

MAWAZO

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Mawazo (sing. wazo) is a comprehensive Kiswahili word covering the following activities of the mind: meditations, reflections, thoughts, opinions, and ideas.

Description

Mawazo is a multidisciplinary international peer reviewed journal published in English by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Makerere University. It is a scholarly journal of research and opinions in the humanities and social sciences. *Mawazo* was first published in June 1967 as a publication of the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences, Makerere University, to promote national consciousness and pan-Africanism through the promotion of basic research in the humanities and social sciences. It seeks to disseminate cutting-edge research and opinions relevant to and reflective of African realities. The thorough multidisciplinary character of the journal enables it to analyse the African condition in a more holistic manner. The journal is interested in receiving well-written papers that conform to its guidelines for possible publication.

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- The manuscript should be original. Articles for consideration should not have been published elsewhere in full or in part and should not be under consideration for publication elsewhere.

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- The title should be on page 1 and not exceed 15 words. The article should have an abstract of no more than 200 words and about five keywords or key phrases. The author's name and affiliations should be on the front page, including an email and mailing address for contact.
- The authors will receive two hard copies of the journal containing their published articles.
- It is not our policy to charge authors to be published and similarly, we do not pay authors for their contributions. Peer Review Policy *Mawazo* is a refereed

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Contents

<i>Editorial</i>	1
Dora Bloch and the Politics of State Terrorism in Uganda	6
<i>Zaid Sekito, Charlotte Karungi Mafumbo, and Anatoli Muleterva</i>	
Rethinking Hastings Kamuzu Banda’s ‘Discriminatory’ Practices against the People of Northern Malawi	23
<i>Eugenio Njoloma</i>	
Women and the Military in Uganda: An Analysis of Mama Chama in the National Resistance Army Bush War, 1981-1986	44
<i>Aturinde Emmmanuel, Andrew Ellias State, and Peter Atekyereza</i>	
Application of Narrative Analysis in Studying Youth Mindsets from a Socio-Cultural Perspective	66
<i>Lynda Nakalama</i>	
Africanisation of Adult Education at Makerere University College in the 1960s	88
<i>Priscilla Asimire, Pamela Khanakwa and Alice Nankya Ndidde</i>	
Ethical Impropriety in the Curriculum Review Process: A Case of Uganda’s Lower Secondary Curriculum	105
<i>Naomi Namanya</i>	
Moving the Discourse from Prostitution to Sex Work in Uganda: Beyond Abolitionist versus Positivists Debate	129
<i>Florence Ebila</i>	
Tonto – Archiving Memory of a vital socio-cultural Local Brew with a rich Vocabulary facing Extinction	148
<i>Gilbert Gumoshabe and Josephine Abikire</i>	
The State of UPE Service Delivery in Uganda: Is Social Accountability the Missing Link?	163
<i>William Muhumuza</i>	

Editorial

What and why do we research it?

We welcome you to this Special Issue of the *Mawazo* Journal of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS), Makerere University. The Issue is indicative of CHUSS' commitment to align its processes with the University-wide move to a research-led institutional agenda. In its ten-year strategy (2020-2030), Makerere University seeks to evolve into a research-led University. It also strives to get more inclined toward graduate-level training. These two bold quests require bold investments in terms of reflective strategic planning and commitment if they are not to remain at the level of good intentions. The research-led pursuit demands a reflection on the question of what and why we need to investigate the issues we are concerned with ourselves. The answers to this question cannot be reached through brainstorming as an administrative routine or through workshopping as a formal legitimization of talking and

networking. The answers can only be arrived at through investigation specifically focused on unpacking what kind of civilisation and development we want to promote in our country, region, and world. Our research-led agenda, therefore, has to be rooted in context and common sense. Our context is multi-layered. On one hand, we have a national obligation to guide the course of our national civilisation. On the other hand, we need to align our processes with regional and international educational standards and trends. Without being intentional about such alignments, we risk becoming parochial.

Civilisation is a multi-stakeholder undertaking, and the university's division of labour lies in the fact that scholars at universities are the custodians of structured knowledge. National, regional, and international actors are ideally supposed to rely on universities to invent and innovate transformative approaches to development. Universities are, in essence, sites of transformation. They

are cradles of renaissances.¹ The scholars are civilisational agents, and Charles William Eliot, the President of Harvard College from 1869 to 1929, was of the view that the mark of astute leadership of a university should be the belief in higher education as the source of enlightenment and progress.² University administrators are therefore obliged to support scholars in pursuing their noble duty of knowledge production to further humanity's progress.

Knowledge production occurs within an ecosystem that facilitates the free trade in ideas. Wilhelm von Humboldt's counsel was that the modern university should be anchored on four pillars: free person, free research, free education and free knowledge.³ The second pillar reflects the imperative of knowledge production through scientific research/ structured inquiry across the entire scope of human knowledge as one of the cardinal missions of a modern university. It places upon scholars the duty to conduct research, publish articles and initiate collaborative scientific research agendas. Universities are thus primarily research institutions.

Research is therefore the seal of excellence for the university.

In that regard, the move to Makerere University's self-rediscovery as a research-led institution ought not be a matter of rebranding—this can be a marketing strategy, of course, but not of scholarly utility. What is transformative is the imperative of rethinking how best to anchor our processes upon the four pillars of a modern university, repeated for emphasis: free person, free research, free education and free knowledge. And because crafting and pursuing civilisational research agendas is a long-term commitment, with little to do with being taken up by the heat of the moment, universities have to pursue their objectives with composure and prudence, avoiding the temptation to yearn for attention. Lakatos, the philosopher of science and knowledge, cautioned against too much enthusiasm in the rapid expansion of universities and argued that too much struggle to impress and adjustment to what is externally fashionable (trending) is a mark of weak science and knowledge.⁴ Universities should announce what is groundbreaking, and they should not lose confidence in becoming breakers of simple news! In streamlining our research agenda, we should constantly reflect on what we are researching and its civilisational utility. And not

¹ Paphitis, S. A., & Kelland, L. (2016). The university as a site for transformation: Developing civic-minded graduates at South African institutions through an epistemic shift in institutional culture. *Education as Change*, 20(2), 184-203.

² Eliot, C. W. (1908). *University administration*. Houghton Mifflin.

³ Von Humboldt, W. F., & Von Humboldt, W. (1854). *The sphere and duties of government* (No. 22). London: J. Chapman.

⁴ Lakatos, I. (1970, January). History of science and its rational reconstructions. In *PSA: Proceedings of the biennial meeting of the philosophy of science association* (Vol. 1970, pp. 91-136). Cambridge University Press.

the least, we should periodically mull over the structural challenges that undermine our business of knowledge production.

Of all the structured challenges, the one we have direct control over is our lack of confidence in homegrown outlets of knowledge—our university-based journals and our University Press (Makerere University Press). The lack of confidence is subtly expressed in statements such as “let me send it to journal A, and if they do not accept it, at least I can ‘put’ it in B [university-based outlet] ...” Or plainly put: “I have no time for their rigorous editorial procedure, let me ‘put’ it in outlet B [university-based outlet], they won’t disturb me”. This can be dismissed as largely anecdotal evidence, but taken at the level of soul-searching, it reminds us that we need to empower and standardise our home-based outlets. The recent alignment of Makerere University Press, which includes the standardisation of the University-wide journals, is therefore a step in a sensible direction. We build on such achievements!

This Special Issue of the Mawazo Journal of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) should, therefore, be received as an invitation to the national, regional and international researchers to consider the Mawazo Journal not as an alternative but rather the first destination of their cutting-edge research articles in the scholarly cultures of humanities and social

sciences. It is also an invitation to the Makerere University authorities to invest in our home-based outlets as part of the strategy for strengthening the university’s research agenda. The nine articles in this Issue attest to scholars’ renewed confidence in the Mawazo Journal, and to the CHUSS fraternity’s commitment to contributing to the civilisation of their country, region and world through research. The articles give a glimpse into CHUSS’ research agenda. They reflect the enduring spirit of scholarship in the disciplines of humanities and social sciences, despite the sometimes-overwhelming odds of being branded as useless by national authorities of importance and of being disenfranchised in terms of what scholars in the humanities earn from the national coffers.

And with all our odds, CHUSS is in a scholarly renaissance. We are pursuing our civilisational division of labour to ensure that the world remains aligned to the social, political, and economic aspirations of humanity. And regardless of their location, humanity seeks survival, a theme that permeates the discussion of the articles comprising this Special Issue. For that matter, Priscilla Asiimire’s article reminds us of the quest for the Africanisation of our educational processes. Her focus is on adult education as part of Makerere’s pedagogical mission. Emanuel Tumwerinde Atulinde reminds us of the role of women as the foundation of our existence

and the pillars of our security. The story of our existence, from birth to death, reflects the nurturing role of women. They nurture the young and take care of the sick. Emmanuel's article debunks the masculine narratives of struggles for freedom. Through the amplification of Maama Chama's story, Emmanuel's treatment celebrates the role of women in liberation struggles. In short, to Emmanuel, women epitomise our journey of survival and its struggles. Florence Ebila reminds us that survival should be disentangled from the dictates of normativity. Her discourse on the rebranding of the procurement of sex—prostitution that has translated into a somewhat “user-friendly” reference: sex work, projects the boundlessness of the visions of the frontiers of capitalism. Sex ceases to be pleasure but labour with all the pressures that are identified with survival as the primary quest of humanity. To survive is to labour—to toil. Toil is to work. It constitutes the use of energy. Prostitution is thus work because it aligns energy with survival. Humans, through prostitution, instrumentalise certain parts of their bodies for the entire self to survive. The gain of sex as labour allows oneself to get what to drink, clothing and use as shelter. So, the utility of sexual intercourse ceases to be about pleasure but is gauged on the lucrativeness of the returns.

Survival is thus beyond normativity; it is a functional necessity, not just for individuals but for collectives

such as nation states. Zaid Sekito's discussion of the politics of State Terrorism in Uganda indicates how, in an attempt to assert themselves in international politics, states resort to violence. In such cases, violence ceases to be absurd; it is a strategy. It revolutionises the way political, social and economic life is perceived by either the collective mind of society or the individual mind. Survival reconfigures the mindsets, and Lydna Nakalawa's article explains how socio-cultural orientations, which are alignments for the continued survival of communities, impact the mindsets of the youth. The need for alignment to survive complicates the dual quest for independence and survival by the youth. To survive is to adjust to the dictates of reality—the choices are limited and circumscribed by social, political and economic controls. Thus, the extent to which one's mind can roam through various options of survival is arrested by the social, political and economic reality. The mind is enslaved and fixed by context, and one wonders how the youth can extricate themselves from the prohibitive contexts to which they have been condemned if they are to become independent.

Survival is not independence; it is resignation to one's context, a truism that Eugenio Njoloma's article on the predicament of the people of Northern Malawi substantiates. Sorely put by the discriminatory practices of the government of Hastings Kamuzu Banda, they

accepted their predicament. They normalised abuse to survive. They avoided the experiences of the people of Biafra! One may argue that to resist is to survive; it makes sense, but not resisting cannot be construed as being stupid because survival is contextual, and the enjoyment of survival is locally circumscribed, and Gumoshabe's rather nostalgic documentation of the rich vocabulary associated with the local brew "Tonto" is indicative of the yearning to conserve and celebrate survival. Gumoshabe's quest is to educate us that survival is not always a struggle; it is also a sequential enjoyment. Tonto was served to reset the physical and mental state of people after a day's toil! Gumoshabe's lesson to us is that the past should be documented not only for the sake of celebrating it but also for transmission to the young through education. The idea is to impress it upon the young that to survive is to be innovative, for as Gumoshabe explains, Tonto is a marvel! To that extent, education is the systematic way through which survival is mobilised. The young

are introduced to the imperative of being innovative for communal and personal survival. This begs one question: What kind of education system have we organised for our young people?

William Muhumuza's interrogation of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and its inadequacies is a call for the streamlining the education system to empower the young to survive better in the future. Naomi Namanya's discussion of the ethical impropriety that punctuated the review of the Uganda Lower Secondary Curriculum Review Process summarises the shabbiness of our education system. We therefore ask: In our educational quests, are we helping our society to survive better? Are we equipping the youth with the skills that enable them to survive better? What and why are we researching? We wish you good reading!

Edward Silvestre Kaweesi, PhD.

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Editor Mawazo Journal

Dora Bloch and the Politics of State Terrorism in Uganda

*Zaid Sekito**, *Charlotte Karungi Mafumbo***, and *Anatoli Muleterwa****

Abstract

On June 28, 1976, France's Airbus 139 with over 240 passengers was hijacked by the Popular Front for Liberation Palestine (PFLP), a branch of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), and landed at Entebbe airport. This was the first international hostage-taking terrorist incident in Uganda. The hijackers released non-Jews but refused to release Jews. On 4 July 1976, the Israeli military carried out a mission to rescue Jews. However, Mrs. Dora Bloch (British-Israeli), who had been hospitalised in Mulago was left behind. She disappeared from the hospital, and her remains were discovered in 1979 after the overthrow of Idi Amin. Mrs. Bloch's disappearance raised questions regarding state terrorism, how it manifested, and its impact on Uganda's geopolitical standing and relations with Israel. Drawing on Mrs. Bloch's disappearance, this article reflects on the manifestation of state terrorism. It draws substantially on overlapping narratives, ordinary voices, and/or conspiracy theories and demonstrates the challenges historians encounter in the search for historical facts. This article employs Critical Terrorism Theory (CTT) to examine how terrorism manifested in Uganda and how it can be used to explain the abduction, disappearance, and murder of Mrs. Bloch and the subsequent actions that led to her death. It argues that state terrorism, even though disguised, will often manifest in ways that make it evident that state actors have a role in causing terrorism, thus conforming to the CTT.

Keywords: Critical Terrorism Theory, History, Politics, State Terrorism, Ordinary voices, Kidnap

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Introduction

Traditionally, terrorism studies have focused on non-state perpetrators of terrorism. However, this perception began to change during the Cold War, when states and state actors actively involved themselves in terrorism by, for example, supporting terrorist organisations operating abroad. Thus, terrorism, a widespread global phenomenon, began to manifest in the actions and policies of both individuals and groups, state and non-state. For the state, it primarily manifests in covert actions and policies which are easy to hide from regular actions. On the surface, states present “terrorism acts” as actions in self-defense, preventive action, counter-terrorism measures, or even as promoting “progress and development”. Forms of state terrorism that are much more widespread, powerful, and destructive are not often in the purview of the citizens¹; instead, the focus is on non-state actors, especially those groups that have been labelled terrorists since 9/11. Uganda had neither been known as a terrorist state nor as harbouring terrorism until the hijacking of the Air France plane on 26th June 1976. The other aspect that tainted Uganda’s image and consequently depicted it as a terrorist state was the disappearance of Dora Bloch following the hijacking. Unlike

the other disappearances of the two Americans, Nicholas Stroh, a thirty-three-year-old journalist, and Robert Siedele, a forty-six-year-old lecturer, in 1971, Chief Justice Benedicto Kagimu Kiwanuka in 1972, the disappearance of Bloch was not an ordinary one but a Pol-Pot-style atrocity² to ensure that the populations would be properly traumatised.

Dora Feinberg was born in Jaffa in 1872 to Joseph Feinberg, one of the founders of the Jewish agricultural settlement of Rishon Lezion. Dora Feinberg moved to Jerusalem as an adult, where she met Aharon Bloch of Welsh origin in 1920 while he was serving in the British Army in Palestine (Saul, 2015). In 1925, they married, and she adopted the name Bloch (Dora Bloch). This granted her British citizenship. In 1976, she was moving to New York for her youngest Son Daniel’s wedding when the plane on which she was travelling was hijacked. She served as an interpreter (from English to Hebrew) between the hostages and the hijackers because of her fluency in languages.

On the 27th day of June 1976, France’s Airbus 139 was hijacked by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) - General Command (a branch of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation [PLO]) and the German leftist terrorist group, Baader Meinhof (German Red Army Faction) on its way from Israel to France. On 28th June 1976,

¹ In this paper, the interest in using the variable *the politics of state terrorism* is intended to elicit the reader to see the machinations, manipulations, and manoeuvres around the concealing of Bloch’s murder to save the state’s political influence at the time.

² Pol-Pot was a Cambodian Marxist dictator

it landed at Entebbe Airport³, making it one of several high-profile Airbus hijackings in the 1970s. On 4th July 1976, the Israeli military carried out a mission to rescue the Jews. Unfortunately, one of its citizens, Mrs. Dora Bloch, a seventy-five-year-old remained unaccounted for and was later reported killed by Ugandan authorities. On the same date, Israel's foreign counterintelligence agency Mossad requested one of President Amin's former confidantes and friends, Colonel Baruch Bar-Lev, to compile a profile of Amin to better understand the leader they were dealing with. Israel, a nation formed out of the ashes of the Holocaust of the Second World War, learned through tragedy to value every single Jewish life, and dropped the subject of Dora Bloch soon after the July 1976 raid on Entebbe.

On the impact of the raid on Uganda and Amin in particular, Britain acknowledged the effects of the raid on Amin's fortunes by remarking that the "raid was a stunning blow to Amin's image of infallibility" (*The Times*, London, July 30, 1976:28). On Uganda, as a whole, the *Times*, London paper covered the breakup of Uganda-Britain diplomatic relations which was confirmed on 26th July 1976. This

followed the Ugandan government's lack of cooperation in explaining the affair. Uganda also failed to provide a satisfactory explanation of the whereabouts of Mrs. Dora Bloch, one of the British citizens who was among the hostages at Entebbe. It was claimed that she had been left behind by the Israeli rescue team.

This was the immediate cause of the breakup of diplomatic ties and was described by the Western public as "a woe for Idi Amin" (*Christian Science Monitor*, July 29, 1976:1), "and as "one more merited setback for Amin." (*Christian Science Monitor*, July 30, 1976:1). Britain's action was, therefore, justified because Britain had all along tolerated Amin's Uganda because it (Britain) was the head of a "meaningful and moral institution"—the Commonwealth, different from the 'global gang' (UN). Therefore, even when Amin expelled foreigners from Uganda, British loyalty to Uganda was still held. Thus, Britain was forced to cut off diplomatic ties with a Commonwealth country for the first time in history (*Christian Science Monitor*, July 29, 1976:1). Indeed, the Dora Bloch affair was a woe to Amin and the entire nation, Uganda, and relations with Britain were only restored as soon as Amin was overthrown. The Dora Bloch affair, as it later came to be termed, demonstrated the futility of diplomacy to protect the British citizens in Uganda (*The Times*, London, July 29, 1976:5).

³ Idi Amin's argument for allowing the plane to land was that Uganda had to portray a strong culture of state compliance. The damage of not allowing the plane to land would have been heavier if it had crashed due to a shortage of fuel, as he had been told. See Harold Koh, *Why Do Nations Obey International Law?* Yale L.J.2599,2655 (1997) (explaining several schools of thinking on the methods by which international law binds State actors).

In 1979, the subject of what happened to Mrs. Bloch only resurfaced after the fall of Amin's fall when her remains were exhumed, something that only made the matter more controversial. Despite having occurred in 1976, her relatives and Israeli state officials still had an interest in this incident. This article attempts to provide a historical explanation for these events. It draws on overlapping narratives and conspiracy theories to demonstrate the challenges historians encounter in the search for historical facts. It employs the Critical Terrorism Theory's central tenet, which presupposes that terrorism is primarily a state-actor manifestation. It argues that state terrorism, even though disguised, will often manifest in ways that make it evident that state actors have a role in causing terrorism, thus conforming to Critical Terrorism Theory. CTT is important because it demonstrates that the state has a monopoly on violence.

What is State Terrorism?

Before understanding state terrorism, one should first delve into the concept of terrorism. However, it is interesting to note that as a historical phenomenon, terrorism is impossible to define because of its permanent development and mutability over time. It is a fluid concept with no universally accepted definition or standard. However, for this article, we draw on David Claridge's definition of terrorism as,

The systematic threat or use of violence, whether for or in opposition to established authority, with the intention of communicating a political message to a group larger than the victim group by generating fear and altering the behaviour of the larger group. Either the victim or the perpetrator, or both, will be operating outside a military context; both will never be operating within a military context.⁴

Two key features of a terrorist strategy according to this definition are that terrorism is systematic in nature and can be exhibited in a single violent act as long as there is evidence. Second, that terrorism is intended to 'generate a response outside of the immediate victim group'. Bearing on the above definition and its qualifications in mind, Claridge derived a definitional model of state terrorism. According to this model, state terrorism displays the following elements:

- a) it is systematic;
- b) it is actually or potentially violent;
- c) it is political;
- d) it is committed by agents of the state, or by proxies who operate with the resources of the state;
- e) it is intended to generate fear; [and]
- f) it is intended to communicate a message to a wider group than the immediate victim(s); and the

⁴ David Claridge, "State Terrorism? Applying a definitional model," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 8:3, 1996, pp. 50.

victim(s) will not be armed and organised for aggression at the time of the incident.⁵

According to Blakeley, state terrorism involves the deliberate targeting of individuals that the state has to protect to invoke terror among a wider audience (Blakeley, 2009:15). State terrorism can be internal and or external. Internally, it is used to maintain order and quell political opposition. Simultaneously, externally, it is done in pursuit of specific foreign policy objectives (ibid, 2009:19). Domestically, the state may sponsor covert support for paramilitary or vigilante groups, while externally it lends ideological support to, provides financial or military support, to or collaborates and cooperates with an external terrorist group (Martin, 2003:85; Stohl, 2006:7). Jackson et al. define state terrorism as “the intentional use or threat of violence by state agents or their proxies against individuals or groups who are victimised to intimidate or frighten the watching audience” (Richard Jackson et al., 2010:3). From this definition, the actors who carry out the terror are identified as paramilitary agencies or personnel. The people who are victims of state terror(ism) are political dissident insurgent groups and others who may hold views that differ from those in power.

From the above definitions, it can be argued that for violence perpetrated by the state to be

called state terrorism, it must meet the following features: *a)* it must be deliberate against individuals, citizens, or non-citizens; *b)* it must be perpetrated by identifiable agents or proxies of the state on behalf of the state or in conjunction with it; *c)* it must be visible, that is, acts are carried out publicly; and *d)* its intention is to induce extreme fear in the target audience that identifies with the victims, internal or external, so that they can change their behaviours. Thus, state terrorism has to do with the intentional use or threat of violence by state agents or their proxies against individuals or groups who are victimised to intimidate or frighten the watching audience. The question then is: whether the disappearance and murder of Dorach Bloch fit this description. The answer to this question is provided in the Findings section.

However, for conceptual clarity, it is better to distinguish state terrorism from other forms of violence, since not all forms of state violence, such as state repression and genocide, be classified as terrorism. The first form of mass violence is genocide. According to Article 2 of the United Nations Convention on the Punishment and Prevention of Genocide (1948):

Genocide is defined as “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the

⁵David Claridge, “State Terrorism? Applying a definitional model,” pp. 47-63.

group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group” (UN Convention on the Punishment and Prevention of Genocide (1948)).

State repression is defined by Schmid as “a more active process of social control by neutralisation or elimination of actual and potential opponents by a variety of coercive sanctions” (Schmid, 1991:25). This definition shows that the difference between repression and state terrorism lies in their scope and aims. While repression is designed to impact only those who represent an actual or potential threat to the state and aims to deter these dissenters from attacking or protesting against the state, leaving the general population largely unaffected, terrorism does not. Thus, Wilkinson argues that “repression can be distinguished from terrorism because it is a form of coercion affecting only actual dissenters while terrorism since it is meant to deter potential dissenters, is more arbitrary, unpredictable and indiscriminate in its nature and effects” (Wilkinson, 1991:25). Terrorism leaves the population affected population in fear and often

in a precarious situation. Terrorism is conceptually distinct from genocide and repression but could happen at more or less the same time. In addition, this case is on state terrorism and not state-sponsored terrorism, while the former applies to situations where the state unleashes terror on its citizens. We are cognizant of the fact that Dorah Bloch was not a Ugandan citizen, but her disappearance holds the state accountable. The latter applies to situations in which a state supports a foreign Non-State Actor that uses terrorism as a strategy. In this case, if Uganda supported the PFLP hijackers, it was state-sponsored terrorism in the context of a broader hijack-hostage crisis and not specifically on Dorah Bloch.

Methodology

This article is the outcome of a larger project studying the history of terrorism in Uganda. Given the qualitative nature of the inquiry, its sources were both primary and secondary historical narratives collected from different people and places. This article is based on a qualitative case study of the abduction, disappearance, and murder of Mrs. Bloch. It uses the historical narrative method to assess how closely the reality of Mrs. Bloch’s disappearance in 1976 adheres to the four manifestations/features of state terrorism. By analysing the overlapping narratives on the disappearance of Mrs. Bloch, this article shows how it is possible to conclude that her disappearance was

a true reflection of state terrorism that is difficult to identify and construct. The information required was obtained from three data sources: first-hand accounts and secondary literature produced after the 1976 raid at Entebbe, and Police and/or military records of exhumations of unidentified burials.

The first-hand accounts were those of witnesses, based on interviews. The interviewees were purposively selected from surviving officers who were guarding the airport. We were lucky as we were drafting the title of this article, a colleague in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences whispered that his father was on duty the day the rescue was conducted. It was from his father (name withheld) that we started snowballing. Thus, the lead to where Dora was buried was provided by an eyewitness who did not know her but saw her being picked up from the hospital and those who claimed to have heard gunshots on 5th July 1976 at around 4a.m. This was augmented with Police Archival reports on the incident. Additionally, the works of Henry Kyemba, a former Minister in the Amin government until his defection in 1977, David Saul (one of the Israeli commanders who were on the Rescue Mission) and Semakula Kiwanuka (a former professor at Makerere University) provided firsthand accounts. Interviews with BBB (a former UBC journalist based in Nakasero), Mr MS (duty overall on the day of the raid), and Dr KA (the only surviving medical expert on the team that examined

the remains of Dora Bloch) also provided primary data. Furthermore, in-depth interviews identified through snowballing were instructive. Two of these were with two special military officers of Amin's regime at the time of the hijack, and like other published accounts, they provide the same narrative. Available accounts of the abduction and disappearance of Mrs. Bloch from police and military records were also used in the study. Thus, this article examines both pre- and post-disappearance accounts.

Competing Narratives, conspiracy theories, and voices on Mrs. Bloch's death

To corroborate these three data sources, this section examines the overlapping narratives about the disappearance of Mrs. Bloch. These range from government accounts (Uganda, UK, and Israel governments) to eyewitness accounts. It should be noted that there are inherent problems with using first-hand accounts, particularly those produced to be commercially viable (Altier, 2012: 88) or for military prestige. For example, Henry Kyemba, a former Health Minister in Amin's government, uses his book to distance himself from the violence that occurred in his ministry and the regime. He justifies his actions and decisions for the period that he remained in Uganda despite knowing about the violence that was taking place. As a historian, Kiwanuka's book focuses on recording the events

of Amin's leadership and how Amin emerged within Uganda. He argues, as does Kasozi, that Amin was both the creator of the situation in Uganda and a product of the history of a country where violence had been used extensively to maintain power. (Kiwanuka, *Amin and the Tragedy of Uganda*: iii). On the other hand, David Saul, a serving Israel military officer writes not only from a military angle but also in defense of the actions of the Israeli government.

Other accounts and historical narratives on the disappearance of Mrs. Bloch used in this article were skewed towards anti-Amin rhetoric. They blamed Amin for the 1976 Entebbe hostage-taking incident which eventually led to the abduction and murder of Mrs. Bloch. These accounts also provide detailed, often uncomfortably intimate pictures of the forms of violence common in Uganda during the 1970s, specifically detailing the 1976 one as the most grotesque. Two of these were with two special military officers of Amin's regime at the time of the hijack, and like other published accounts, they provide the same narrative. They argue that the abduction of Mrs. Bloch by Amin's men was not dissimilar to other abductions during his rule. The interviewees explained how they portrayed Amin's regime and Amin as a monster that needed international recognition in this affair. All these accounts provide very similar descriptions to one another and other reports produced, and therefore, it can be assumed that these accounts

do provide an accurate portrayal of the general trends in violence over this period, even if individual stories may have been sensationalised.

Police archives, File Case No. CD/06/76/00713-02, show that there was an attempt to obtain knowledge of the death of Mrs. Bloch. CID Officers Chemutai and Otika (*not real names*) asked 25 people in Namanve and Kivuuvu but were all hesitant to say anything recalling the days of Idi Amin. However, information was later obtained from Petero Matovu, a shamba man in the Kivuuvu sugarcane plantation (now part of the Lugazi sugarcane plantation). With the disappearance of such a high-powered person, "Mrs. Bloch" -- it was important to review the archives and published reports of the time from different security organisations. In revisionist accounts, the archival material obtained from the security institutions pointed to the fact that protecting the masses, both citizens and non-citizens, was and continues to be the primary responsibility of both the police and military. Therefore, the search for who was responsible for Mrs. Bloch's disappearance was the responsibility of the security forces. Notably, they did their best to find the truth. Despite this, it was impossible to ascertain who was responsible for her abduction, disappearance, and death. Investigations had hit a dead end, and so blaming the state as responsible was not done at that time. Revisionist accounts have pointed to the fact that Mrs. Bloch's

abduction was witnessed in a state characterised by general intimidation, distrust, and social isolation. These accounts that emerged after Amin's overthrow solely blamed her death on Amin. For this reason, Amin was subsequently referred to as a terrorist. Accounts from those who witnessed the kidnapping of Mrs. Bloch could neither point to any person or where she was buried. Thus, none of the eyewitnesses of the kidnapping could help establish the fate or location where Mrs. Bloch was dumped or buried.

Additionally, records of pathological reports on exhumed unidentified burials: On Tuesday 29th May 1979 the remains of Dora Bloch were exhumed at Kivuuvu, Kyagwe, Mukono, and examined by a team of pathologists and medical doctors led by Maurice Rogoff. Other doctors present were Dr Lutakome Kayiira (Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs), Dr. Arye Oded (Israel Rep to Uganda), Prof. Ssebuwufu, Dr Makumbi (head Mulago Hospital), Dr Adam Kimala (Lecturer, Makerere – still alive), Dr Kakande and Dr Ssendyose (see, George Muwanga-Kamya, *Munno*, Thursday 31 May 1979, pp. 1 &4, AF PER 079.6761 M 85). In the presence also was Dora's son Bertram Benjamin Bloch. The pathology results corroborated the X-Ray report from Israel indicating a damaged back-bone and the jaw bone resembled that of Dora's according to the 1974, leg bone had mark of leg ulcer which she was

suffering from. The nylon piece of cloth on her was also same the piece she had on the day she was picked from the hospital. The weakness with this data source, however, is that although systematic exhumation could provide information both on individual of Mrs. Bloch and patterns, it could not address cases in which she disappeared,⁶ which would help reflect important patterns, such as the branch of the military that was involved.⁷

In an interview on the American CBS television network on July 11, 1976 a week after the successful raid on Entebbe, the then Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was asked the following:

Question: Do you have reason to believe that Mrs. Bloch was killed on the orders of Idi Amin?

Answer: I have no other evidence until this moment as to the whereabouts of Mrs. Bloch, except one — that the Government of Uganda is the sole responsible body for whatever has happened, happens, or will happen to Mrs. Bloch. She was under the full control of the Ugandan authorities while

⁶ Clyde C. Snow & Maria J. Bihurriet, *An Epidemiology of Homicide: "Ningun Nombre" Burials in the Province of Buenos Aires from 1970 to 1984*, in *Human Rights and Statistics: Getting the Record Straight*, supra note 2, at 328, 331.

⁷ Christopher Joyce & Eric Stover, *Witnesses from the Grave: The Stories Bones Tell* (1991).

in the hospital. We have hard evidence that Mrs. Bloch was alive on Sunday morning after the operation. Therefore, the full responsibility for whatever has happened or will happen to Mrs. Dora Bloch lies with the Ugandan government and its president.

Question: In the event that you should get some tragic news about the 75-year-old Mrs. Bloch, what can Israel do?

Answer: I would not discuss what the options that are open to Israel, are but I would like to stress very clearly that the full responsibility will be put on the Ugandan government” (Dan Rather, *Yitzhak Rabin* on July 11, 1976).

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin’s responses, as shown above, combined with the hostage-taking and rescue events at Entebbe, lead us to the question of who killed one of the hostages, Dora Bloch.

Contrary to the Israeli narrative, Lt. Col. Juma Oris, Uganda’s foreign minister, while addressing the United Nations Security Council in New York on July 9, 1976 explained the circumstances of Bloch’s disappearance. From Uganda’s perspective:

Up to the time of Israel’s invasion in the early hours of Sunday, July 4, President Amin had succeeded in having more than half the hostages released.

In his humanitarian efforts, Idi Amin was concerned not only with the release of all hostages but also with their welfare. In this spirit, Mrs. Bloch, who had a piece of food stuck in her throat, was immediately rushed to Uganda’s best hospital for medical treatment.

When she got better on the evening of Saturday, 3 July she was returned by the medical authorities to the old Entebbe airport to join the other hostages. Following the understanding given by the Uganda Government to the hijackers, this was done not to jeopardise the lives of the hostages who were at that time still at Entebbe airport. The Israelis committed a naked act of aggression by invading Entebbe airport, where the hostages, including Mrs. Bloch, were being held by the hijackers” (UN Security Council Proceedings, July 9, 1976).

Since the Amin regime was already much maligned in the eyes of the world, even if Lt. Col Oris was speaking the truth, it was much easier to dismiss this statement as a cover-up and a distortion of the truth to absolve the “murderous regime.”

The British narrative, in a confidential Foreign Office memo written by James Hennessy, the British High Commissioner to Uganda, says, “She had been seen by a consultant

at Mulago Hospital last Sunday long after the Israeli commandos had come and gone. Since then, she has not been seen anywhere. Another confidential Foreign Office briefing report sent to No 10 said the most likely scenario was that Mrs. Bloch was killed by Ugandan soldiers, who were “bitter and dangerous following their disgrace at Israeli hands”. Approximately 50 Ugandan soldiers were killed by Israelis during the raid. The report adds, “They may have seized on the only available Jew on whom to exact their revenge”. The Foreign Office confirmed that Mrs. Bloch, who had also required treatment for leg ulcers, was seen by a member of the British High Commission (Peter Chandley) while under guard at the hospital. The report goes on to note, “Moreover, President Amin confirmed that while in hospital, Mrs. Bloch developed leg ulcers. Nonetheless, he ordered her to return and join the other hostages. However, he admitted that he could not ensure that all his orders were carried out. President Amin, therefore, did not deny the possibility that the Ugandans had custody of Mrs. Bloch at the time of the Israeli raid and thereafter;”. Having lost the crisis to the Israelis after they raided Entebbe, there was nothing left to bargain with.

Another narrative that emerged at that time was the “Jimmy Parma Narrative”. This narrative has been greatly debated regarding its authenticity and appropriateness. Parma was a photographer with a

government-owned newspaper, *The Voice of Uganda*. According to this narrative, Parma took photographs of Mrs. Dora Bloch’s body. To conceal the evidence, Parma was murdered by an unknown person. However, for Parma to have photographed Bloch’s body, he had to have come close enough to the scene. This means that he must have been permitted to take the photographs. Had Amin’s soldiers killed her in the first place, she would have been deterred from even attempting to take the photographs.

Knowing the political situation in the 1971-1979 period and the reports of a murderous government in power, Jimmy Parma would have known better than to venture to take photographs of Bloch’s body, when he would have understood the consequences it was indeed Farouk Minawa who dragged the elderly woman to her death. If the story of Parma taking photographs is true, the pictures were not of a dead Bloch but of Bloch being dragged out of Mulago Hospital by the mysterious killers. Arguably, while Parma might have been a state photographer, known to investigative journalists, he might have covertly taken photos of the murdered Bloch and was eliminated upon being discovered.

The editors knew the government’s position on the issues of the day. Whatever the nature of the photographs he took of Bloch, they were only and could only have been of the kind that made the government look reasonable and

even heroic. He would not have been assigned to take a single photograph that did not. If he had ventured out on his initiative to take damaging photographs that incriminated the government, there is a high chance that not only Parma but also many of his supervisors and senior editors would have disappeared at the hands of the government. After all, how was anybody to be sure that Parma had not already smuggled the photographs or negatives to his editors or out of the country to an overseas news photo agency like Camerapix, a Pan-African Multi-Media company, or AP/Wide World?

Apart from Parma, no other reporter or editor of the *Voice of Uganda* was killed. This leaves only one possible interpretation. For a government photographer to have come close enough to Bloch to take her photos could only mean that at the time Parma took photos of Bloch, she was being treated well, was safe, healthy, being attended to by Ugandan soldiers and medical personnel, probably smiling, and in no way being harassed. In a government-owned newspaper during a dictatorship, such photos would be published in the next day's edition to attract public sympathy for the regime's actions. The person who killed Parma did so for either one of two reasons. The first is that Parma's photographs covertly captured the people dragging Bloch to her death, who were probably government operatives (state terrorism); or they showed Bloch looking well, thus

contradicting the reports that she had been killed by the Amin regime (non-state operatives backed by the state (not Ugandan state) which is also tantamount to state terrorism.

The narrative that has attracted the most concern to warrant Amin's government being identified as a terrorist is that of Henry Kyemba. The Kyemba narrative holds that the state was behind the abduction, disappearance, and murder of Mrs. Bloch. Kyemba describes how the men who killed Dora Bloch did not attempt to hide what they were doing:

One of the most extraordinary aspects of this murder was its unnecessarily brutality and public nature. Amin could have acted humanely by helping Mrs. Bloch. The State Research people could have hidden their deeds by arranging for her to be officially discharged from the hospital and picking her up afterwards. Alternatively, they could have quietly removed her through a back entrance. Instead, Amin sent two of his most notorious thugs, who no doubt relished the chance to display their viciousness in public. No cover-up, however efficient, could conceal their crime (Kyemba, 1977:176).

Kyemba's narrative denotes State terrorism and what has augmented his narrative more is his entire book on Amin. In three of the book's chapters, he references Amin or his henchmen's involvement in acts

of violence, torture, and murder. This qualifies the state as having a monopoly on violence.

Another narrative about the death of Mrs. Bloch is the Abraham Kisuule Minge's narrative. According to this narrative, following the end of the 1979 Tanzania-Uganda war in which Amin was deposed, a former officer in the State Research Bureau, Abraham Kisuule-Minge, espoused a narrative in April 1979 that Bloch was killed on orders of two security men, the Director of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA), Lt. Col Farouk Minawa and one Cap. Nasur Odongo. As quoted by *Times* magazine in a report published on April 30, 1979:

Bloch was transferred from the hospital to the SRB. Minawa did not drag Bloch from her Mulago hospital bed, as has been alleged (according to Kissule's narrative). As the director of the NIA, Minawa hardly needed to come to Mulago Hospital himself to arrest an elderly woman who posed no security or physical threat to anyone. Bloch was brought to Minawa, and while in Makindye, Farouk made a slashing motion and cut her throat as she was flung to the floor. Mrs. Bloch was driven away, sobbing, to a nearby forest, where she was shot in the back buried in Makindye barracks where Ben Kiwanuka

was buried. (*The Times Magazine*, April 30, 1979).

While this narrative may be true, it misses the fact that neither the remains of Ben Kiwanuka nor those of Bloch were found in the Makindye Military Barracks. The narrative also does not corroborate other narratives regarding the place where Bloch was presumably killed and where the remains were found. The inability to corroborate this information from Kissule demonstrates the challenge of sustaining an argument on state terrorism.

One narrative that has come to challenge all other narratives imputing state terrorism is the J.G.S. Makumbi's narrative. According to Dr Makumbi, who was the Medical Superintendent of Mulago Hospital, Dora Bloch was taken from the hospital by men in civilian clothing. Recalling the date as July 4, 1976, Dr Makumbi stated that the circumstances leading to Mrs. Bloch's disappearance started when he had just completed the evening ward rounds. As he stood on the fourth floor, he heard a scuffle on the sixth floor, where Mrs. Bloch was staying in one of the VIP rooms. He rushed to the stairs to see what was happening and saw armed men carrying machine guns, firing bullets to frighten people out of the way, and pulling Mrs. Bloch down the stairs. Outside, a black Mercedes-Benz was waiting. She was dragged into a vehicle, the door was shut, and the vehicle was driven away. Although these men were clad in civilian' clothing, their

features were quite familiar to some hospital staff. They were believed to be security guards in the presidential staff. How they were known at the hospital and whether they always picked up people were issues that were interrogated. Although this narrative is informative, our attempts to find an eyewitness to corroborate it failed. Additionally, this narrative was characterised by generalisation. For example, Dr Makumbi talks of a machine gun, but as a doctor or civilian, he would not know the different types of guns. Likewise, he talks of men in civilian wear unique to them without identifying any of them which does not qualify them to have been Amin's guards.

Another narrative is the Victor Kato's narrative. Kato was a resident in Namanve at the time of the death. According to his narrative, Mrs. Bloch was shot. He had never witnessed the shooting but had heard gunshots on the evening of July 4, 1976. The body of a white woman was found after the killers abandoned it in the Namanve Forest. Kato adds that the white lady (assumed to be Mrs. Bloch) was killed along with a white chicken, as a possible practice of witchcraft. This narrative does not, however, tell how the remains of Mrs. Bloch came to be found in the Kivuuvu Sugarcane plantation, Kyagwe, Mukono, over 30 kms away from the Namanve forest.

The final narrative considered in this article is the John Sekabira narrative. According to this narrative, a soldier named Shaban killed

Bloch. John Sekabira, a former student at Makerere University, speaking in exile, told *Drum* in an account published in its September 1977 issue that he had witnessed the burial of "the body of an elderly white (referring to the white race) woman" at Murchison Bay Prison Camp on August 20, 1976 (*Drum*, Sept 11, 1977). Sekabira was not specific about whether this elderly woman was a Bloch or any other white woman. Speaking from exile, a soldier named Shaban is the one who killed Bloch. However, there seems to be no connection between where he claimed the elderly white woman was buried and where Mrs. Bloch's remains were found. This suggests that there may have been other whites, in addition to Mrs. Bloch, who died in Uganda during the same period.

In an interview with one of the surviving members of the Presidential Military Unit, he described the situation as follows:

If there was anyone who knew how difficult this affair was from the start, it was my boss (President Amin). The safety and well-being of the hostages was a big concern for him, regardless of his personality and position as president and OAU Head. Not only Dorah, Bloch alone but all the hostages were on his mind. He kept telling us this, and the most pressing issue was to secure the release of the hostages, but the hijackers had also

held us at ransom with some demands. The night Israel attacked was the very night Amin had planned to poison the hijackers and hand over the hostages. That is how Israel would respect Uganda and him in particular. When Israel attacked and President Amin heard what had happened to our colleagues, he became furious. I remember him saying, ‘You can imagine these fools. We are even treating their sick people, and they cannot cooperate? Go get her out of the hospital and dump her at the airport which we did but as we were carrying her in the car, she stressed us and bite our colleague’s hand (now late) who got annoyed and pushed her. She hit her head on the door and went into a coma. We called the president and informed him that she fainted and died while attempting to resist, she fainted and died. He told us that no one should know about it. Go bury her in Makindye...That was the story in short. We could not pronounce her dead in our hands. Therefore, the ideal state policy was to say that she disappeared from the hospital. (Interview with Brigadier X, 16 July 2019).

This interview echoes narratives found in the biographies and statements of key actors in Uganda’s

military and press at that time. From Idi Amin’s memoir, there seem to be widely scattered comments on this subject. However, given his personality and the foreign policy direction with Palestine and Israel, it is clear from the above interview excerpt that Uganda had a hand not in the murder but in the disappearance of Bloch. This does not exonerate the state from terrorism.

From the above, it is clear that these deaths and disappearances and the narratives around them are often told in truth, speculation, and rumour, in competition for audience. Hence, the use of the term competing narratives in this article. These narratives range from government accounts (Uganda, UK, and Israeli) to “eyewitness” accounts. What is clear is that these accounts and historical narratives on the disappearance of Mrs. Bloch in this article were skewed towards anti-Amin rhetoric, except for the Uganda Government narrative that was pro-Amin. Even with no credible evidence in them, narratives such as Henry Kyemba, Abraham Kisuule Minge, Jimmy Parma Narrative, Victor Kato, and John Sekabira thrived on the anti-Amin rhetoric. In the end, the Dr. J.G.S Makumbi narrative came to challenge all other narratives imputing state terrorism. The failure of all those narratives to point out the role of the state in Mrs. Bloch’s murder makes them lacking in authenticity and appropriateness, thus giving way to the records of pathological reports on exhumed unidentified burials, later to be confirmed as Mrs. Bloch’s. The

changing circumstances surrounding the concealment of knowledge of Bloch's murder manifested as urban state-centric terrorism.

Conclusion

This article has attempts to locate the death of Mrs. Dorah Bloch within the state-sponsored terrorism narrative. It examines different types of narratives based on archival records and interviews. The abduction, disappearance, and murder of Bloch raises three historical questions. The issue is that State Terrorism existed in the 1971-1979 period because abduction and concealed murders are types of terrorism. Additionally, the inability of any single narrative to persuade us that Dorah Bloch was kidnapped or abducted by Person X, killed, and finally buried in place Y leaves us with three important questions: If not the state, who can walk into a hospital and get a patient out without any formal clearance? Was Dorah Bloch's disappearance similar to that of former Chief Justice Benedicto Kiwanuka or Julie Ward in Kenya? Based on the four characteristics, does the above narrative and voices qualify the disappearance and murder of Mrs. Dorah Bloch fit to be described as state terrorism?

The answer to the question of who committed or masterminded the abduction, disappearance, and murder of Bloch can be summed up as follows: Dorah Bloch's remains

were found in Uganda shortly after Idi Amin's fall. On Tuesday, May 29, 1979, the remains of Dorah Bloch were exhumed at Kivuuvu, Kyagwe, Mukono, and examined by a team of pathologists and medical doctors led by Maurice Rogoff. Other medics present were Dr Lutakome Kayiira (Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs), Dr Arye Oded (Israel Representative to Uganda), Prof. Ssebuwufu, Dr J.G.S. Makumbi (Medical Superintendent, Mulago Hospital), Dr Adam Kimala (Lecturer at Makerere – still alive), Dr Ignatius Kakande and Dr. Andrew Ssendyose. (see, George Muwanga-Kamyia, *Munno*, Thursday, 31 May 1979, pp. 1 and 4, AF PER 079.6761 M 85). Dorah's son, Bertram Benjamin Bloch was also present. The results corroborated the X-ray report from Israel, indicating a damaged backbone and jawbone that resembled that of Dorah Bloch, according to the 1974 medical report, a leg bone had the mark of an ulcer which she was suffering from. The nylon piece of cloth on her was also the piece she had on the day she was picked from hospital. Thus, although her disappearance was disguised, the exhumation of her remains in Uganda and the results of the X-ray report made it evident that Bloch disappeared from the hospital but remained in Uganda. State actors whose primary duty was to protect Bloch played a role in causing this form of state terrorism, thus conforming to the Critical Terrorism Theory.

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Rethinking Hastings Kamuzu Banda's 'Discriminatory' Practices against the People of Northern Malawi

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Abstract

This article challenges existing scholarship that portrays Malawi's first leader, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, as responsible for the alienation of the people of Northern Malawi. It argues that Banda's policy choices were pursued to enhance national unity by eradicating ethnic and regional disparities in public spaces. Situated within a historical study design, this article approached qualitatively, using both primary and secondary data to support this perspective. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus-group discussions, archival research, and desk research. Evidence suggests that events such as language policy changes in 1968, changes in the education sector in 1969, 1987, and 1989, and the transfer of government seat from Zomba to Lilongwe in 1975 have been analytically inconsequential in justifying Banda's perceived 'discriminatory' practices against the people of Northern Malawi. Nevertheless, the portrayal of Banda as having been discriminatory affected relations among the people of Malawi's three regions, since his policy choices and actions were said to be motivated by his desire to uplift his Chewa ethnic identity.

Keywords: People, Northern Malawi, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, ethnicity, ethnic favouritism, state discrimination

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Introduction

This article challenges existing scholarship that portrays Malawi's first leader, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, as being responsible for the alienation of the people of northern Malawi from broader Malawian society (Mkandawire, 2010; Chirwa, 1998; Vail and White, 1989). It argues that Banda's policy choices and actions were driven by his quest to enhance national unity by eradicating ethnic and regional disparities in public spaces which had been dominated by the people of northern Malawi at the time. However, the flagging of Banda's 'discriminatory' practices appears to hold ground because, at independence in 1964, no signs of politically motivated ethnic or regional stratification manifested in Malawi (Virmani, 1992). According to Chipembere (1976: 80), the "nation was one vast extended family, [in which] unity and goodwill prevailed among [the] people." In fact, Banda was only preoccupied with ensuring that the people, regardless of ethnic affiliations and loyalties, cultivated a spirit of hard work as a prerequisite for prosperity in the soon-to-be independent Malawian nation (Chipembere, 1976).

Soon after independence, Banda became increasingly autocratic, enabling him to consolidate enormous political power (Rotberg, 2023). To sustain his whims, Banda is said to have appealed to his Chewa ethnic kin for political support (Vail and White, 1989). This approach is

consistent with *quid pro quo* logic, which suggests that the leaders' desire to garner broader political support compels them to look to their fellow ethnic group members and provide them with material benefits (Franck and Rainer, 2012). However, Banda's turn to his Chewa ethnic kin is said to have been achieved at the expense of the people of Northern Malawi, whose superiority in education and professional spheres during both the colonial era and this immediate post-independence period surpassed those of the people of Central and Southern Malawi (Mkandawire, 2010; Kaspin, 1997; Chirwa, 1998; Vail and White, 1989). Events such as the language policy change in 1968; changes in the education sector in 1969, 1987, and 1989; and the transfer of the government seat in 1975 from Zomba in Southern Malawi to Lilongwe in the central region (his home/Chewa-dominated region) include some of Banda's policy actions, which have been interpreted as constituting tactics for safeguarding his Chewa interests at the expense of the people of Northern Malawi. This article uses both primary and secondary data obtained through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), archival research, conversations from Northern Political Bloc (NPB) and Voice of the North (VON) WhatsApp platforms, and desk research to dispel this perspective and demonstrate that Banda pursued these policy choices as a means of enhancing national unity.

The article begins by defining the people of northern Malawi to locate their socio-cultural and political significance in the political history of Malawi. Thereafter, this article presents a theoretical exploration of state discrimination. This is followed by a discussion of Banda's aforementioned policy choices as embodiments of his perceived discriminatory practices against the people of northern Malawi. Before concluding, the chapter justifies Banda's pursuit of these policy choices as a means of enhancing national unity by eradicating ethnic and regional disparities in public spaces, as opposed to perceptions of ethnic favouritism.

The social-cultural and political position of the people of Northern Malawi

The confinement of the people of Northern Malawi into one ethnic and regional basket requires befitting historiographical consideration. This is because Northern Malawi, as one of Malawi's three administrative regions, is home to multiple ethnic groups. Specifically, Tew (1950) indicates the existence of over 18 ethnic groups in this region compared to only three and seven ethnic groups in Central and Southern Malawi, respectively. Critically, such a composition of multiple ethnic groups in Northern Malawi has not been without political repercussions. Just as Easterly and Levine (1997) indicate that ethnically diverse societies are prone to internal

strife, Northern Malawi experienced political and cultural rivalries among its ethnic groups prior to colonial occupation.

The hallmark of instabilities in Northern Malawi ought to be traced to the Ngoni invasion of Tumbuka, Henga, and Tonga ethnic groups around 1855 (Vail and White, 1989). This resulted in deaths, experiences of cultural alterations, and displacement to places by these ethnic groups (McCracken, 1977). For instance, Tumbuka, who had been placed in Ngoni captivity, experienced a loss of their cultural values (Vail and White, 1989). This manifested through a severance of their allegiance to the Chikang'ombe deity; they underwent Ngoni baptism defined by the perforation of earlobes, and they embraced the patrilineal system of descent and inheritance away from the matrilineal system (McCracken, 1972). The Tonga, had to get the help of missionaries to ward off frequent raids by the Ngoni (McCracken, 1977). Tumbuka-speaking Henga escaped northward and settled among the Ngonde (Vail and White, 1989). However, autochthones resented and derided them as slaves and agents of Swahili slave traders (Vail and White, 1989). They also resisted Henga's growing influence by rejecting Chitumbuka, which the Scottish Missionaries had elected to use for instruction in schools and prayer in churches because of its use mostly among the Henga who had embraced missionary education (Vail and White, 1989). Instead, they

showed a preference for Chinyanja, which is widely spoken in Central and Southern Malawi (McCracken, 2012). Geschiere (2009: 4) aptly underscores the exclusionary impact of such attitudes by the autochthones, demonstrating that they have resulted into the “exclusion of strangers” in Ivory Coast, Congo, Cameroon, and Senegal.

Thus, the attribution of a unified ethnic and regional identity to the people of Northern Malawi is a challenging endeavour. In reality, however, an encompassing ethnic identity as ‘Tumbuka’ and a regional identity as ‘Northerners’ exist among the people of Northern Malawi. Arguably, such a unified ethnic and regional identity exists within Benedict Anderson’s (1983) *Imagined Community* thesis, which suggests, that although not everybody knows the other in the region, an image of their communion reigns supreme in their minds. This is reflected in practice by the people of northern Malawi’s reference to each other as *wakwithu*,¹ outside their northern regional geographical and cultural boundaries. They also acknowledge and embrace the ascription of Tumbuka ethnic identity, regardless of their original ethnic affiliation. This was apparent when a research

participant of Ngonde ethnic descent stated that “*ise ni baTumbuka imwe muli baChewa*” (We are Tumbuka and you are Chewa) (Grace Mwanjabe, FGD, Karonga, July 27, 2023). This statement was made to emphasise the cultural dichotomisation between Northern Malawi as inhabiting the Tumbuka and Central and Southern Malawi as a distinct home for the Chewa. Hence, despite being of Ngonde ethnic descent, this study participant identified herself as Tumbuka and attributed the Chewa ethnic identity to the researcher because of his Southern Malawian background.

An important force behind the emergence of the ‘Tumbuka’ ethnic and ‘Northerner’ regional identities included the work of the Scottish Missionaries in northern Malawi, which produced a Christian elite, consisting of teachers and catechists (Vail and White, 1989). As McCracken (1977:215) observes, this helped to create “an environment where new ideas could be successfully disseminated and new leaders could emerge.” Through extensive educational opportunities created by the Mission, culture brokers emerged and helped promulgate the use of the Chitumbuka language. Importantly, Chitumbuka gained the status of the region’s *Lingua Franca*, but since 1947, it existed alongside Chinyanja as colonial Malawi’s two national languages (Vail and White, 1989). Again, through extensive educational opportunities in Northern Malawi,

¹ *Wakwithu* colloquially implies a ‘homie.’ It is an expression commonly used by people from northern Malawi in their social interactions outside their regional and cultural boundaries. Its invocation is intended to inspire solidarity as a necessary weapon for moral support as well as to collectively confront any forms of adversity that those concerned may be subjected to in the ‘land of the stranger.’

the majority of the people were able to enter the colonial civil service as clerks and teachers (Vail and White, 1989), while others seized employment opportunities in the gradually but steadily industrialising southern Malawi (McCracken, 1977). McCracken (2012) reveals that the ability to seize employment opportunities constituted the only meaningful economic activity among the people of Northern Malawi. As such, it induced significant labour migration trends among them, mostly to Southern Malawi and other countries within the southern African region (McCracken, 2012). These trends persisted for some time, including during the immediate post-independence period, and resulted in the dominance of public workspaces by the people of northern Malawi. Vail and White (1989: 182) emphasise this point by demonstrating that in 1969, “out of 113 highest level Malawian civil servants, the northern region, with but 12% of the population held over 50% of the places.”

State discrimination: A theoretical survey

The portrayal of Banda as discriminatory should be situated within the theoretical debate on state discrimination. According to Fiske (1998), discrimination is a form of behaviour, procedure, or policy that directly or indirectly disadvantages members of certain categories compared with others, simply because they happen to be

members of that category. From this understanding, state discrimination can be understood as follows:

Practice for the state...to refuse, withhold from, or deny to a person any local, state, or federal funds, services, goods, facilities, advantages, or privileges because of race, creed, religion, sex, marital status, colour, age, physical or mental disability, or national origin, unless based on reasonable grounds (Montana Legislature, 49-2-38, 2023).

Alcorta et al., (2020) recognised the existence of this phenomenon in multiethnic societies. Importantly, they have been able to make theoretical differentiations regarding the forms of politically discriminated groups of people within the state. They identify two groups as (i) those who experience political discrimination in the hands of the state, and (ii) those without political power that are not explicitly discriminated against by the state. This dichotomy entails who those that experience political discrimination in the hands of the state are more likely to experience grievances that heighten the likelihood of a conflict. The apparently discriminatory practices of Hastings Banda towards the people of northern Malawi thus carried the possibility of such conflictual repercussions. This is because “groups that face active, intentional, and targeted discrimination by the state are significantly more likely” to raise more grievances “than excluded groups who do not face this explicit form of discrimination” (Alcorta et

al., 2020: 251). Gurr added that while economic and political disparities among different groups can give rise to collective grievances, more profound grievances will only occur if the marginalised group has been subjected to intense discrimination.

However, it is important to acknowledge that, to a considerable extent, state discrimination occurs against the backdrop of ethnic favouritism practices by those in power. According to Burgess et al., (2015), ethnic favouritism entails a situation in which members of the same ethnic group benefit from patronage and public policy decisions and receive a disproportionate share of public resources when members of their ethnic group control the government. However, Li (2018) appears to caution against the tendency to make wholesale consumption of such an understanding of ethnic favouritism. In agreement with Li's perspective, it is useful to understand ethnic favouritism within a multidimensional context underlined by the three questions. First, does ethnic favouritism primarily benefit the sitting president's fellow ethnic group members? Second, does it disregard those without ethnic commonalities with the president? Third, does it only benefit those without ethnic commonality with the president when they reside in areas where the majority are the president's fellow ethnic group members?

McGrath (2020) validated the pertinence of these three questions

by underscoring the role of ethnic favouritism as the primary foundation of political competition. This is suitably extrapolated by Bates (1983:152) in his argument that "ethnic groups represent, in essence, coalitions which have been formed as part of rational efforts to secure benefits created by the forces of modernisation, benefits which are desired but scarce. Thus, this viewpoint privileges the instrumentalist regard of ethnicity which tends to view ethnic groups as political coalitions formed to extract material benefits from others (Fearon, 1999).

A growing body of literature points to a prevailing tendency among political leaders in power to enact policies that tend to benefit their fellow ethnic group members (Li, 2018; Ejdemyr et al., 2018; Burgess et al., 2015; Franck and Rainer, 2012; Oucho, 2002; Hodler and Raschky, 2014). This tendency becomes responsible for the feeling of being at the receiving end of discrimination among those without ethnic commonality with their leaders. Ilorah (2009) summarises this phenomenon by suggesting that the behaviour of leaders in such societies inclines toward in-group solidarity, which benefits fellow ethnic group members and marginalises those outside this socio-cultural identity circle. Mamdani (1996) and Herbst (2000) concur with this perspective and consider it the cause of socioeconomic deprivation in many polities on the African continent.

However, it is not always the case that leaders would be bound to favour fellow ethnic group members. This has been suitably exemplified by Kasara (2007), who observed that in the 50 countries she studied, cash crop farmers who were ethnically identified with the sitting president faced higher taxes relative to those with no ethnic commonality. Similarly, a study by Kudamatsu (2009) in Guinea revealed that a change in the ethnicity of presidents did not affect the relative levels of infant mortality among the country's ethnic groups.

Nevertheless, a significant body of literature has demonstrated the extensiveness of the ethnic favouritism phenomenon on the African continent. Franck and Rainer (2012) found that ethnic favouritism is detrimental to primary education outcomes and infant mortality rates in sub-Saharan Africa. Specifically, those who do not ethnically identify with leaders appear to be negatively affected. Kramon and Posner (2016) used Kenya as an example of such a correlation. They observed that sharing the same ethnicity as the president during one's school-age years often translated into higher levels of educational attainment. Another Kenyan example of road infrastructure by Burgess et al., (2015) revealed that districts that share the ethnicity of the president receive twice as much expenditure on roads and have five times the length of paved roads built. Ahlerup and Isaksson (2015) aggregated data from

Afrobarometer surveys conducted in 2005 and 2006 to demonstrate that individuals belonging to the president's ethnic group, as well as those residing in the president's region of origin, have a lower likelihood of experiencing unfair treatment from the government. Amodio and Chiovelli (2016) found that individuals from the Zulu ethnic group in South Africa are more likely to secure employment in the agricultural sector and in municipalities where the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) holds the majority vote. Similarly, Walters et al., (2023) observed a correlation between ethnic favouritism and the provision of water and electricity infrastructure in South Africa. Separate studies by Hodler and Raschky (2014) and De Luca et al. (2018) reveal that the birth regions of incumbent political leaders experience higher levels of nighttime light density compared to regions not associated with current political leadership in a panel of countries. Dreher, et al., (2019) also found that the birth regions of leaders in power receive substantially more funding from China than other subnational regions.

One important explanation for ethnic favouritism is the leaders' quest for power, which they can only sufficiently obtain if they provide co-ethnics with public or private goods (Bandyopadhyay and Green, 2023). The desire here is to safeguard the interests of a significant electorate, which often succeeds because voters tend to hold strong preferences for candidates and parties associated with

their ethnic communities (Dionne and Horowitz, 2016). The construction, deconstruction, and creation of ethnicity by political actors in Kenya as a way of obtaining electoral support from fellow ethnic group members, in view of access to state resources, is one case in point (Lynch, 2006). Similarly, the pursuit of tribal hegemony by Zimbabwe's political actors has been critical in nurturing and prolonging the country's political and/or electoral culture (Gumbo, 2020). Furthermore, local tribal identities in Zambia have been pivotal in forming an axis of political coalition building and electoral competition (Posner, 1998). Anthony (2002) shows how tribal politics have been central in shaping electoral processes in Uganda. This Ugandan experience was validated in 2021 by an ethnically fragmented electoral map of opposition candidate, Robert Kyagulanyi, and President Yoweri Museveni (Taylor and Matsiko, 2021).

The appeal of ethnicity itself also forms a significant push for practice among leaders. In other words, it is easier to provide materials to ethnic kin than to other forms of groups such as class, religion, gender, occupation, party platform, or single-issue interest groups (Banton, 2008). The 'pork' analogy by Fearon (1999) also underlines ethnicity's appeal to leaders. Thus, ethnicity would limit the numerical value of those who would be able to share pork, a phenomenon that could be different if the criterion used was, for instance, party affiliation.

Arguably, these factors have been critical in supporting the scholarship, which has considered Hastings Banda to have been significantly inclined toward his fellow Chewa ethnic group members at the expense of the people of Northern Malawi. The following section focuses on Banda's policy choices, which underpin the perception of his discriminatory practices against the people of northern Malawi.

Language policy change

As alluded to, Chitumbuka was, alongside Chinyanja, Malawi's national language at independence (Kishindo, 1997). Arguably, the elevation of Chitumbuka to national language status in 1947 (Vail and White, 1989) solidified the position of the people of Northern Malawi and sustained their political and cultural relevance at the national stage. However, this position changed in 1968, when Chichewa acquired national and official language status alongside English (Kishindo, 1997). This entailed the official release of Chinyanja and Chitumbuka on the national ladder. Accordingly, a new language policy came to life through the following resolution:

Malawi [to adopt] Chinyanja as a national language; that the name Chinyanja ...henceforth be known as Chichewa; [and that] Chichewa and English [be made] official languages of the state of Malawi and that all other languages would continue to be used in everyday private life in

their respective areas (The Malawi Congress Party, 1985: 6).

The stated rationale for this language policy shift was Banda's desire to promote "national unity" (The Malawi Congress Party Resolution, 1985: 6). Nonetheless, scholarly interpretation of this move has often pointed to Banda's determination to annihilate the socio-cultural and political relevance of the people of Northern Malawi through the release of Chitumbuka (Vail and White, 1989). Specifically, Mkandawire (2010: 23) regarded the shift as a form of "cultural violence" perpetrated by Banda on the people of Northern Malawi. Kishindo (1997) appears to sympathise with scholars holding this view when he highlights the contradictions in Banda's language policy. Mkandawire (2010: 26) underlines this contradiction by arguing that any genuine desire to nationalise Chichewa should have entailed pushing it into "key areas such as parliament and education just like Swahili in Tanzania" and that Banda should have himself used Chichewa in his public addresses rather than needing the services of interpreters for his usually English speeches.

However, these concerns need not detract from the argument that Banda's elevation of Chichewa at the direct expense of Chinyanja and Chitumbuka was intended to advance his agenda for national unity. Indeed, this goal could not have been achieved if Chitumbuka were to be maintained on the national language

ladder. In other words, maintaining Chitumbuka could have implied the consolidation of the political and cultural importance of a specific ethnic entity over other ethnic groups in the country. Consequently, this could have resulted in other ethnic groups also pushing for the recognition of their languages at the national scale, hence adopting many national languages.

However, this does not suggest that a country has multiple national and/or official languages. South Africa in the post-apartheid era, with 11 official languages, is a useful case (Tshotsho, 2013). Nevertheless, Louw (1992) strongly contends that this phenomenon represents a legacy of the divide-and-rule policies of the apartheid regime, a model that clashed with Banda's aspirations for national unity through the adoption of one national language. Thus, Banda effectively corrected this divisive colonial policy, which was also pursued in colonial Malawi on the basis that the "spread of one dialect through the country would ... tend to merge the various tribes at greater rate, [which is] undesirable... [and] individualism of the various tribes [would] safeguard against any combined rising" (Vail and White, 1989: 164).

Four explanations help show that Chichewa was not elevated simply out of Banda's mere discontent with the people of Northern Malawi. First, Chichewa was widely spoken in the highly populous central and southern

regions of Malawi (Vail and White, 1989). In the same vein, Chinyanja possesses a significant lexical resemblance to Chichewa, thereby making its grasp easy among Chinyanja speakers. Chitumbuka, it was mainly confined to Northern Malawi, indicating that fewer Malawians were able to use it. This point is validated by the realisation that even within the Northern Malawian region itself, not everyone spoke (speaks) it. One member of the region asserted this in the following way:

Why do you force us to use Chitumbuka in this group? Do you know that our friends from Chitipa and other districts in the region cannot speak about Chitumbuka? Even myself, I am Tonga. I struggle to speak about Chitumbuka. I am more comfortable using Chichewa than Chitumbuka (Allan Mphande, personal communication through VON WhatsApp Forum, October 23, 2023).

This statement offers a clear testimony that Chitumbuka is not easily grasped by every member of the northern region of Malawi. Second, Chitumbuka maintained its *Lingua Franca* status in Northern Malawi. Evidently, both the Livingstonia Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian, and the Mzuzu Diocese of the Catholic Church in Northern Malawi continued to use Chitumbuka in their pastoral work (Kamwendo, 2005). Third, Chitumbuka was still being used in official public spaces. Chitumbuka literature through *Nyimbo*

za mmaboma continued to feature on the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (Kamwendo, 2000). Fourth, Banda, permitted Chitumbuka's use during official engagements in Northern Malawi. By allowing other speakers before him to speak in Chitumbuka and allowing the interpretation of his English speeches in Chitumbuka, he himself showed proficiency in Chitumbuka (Banda, August 25, 1972). The latter point was particularly evidenced by his diversion from English to emphasise a point, which he believed could be better grasped by his audience if he employed a Chitumbuka word or phrase (Banda, November 16, 1975). He also occasionally corrected any inaccurate interpretation of his English statements, providing the interpreter with appropriate Chitumbuka phrasing (Banda, August 25, 1972).

It is important to emphasise that Hastings Banda's skills in Chitumbuka resulted from him having Tumbuka traits. He emphasised this point when he argued that:

Chitumbuka is not my language; I am a Chewa. However, in Kasungu (his home district), we are bilingual. Many people ... speak both Chichewa and Chitumbuka, and I happen to be one of those because my grandfather spoke very little about Chichewa. He was a Tumbuka more than a Chewa by language. Therefore, I learned about Chitumbuka as a child. That being the case then, at least I know village Chitumbuka, not chiMishon.... Reverend Chinula used

to say that I knew Chitumbuka and that I pronounced Chitumbuka much better than many of the people... because they are using the missionary pronunciation of Chitumbuka and not true Tumbuka (Banda, November 16, 1975).

These sentiments reveal the fundamental cultural reality of the Banda. Specifically, they point to his sense of cultural inclusivity with regard to the people of Northern Malawi who spoke (speak) Chitumbuka. Indeed, Banda's ability to pronounce Chitumbuka perfectly suggested a deep immersion in Tumbuka culture, and his critique of the missionary version of Chitumbuka indicated his concern for maintaining linguistic purity and resisting external influences that may have altered the traditional Chitumbuka. Thus, Banda showed a strong sense of linguistic identity and commitment to preserving the traditional form of Chitumbuka. Given this, therefore, claims that Banda relegated Chitumbuka out of mere discontent with the people of northern Malawi, requiring careful re-examination.

Changes within the education sector

In the following years, the people of Northern Malawi became "over-represented in important positions" in public service due to the many educational opportunities they acquired during the colonial days (Vail and White, 1989: 182). Macdonald (1969:542) indicates that, "over two-

thirds of the students accepted for the initial intake at Blantyre Secondary School in 1940 were from the far north." Similarly, the composition of the first class pursuing a degree course at the newly established University of Malawi in 1965-1969 was dominated by students from northern Malawi (McDonald, 1969). According to Vail and White (1989), Banda was poised to curtail this dominance by the people of Northern Malawi in the education system to spread education opportunities across Malawi. Consequently, the education sector experienced significant shakes from the late 1960s to the late 1980s.

However, suggesting that Banda shook the education sector on the mere basis that it was dominated by the people of Northern Malawi may be factually misleading. It is important to emphasise that Banda was more inclined to meritocracy than to ethnic affiliations. He stressed this through his belief in "giving jobs or posts to the people who are best suited for those posts" (Banda, November 2, 1977). This was verbally corroborated by Banda's former cabinet minister, who recalled that "three permanent secretaries in the various ministries [he] I held were from the North. If Banda was biased against the people of Northern Malawi, these professionals could not have been in these ministries" (Former Cabinet Minister, personal communication, July 2, 2024). Hence, it is important to locate Banda's actions within his desire to counter tribalistic and nepotistic tendencies in the education sector,

which he argued was perpetrated by officials of Northern Malawian origin. In 1989, Banda was blatant about this reality when he warned the people of Northern Malawi “not to monopolise” public spaces because people from other regions were equally deserving (Boma Lathu, 1989).

In this regard, Banda institutionalised the quota system in 1969 and 1987, arguably achieving regional parity with regard to enrolment in public schools (Vail and White, 1989). However, Carver (1994) interpreted this move as only constituting a tactic to victimise the people of Northern Malawi. Galafa (2019) emphasises this perception by arguing that the people of Northern Malawi were denied their meritocratic right to attain education, benefiting from their ‘natural’ intelligence and enormous interest in education as a result of colonial legacy.

Nevertheless, prevailing evidence supports Banda’s pursuit of policy actions in the education sector as a way of countering ethnic favouritism practices by officials from Northern Malawi. One historian illuminated this point:

Kanyama Chiume in 1964 as a cabinet minister of education seized this opportunity to promote his *wakwithu* syndrome. He did this by offering every scholarship at his disposal to his kinsmen to study abroad. He did not stop there, and he ensured that most students selected secondary schools from

the north. This meant that many university spaces would also go to children from the north. He did this tactfully by devising a system whereby children in the central and southern regions would use black pens while the northerners would use blue pens during exams. This made it easy for the markers to separate sheep from goats. This became the genesis of most northerners dominating the academic sector, including many institutions (Historian, personal communication, in-depth interviews, Blantyre, April 26, 2023).

It was in this context that in 1989, Banda issued a directive that teachers were to teach in their regions of origin (Staff Reporter, 1989). This directive followed Banda’s belief that teachers from the North taught “to the best of their ability” only when in their own region and failed to replicate their efforts when serving in Central and Southern Malawi (Staff Reporter, 1989). The sincerity of Banda’s directive was arguably underpinned by three factors. First, the realisation that if teachers from Northern Malawi taught well in the Central and Southern regions, and given their numerical significance in these regions, there should have been a considerably competitive performance across the three regions. This should have yielded parity in the number of children selected from public secondary schools and the universities. Second, Banda appeared to have made the move without regard for its counter-productive effect. Specifically, Moyo (1992)

revealed that the move resulted in the Northern region benefitting more. According to him, the North enjoyed the 50:1 pupil-teacher ratio at the primary school level, which was in contrast to the 76:1 pupil teacher ratio in the Southern region. Third, the reassignment of teachers has resulted in a lowering of education quality in the country (Moyo, 1992). This is because the resources spent to effect the transfers could have been used to provide additional teaching/learning materials which would directly boost student achievement (Moyo, 1992). Hence, if Banda had indeed executed this move out of ill-intention against the people of Northern Malawi, he could have abandoned it after considering the devastating impacts of the move in the Central and Southern regions.

Transfer of the government seat

In 1975, Malawi's government seat was relocated from Zomba in Southern Malawi to Lilongwe in the Central region. Several factors necessitated this change. One included the fact that Zomba was deemed too small to accommodate further expansions and retained remnants of colonialism (Potts, 1985). Accordingly, it is possible to argue that Banda might have aimed to promote a sense of national unity by developing a new capital that symbolised a fresh start for the newly independent nation, rather than continuing to use Zomba, which was associated with colonial

administration. Furthermore, the lack of sufficient land in Southern Malawi and the surrounding districts, which had been leased by white settlers (Vail and White, 1989), might have also helped strengthen Banda's urge to look to Lilongwe to establish the capital there. In Banda's own words, Lilongwe's suitability as capital was underlined by its central geographical location (Banda, January 29, 1968). This entailed the provision of equidistance to those from the furthest points in Northern and Southern Malawi. Importantly, the relocation of the government city was recommended by an expatriate physical planning expert, who stated that the relocation would promote economic development and serve as the central region's centre of growth (Banda, January 29, 1968).

However, extant scholarship has regarded Banda's decision to move the capital as a signification of practices of ethnic favouritism (Connell, 1972; Vail and White, 1989). In particular, Banda's situation of the government seat in Lilongwe was believed to constitute the means of serving the interests of his Chewa ethnic kins, whose concentration is in Lilongwe and most part of Central Malawi. This scholarly regard resonates with similar views that have often associated African leaders with channelling development programmes to their home regions (Hodler and Raschky, 2014). Ahlerup and Isaksson (2014) show how Ivory Coast's Félix Houphouët-Boigny transformed his previously rural

birthplace, Yamoussoukro, into a national capital with mesmerising features such as an artificial lake populated with crocodiles, a six-lane highway, a five-star hotel, a large airport, and, arguably, the largest church in the world. Similarly, Meredith (2006) writes about Mobutu Sese Seko of formerly Zaire, who turned his small village of Gbadolite into a luxurious city often nicknamed ‘Versailles of the jungle’.

In the case of Hastings Banda, however, assertions of ethnic favouritism regarding this move provoke significant analytical interest. Connell (1972) suggests that the choice of Lilongwe was necessitated by its closeness to Kasungu, his birthplace, and generally because of the prevalence of the Chewa in Central Malawi. This viewpoint is supported by Kaspin (1997), who argues that Banda’s development policies were biased towards his home region. Chirwa (1998) emphasises this point by suggesting that Banda’s desire was to change the face of the region in terms of economic development because colonialists and Christian missionaries had neglected it the most educationally and socially. Hence, Banda was poised to ensure that the region became the focus of national development by allocating a substantial amount of financial and technical support at the expense of northern Malawi which remained socioeconomically stagnant (Chirwa, 1998).

However, evidence suggests that the decision to shift the capital was hatched during Banda’s days in Gwero prison in Zimbabwe before independence. Chipembere (1976) argued that no signs of ethnic favouritism existed in pre-independence Malawi. But again, McCracken (2012) has even suggested that the idea to move the capital was initially proposed by Dunduzu Chisiza from Northern Malawi, who was a planner by profession and a powerful righthand man of Banda at the time. It is also important to acknowledge that if Banda had so wished, given his immense political power underpinned by dictatorial tendencies (Rotberg, 2023), he could have easily established the capital in his home district of Kasungu, which is close to Lilongwe and has nearly similar topographical features similar to those of Lilongwe. Crucially, Kaspin’s (1997) use as evidence of the overwhelming electoral support Banda received from his ethnic and regional kin in the 1994 general elections as proof that he was indeed bent towards Central Malawi is empirically troubling. This is because, in the same elections, Bakili Muluzi won the majority of his native Southern region votes and Chakufwa Chihana triumphed in his home region, Northern Malawi (Englund, 2002).

Crucially, it is apparent that Banda’s own explanations for the relocation of the capital have not been sufficiently dissected. In other words, there have not been enough historical or other accounts to discredit the implausibility

of Banda's explanations on scientific grounds. In the same vein, Vail and White's (1989) work fails to recognise the value of other literature to achieve a balanced interpretation of Banda's policy decision on this matter. For example, an earlier work by Debora Potts (1985) on this issue adequately synthesises factors that were at play at the time. Therefore, making use of such work could have helped to offer Vail and White balanced perspectives regarding the issue. Similarly, Kayira and Banda (2022) fall into a methodological inconsistency, as evidenced by their attribution of views by Connell to Potts. A quotation from the work is helpful in illustrating this point: "Deborah Potts has argued that Banda might have [moved the capital because] Lilongwe is near Kasungu district, Banda's birthplace" (Kayira and Banda, 2022: 288). This contrasts with Pott's acknowledgement in her work that this was not her own view. Again, a quotation from Potts' work is helpful in demonstrating this point:

Connell, for instance, has speculated upon whether Lilongwe was chosen partly as the result of regional or ethnic loyalty, as it located near Kasungu where Banda was born, and it is also near the core area of ethnic group, the Chewa" (Potts, 1985: 188)."

Therefore, it is possible to argue that this methodological error by Kayira and Banda was deliberately overlooked since it suitably served in spinning the narrative regarding

Banda's ethnic favouritism towards his ethnic kin in central Malawi.

However, it is important to emphasise that the determination of a capital city's location is a multifaceted decision that is influenced by a combination of historical, geographical benefits, political tactics, economic goals, and strategic factors. The positioning of each capital city mirrors the distinctive context and priorities of its respective nation when the decision was made (Mayer et al., 2016). The relocation of capital forms a part of a complex political decision-making process. This involves a wide range of strategic, economic, logistical, and administrative considerations. Diverse stakeholders, such as economic planners, urban developers, and international advisors, also need to converge to share their technical expertise (Former Cabinet Minister, personal communication, in-depth interviews, Lilongwe, July 2, 2024). Accordingly, a comprehensive understanding of such decisions requires a critical evaluation of historical records, planning documents, and government archives from the relevant period. These valuable sources become useful in unveiling the motivations and actors involved. Banda's own explanations for relocating the seat of government from Zomba to Lilongwe, including other pieces of evidence are not far from this reality.

Banda's pursuit of ethnic and regional parity in the public spaces

The three issues discussed above have been less incentivised by Banda's ethnic favouritism practices at the expense of the people of Northern Malawi. Thus, the regard that Banda made these policy choices for the sake of national unity by eradicating ethnic and regional disparities. To a considerable extent, Banda pursued these policy choices to ward off the tribalistic and nepotistic tendencies prevalent among the people of Northern Malawi. Empirical evidence supports Banda's move in this regard. For instance, once research participants in Southern Malawi's Machinga district considered the people of Northern Malawi as "self-centered and they tend to numerically dominate in work places" (Josephine, personal communication, FGD, Machinga, June 11, 2023). This was corroborated by a research participant in Lilongwe, who stated that "even when we meet with these people at Kamuzu Central (Referral) Hospital as guardians, they cannot mingle with us. They congregate with each other. They look down upon us" (Elizabeth Thawe, personal communication, FDG, Lilongwe, June 26, 2023). Interestingly, some people in Northern Malawi also acknowledge the prevalence of tribalistic and nepotistic tendencies among themselves. This was apparent when one of them accused his co-ethnicity:

Putting a more tribal approach to issues than development. The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest. I am a northerner, a pure northerner. However, I am able to see some things that this is not right. I have publicly accused my tribe. Some of the people from the Central Region and Southern Region [ask me:] are you from the North? I say yes, [I am] a pure northerner. Our attitude [as northerners] was bad. This destroys the country. Because we feel that we are the only favoured ones, no no no! (Nyirenda, in-depth interview, 1 June 2023).

These sentiments underscore the prevalence of tribalistic and nepotistic tendencies among people in Northern Malawi. Of course, it is possible to argue that the sentiments originating from the people of Central and Southern Malawi may have been influenced by the glaring north-south cultural divide of Malawi. Posner (2004) offers a useful hint regarding this cultural divide when he unravels the basis of cultural and political incongruity between the Tumbuka of Northern Malawi and the Chewa of Central Malawi. Importantly, the acknowledgement of tribalistic and nepotistic attitudes among fellow northern regional group members validates the basis upon which Banda sought to enhance national unity by removing ethnic and regional disparities in public spaces, and enhancing ethnic and regional parity in public spaces. Indeed, the acknowledgement of

tribalistic and nepotistic tendencies from the horse's mouth is more valuable and binding than hearsay. Payne (2008:13-15) considers such type of acknowledgement as self-confessions, which sustain their value by the fact that they "are more than mere political talk: they not only say something, they do something. They interpret [and shape] the meaning of an event.

Therefore, while the aspect of meritocracy, owing to the people of Northern Malawi's better educational achievements, played a crucial role in their acquisition of employment opportunities in large numbers, their dominance in public spaces was arguably increased by their tribalistic and nepotistic tendencies. In other words, their strong cultural and regional identity, coupled with the reality that labour migration was their only reasonable economic activity (McCracken, 2010), served to fence out people of other ethnic identities from labour opportunities. This tendency thus resulted in an ethnic imbalance in the labour market, which only colonial authorities at the time could have corrected. However, as Leys (1975:199) demonstrates, the failure of the colonial regime to do so was not necessarily due to its regard for meritocracy. Rather, it was their tendency to foster "tribalism ... by discriminating in favour of some tribes and against others, especially in their own recruitment policies." This strategic reluctance by the missionaries and colonial authorities

to alter the status quo privileged the people of Northern Malawi and, arguably, encouraged tribalistic and nepotistic tendencies among them. This was acknowledged by one of the people of Northern Malawi that:

All positions in Malawi belonged to people from northern Malawi. And when recruiting, they went for the qualified, who turned out to be people from the north. This is why [and how] we practice nepotism: I am in Blantyre [in southern Malawi]. I am educated. A coethnic from the north is seeking employment. And he or she is qualified too. I am the employer. I cannot employ anyone else more than my fellow northerner. Mind you, it is *ku mmvera* (in southern Malawi) where people get employed. So a lady like this one, goes to look for employment in southern Malawi, you see, we northerners are united. I will say, oh, you have come here for work. I work at a such and such company; we will be recruiting on a such and such date. I will automatically recruit her. I cannot sideline her because she has come from very far. It is better I sideline you a southerner because you live within the same region, you can even foot to your home place. Yet the northerner cannot foot from his or her home to southern Malawi).²

This sentiment reveals a complex interplay of critical elements, such as regional favouritism, ethnic loyalty, and the practicalities of job-seeking and acquisition. Clearly, this underscores the regional dominance

² Baxter Mwangonde, FGD, Karonga, July 27, 2023.

in employment spaces by the people of Northern Malawi, who were more educated at the time than their counterparts in other regions. Importantly, it reveals the reality regarding the prevalence of clear bias among the people of Northern Malawi with regard to recruitment, which was bent towards assisting fellow members of the Northern Malawian region. This underlines the aspect of favouritism and nepotism in job recruitment, a phenomenon that was enhanced by the realities of geographical and cultural unity. In the construal of the people of Northern Malawi, this regional bias was justified as a form of solidarity and support for each other owing to rich historical background of constructed unity (Vail and White, 1989).

It is important to emphasise that, contrary to Banda's portrayal as being discriminatory against the people of Northern Malawi, not everyone from this region toed that line of thinking. This article reveals that others from this region hailed Banda's distributive politics. This became apparent in the following acknowledgement: "President Kamuzu Banda was like our biological father. If we told him we experienced famine, he would give us white maize flour. He fed us without regard for regional or district identity" (Catherine Mwandenga, personal communication, FGD, Karonga, July 27, 2023). This demonstrates the contrasting portrayal of Banda between ordinary

masses and prevailing scholarship. This realisation is helpful in exposing the absence of merit, particularly by the academic literature on Banda's perceived discriminatory practices against the people of Northern Malawi.

Conclusion

This study challenged the portrayal of Banda as having practiced discrimination against the people of northern Malawi. It concludes that Banda's policies, often perceived as discriminatory, were aimed at balancing representation and opportunities in public spaces, which were dominated by the people of Northern Malawi. This suggests that Banda's actions were driven by the desire for equity rather than bias. Hence, this article underscores the need to adequately understand the historical and socio-political context in which Banda's policies were formulated and implemented. Doing so could be helpful in highlighting the complexities and nuances of his leadership and decision-making process. Indeed, while Banda's policies aimed at enhancing parity, the prevailing academic literature has clearly highlighted how they have been adversely interpreted. Therefore, this article has been valuable in contributing to the ongoing debate on what constitutes state discrimination and how to distinguish it from efforts to achieve equity.

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Women and the Military in Uganda: An Analysis of Mama Chama in the National Resistance Army Bush War, 1981-1986

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Abstract

This paper focuses on *Mama Chama*, women who participated in the National Resistance Army (NRA) bush war in Uganda, through the lenses of historical contestation and varied views on the involvement of women in frontline military operations and warfare. While *Mama Chama* remains part of Uganda's historical trajectories, their roles during the civil war and their influence on women's post-war military involvement in Uganda remain less documented and analysed. This article draws on debates about gender integration in military service, historical comparative analysis of documentary data, and participant soldiers' responses to demonstrate that women's participation in military activities is not new and that women's experience in Uganda's bush war and state military services debunks the narrative that women's role in the military and its operations are not salient. The findings reveal that Uganda's armed struggle ushered in a new era, offered a firm foundation, and opened space for the recruitment and participation of women in the national military. This study contributes to civil-military relations research on women as soldiers or civilians and their influence on gender equality in the contemporary military in Uganda and beyond.

Keywords: *Mama Chama*, Military, Women Integration, Uganda.

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Introduction

The National Resistance Army (NRA) civil war, locally represented as “the bush war” in Uganda, 1981-1986, is seen to have altered the hitherto existing history of women’s exclusion in military services, specifically warfighting and frontline roles. The NRA recruited, trained, and deployed a group of women rebel fighters and war supporters from the start to the end of the war. Known as *Mama Chama* in Uganda’s military lingo, these women bush war heroines acted both as champions of support roles, which are dominantly acknowledged as women’s roles, as well as frontline fighting roles that had historically been largely for men. Ironically, women’s engagement in military activities has always been underestimated in the literature. Where their involvement is acknowledged, women’s contributions are often blurred by gender stereotypes, misrepresentation, and gendered patriarchal cultural purviews that place men as more suitable actors in military operations. Proponents of women’s involvement in military activities argue that women have historically been excluded from participation as combatants, have been relegated to the sidelines of military operations, and that fighting remains the ultimate test of masculinity. This exclusion of women offers men a chance to assert their control, capacity for domination, conquest, and even immortality (Wheelwright 1989; Holm 1992; Kuhlman 2008; Nuciari, 2006; Sherrow 2007; Macdonald, Holden and Ardener 1987). Existing

historical facts, however, reveal that women’s participation and influence in military activities are as old as the military institution itself.

Attempts to understand the historical accounts of women’s involvement in the military draw from Skocpolian Historical Sociology, which underscores the importance of appreciating of the relationship between personal activity and experiences as something that is continuously constructed in time and space to inform social change. Historicising women’s participation in military services, in particular *Mama Chama*, is therefore to advance the premise that understanding past patterns and alternative trajectories of women’s inclusion or exclusion in military operations is relevant for present choices and informs current gender relations in the military (Abrahams 1983; Calhoun 2003; Skocpol, 1984). The study of *Mama Chama* is grounded in the historical accounts of women’s participation in military activities from ancient times to the present world. I further contextualise women’s engagement in the military from pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial military, civil war, and liberation movements.

I focus on *Mama Chama*, women who supported and participated in the NRA civil war of 1981–1986 and the post-civil-war military in Uganda. Beyond the accounts of the heroes and heroines of the war, the extent of women’s participation in Uganda’s military allows us to gain salient insights into how the history

of *Mama Chama* has shaped women's participation and influenced gender relations in Uganda's contemporary military and its operations. This paper responds to the question: 'How have the wartime roles of *Mama Chama* during the war influenced the debates about and trends of gender integration of women in Uganda's post-bush-war military?'

To answer this question, I draw on debates about gender integration in military service, historical comparative analysis of documentary data, and the responses of participant soldiers to historicise women's role in modern Uganda's military landscape. I show that the subject of women in military activities is not a new phenomenon. Where participation took place, available records demonstrate that women have served with courage, honour, bravery, determination, and heroism, and have accomplished remarkable feats on battlefields. The narrative that makes women's participation in the military and its operations appear to be insignificant and portrayed as rendering only support roles needs to be debunked. Available evidence indicates that the civil war in Uganda ushered in a new era and offered a firm foundation for women's recruitment and participation in today's military.

Historising Women in the Military

Women's historical participation in military activities is richly documented in Greek mythology of the Amazons,

which shows that women played key roles on the battlefield, as did men. The Amazons were fierce warrior women, courageous and skilled in battle, as the mightiest Greek heroes of the greatest Greek City State, Athens (Mayor 2014; DeMott 2006; Arbor 1991; Geary, 2006; Ardener 1987). The Amazons are presented in Greek history as women warriors who fought Heracles and other heroes in Greek myths and were long assumed to be an imaginative invention by the Greek. The story of the Amazons is widely documented in Europe, South America, West and North Africa, and Asia, referring to women fighters. While the Amazons are presented in literature as fictional mythologies, evidence shows that they were real human beings and women. Evidence from archaeological discoveries of battle-scarred female skeletons buried with weapons proves that warlike women existed among the nomads of the Scythian Steppes of Eurasia (Mayor 2014). But at the same time, the mythology about women as fighters and as equals of men is met with all kinds of discourses.

The Amazons, for instance, were referred to as "equals of men, single-breasted women, a society of self-governing women living apart from men. Some Amazons are pictured as a tribe of man-hating virgins or domineering women who enslaved weak men and mutilated baby boys, a vision that led to speculations on how Amazon society reproduced" (Myscowski 2013:37). The varied definitions of Amazons enable us

to analyse how women have been diversely involved in military affairs, but also withstood the perceptions against cultural stereotypes that emphasise male domination and treated any woman's exceptional engagements in military affairs as out-of-the-norm. Wide-ranging accounts of female warriors across the globe, in which scholars have documented accounts of women who have excelled in warfare are summarised here.

In ancient China, the successes of the great Chinese woman, General Fu Hao, an Emperor's wife who lived during 1250–1192 BC, are referenced. Fu Hao is said to have led an army of three thousand to win decisive battles. Most of Fu Hao's military accomplishments were listed on two hundred tortoise shells according to the records excavated in 1936 by archaeologists (Mayor 2014:414). This discovery validates the pre-existing historical records. Moreover, many women fought battles in the early centuries of British history, the notable ones being the English Girl and Lady of Mercians. The English Girl in the 6th Century commanded 100,000 men and 400 ships at the mouth of the Rhine River to attack Varni, conquering Radigis, the King of Germania, who would eventually become her husband, though she later annulled their marriage. The other warrior woman is the Lady of the Mercians, whose reign spanned between 911 and 918 AD. The Mercians fought many expansionist wars in Britain and are remembered for their daring military adventures

that involved years of victorious advances, battles, and occupation of territory (Kathleen 1997). The two women exhibited remarkable heroism and remain prominent figures in British history.

In Brazil, women in the Tupian and Arawak communities in Northeastern Brazil reportedly fought alongside male warriors and led separate women's sodalities, which may have been confirmed in European folklore (Myscofski 2014). In the Black Jacobins, women who are former black slaves in Haiti are historized to have broken the patriarchal norm in defense of their freedom during the Haitian Revolution of 1780 and the early 1790s, which made Haiti the first Black Republic in the Americas to have acquired independence from a European colonial power (Cyril 1989). During the two successive world wars, women were reported to have been active actors in many countries (Pegler 2004; Maninger 2008; Nuciari 2006; Honey 1999). Women were heavily deployed in defense industries in the USA, France, Britain, Germany, and the Soviet Union to support the production of ammunition. Others fought on the frontlines. In addition, the publication, "When the War Was Over", a mirror view of the roles women played in the world wars, states:

During the war years, women were active in armed conflict, supporting troops in the field, and participating in resistance movements. They had been

victims of political oppression and violence, bombs, and sexual aggression, and abuse. They looked after families, shouldered unpredictable responsibilities, endured harsh living conditions, and sustained personal loss (Duchen and Bandhauer-Schoffmann 2000:1).

The World Wars undoubtedly disrupted traditional gender roles when women were brought into formal employment and inclusion in the traditionally male domain (Higonnet et al., 1987; Duchen and Bandhauer-Schoffmann 2000), thereby breaking women's domesticity and exclusivity of wars and the public sphere to men.

In the Philippines, history is written about two beauty queens - Remedios Gomez, also known as Kumander Liwayway, and Teofista. In particular, Liwayway is identified as a daring female military commander who established her reputation by leading successful military attacks against the Japanese during World War II (Lanzona, 2009). After the war, she rejoined the Huks in what is known as the Huks Movement, in their struggle against the new Philippine Republic. She quickly re-established herself as a skilled military commander, once again leading a number of men in the mountains of Arayat, but this time, fighting fellow Filipinos. These stories reflect the significance of women as agents of revolutionary struggle in the postwar Philippines;

yet most studies of the Huk rebellion have overlooked the important role these women played in the movement (Lanzona, 2009). Even when the Huks movement was defeated in the late 1950s, it brought to the fore the ability of women to shape the vision of war and liberation movements.

In Africa, stories of women warriors can be traced in the scholarly work of historians. Women's active involvement and roles in war date back to ancient Africa. The chronicle of African women is rich and diverse. First, Queen Ahhotep 1 of Egypt (1560–1530 BC) is believed to have played an important role in her country's liberation struggle during the Hyksos period (Juma 2009). The Hyksos comprised a small group of West Asian individuals who ruled Northern Egypt, especially the Delta, during Queen Ahhotep's reign. Due to her bravery, Ahhotep was awarded the "Golden Fly of Valor" by the Pharaoh of Egypt (Singer 2009; Sayce and Maspero 2023). Moreover, accounts of African warrior queens - Amanirenas, Nzinga Mbande, and Nanny are detailed in *Female Warriors who led African empires and armies* (Pitchon 2022).

In present-day Sudan, Queen Amanirenas ruled the Kingdom of Kush from 40 B.C. to 10 B.C. She is believed to have successfully led an army of 30,000 fighters against the Roman Emperor Augustus. Another Heroine historicised is Queen Nzinga Mbande (1583-1663), who led the Mbundu people in present-day

Angola to fight against the Portuguese and the expanding slave trade in the 17th century (Miller 1975). In present-day Jamaica, Queen Nanny (1685-1750) led the Jamaican Maroons community, largely composed of formerly enslaved Africans, to fight for freedom. A Ghanaian by origin, Queen Nanny is believed to have possessed exceptional leadership and military skills. The Dahomey Amazons (from modern-day Benin) are also documented to have formed a key group of female warriors in the national army, and their equivalents in Monomotapa (modern-day Zimbabwe) were renowned for their courage and efficiency (Juma 2009). In modern military history, Gaddafi's Amazonian Guards in Libya, also known as the Revolutionary Nuns, present an example of women in military service at the front on the continent.

Moreover, African women fighters and their roles in wars are largely seen in anti-colonial struggles and later liberation movements. In 1900, Yaa Asantewaa, the Queen Mother in the Ashanti Kingdom in modern-day Ghana, led the Ashanti War, also known as the War of the Golden Stool or the Yaa Asantewaa War of Independence, against the British Empire (Boahen & Akyeampong 2003). In Nigeria's Women's War of 1929 and Cameroon's Anlu uprising of 1959, women exemplified their abilities to champion war and military activities (Falola and Paddock 2011, Umoren 1995, Wipper 1989, Drew 1995). In 1905, in the nationalist

resistance struggle in German East Africa, Tanganyika, both men and women warriors organised themselves to fight the Germans in the famous Maji Maji rebellion (Shiraz, 1984; Rushohora and Kurmann, 2017; Rushohora, 2005). Women warriors, such as Nduna Mkomanile Namabengo, File, and Sanyasi, who played key roles in the course of the Maji Maji rebellion, have been documented (Elijah, 2010). In the Maji Maji, women were largely involved as diviners and foretellers in the rebellion. In Kenya, women fighters, largely drawn from Kikuyu, actively fought in the Mau Mau movement. For instance, Muthoni Ngatha was designated as a Field Marshal. Wagiri Njoroge was crowned Queen of Mau Mau which occurred around 1953 at the time that Queen Elizabeth II was being crowned in the United Kingdom (Kanogo 1987a:89, Kanogo 1987b, Mboka 2012). The accounts of the Mau Mau movement clearly show that women lived in the forests as guerrillas and in various other capacities, against the traditionally held stereotypes that they were weak for war.

In pre-colonial Uganda, armies were formed to defend clans, chiefdoms, kingdoms, empires, and later, the colonial state. The armies were recruited and structured on a system of patron-client relationships, age-sets, and age grades, which dictated that junior warriors were predominantly male (Bernardi 1952, Omara-Otunnu 1987). The strict division of labour confined women

to domestic work (Kodesh 2010) and support roles whenever any external threat, most especially during inter-clan wars or expansionist wars in kingdoms, occurred. While boys and men were designated as warriors to defend society, including the protection of women who might be vulnerable to invading enemies, the notion of boy warriorship played out in all societies, including modern times. In Acholi, for instance, males of fifteen years and older formed the fighting force, and the essential condition of members of the force was being able-bodied males. In Bunyoro, the standing Army, Abarusula, although multi-ethnic, never integrated female guards. In Buganda to date, the Royal Guards, known as “the Bambowa”, Kabaka’s protection soldiers, were and are still largely male. Moreover, it was compulsory for all males in Buganda to serve in the army as and when called upon (Kyerere 1990, Omara-Otunnu 1987). The societal designation of defence roles to men and the protection of women was and is still the order of Kingdoms and Chiefdoms in modern societies.

Given the limited scholarship on women in the military in Africa, the history of women warriors in Uganda is generally not well documented, even though the country experienced decades of war and instability. For instance, in Kingdoms and Chiefdoms, women are known to govern along with their husbands (kings), which puts them in rear command positions for the Kingdom

Guards (Hanson 2002). Like in other Kingdoms, Dahomey and the Asante, Queen mothers in Buganda were co-rulers with the ruling chiefs (Barnes 2006): “Queen Mothers were not just women rulers; they were women who ruled by doing for kings the things that mothers did for their sons, which included supporting, advising, defending, protecting, punishing, and nurturing” (Hanson 2002:220). Moreover, in the early 1900s, historical records point to women leading anti-colonial resistance in present-day Kigezi under the Nyabingi Movement. A woman called Muhumuza was the first known woman resister who mobilised a cross-section of Banya-Kigezi into armed resistance (Rutanga 1991). After Muhumuza’s defeat, other women fighters, such as Nyinabatwa and Kanzanyira, assumed leadership of the Nyabingi Movement against colonial rule. Another widely referenced example is that of Alice Auma, also known as *Lakwena*. In August 1986, Alice Auma, a young woman from Gulu in northern Uganda, began raising an army called the Holy Spirits Mobile Forces (HSMF). The HSMF marched through numerous districts of modern-day Uganda from Kitgum to Lira, Soroti, Kumi, Mbale, Tororo, and as far as Jinja in eastern Uganda, where they were defeated at the end of October 1987 (Behrend, 2000). In her struggle, Auma can be categorised as the Ugandan Amazon who led men to battle and registered remarkable success, albeit short-lived.

The limited number of women warriors in Uganda highlights the fact that there is a remarkably small number of women who have directly engaged in military operations. Uganda's historical trajectories speak to the fact that during the colonial and post-colonial eras until the overthrow of the Obote II government in 1986, no women are reported to have served in military operations. It was during and after the National Resistance Army/National Resistance Movement (NRA/NRM) war that women were allowed into the military, although the police had embraced them since the 1960s. In a twist of history, during the NRA war, women were recruited to fight on the frontline and support the war. The resilience of women in the bush war set the stage for a new era of women in Uganda's military. The women who supported the armed struggle were later called *Mama Chama* or Mothers of the Party, a concept buttressed in this paper.

Underpinnings of Women Exclusion and Inclusion in Uganda's Military

The historical foundations of the evolution of military institutions show that the contemporary military in Uganda has evolved over the years from the pre-colonial to the colonial army, to anti-colonial movements, to the post-colonial military, to rebel movements, and later the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) as we have it today. Due to this

evolutionary trajectory, I contend that the foundations of a country's military influence men's and women's participation trajectories. Accordingly, the post-independence military in Uganda inevitably inherited pre-colonial and colonial gendered military practices that excluded women. The laws and policies that informed the post-independence military in Uganda and other British Colonies were largely colonial in origin, patriarchal in nature, and excluded women's participation in the military. The recruitment, training, and deployment procedures for military service during colonialism barely changed and continued to influence the status and operational processes of military missions. As such, the contemporary military in Uganda and all formally colonised societies that are now defined as 'independent states,' were formed from the patriarchal division of labour that was informed by the army of the pre-colonial and colonial cradle, where women had no or limited space to participate.

As such, it is important to acknowledge that militaries would over-represent the circumstances under which they emerge. According to Kyerere (1990:66), "armies are institutions whose character and activities shed a revealing light on the nature of the societies from which they sprung." Thus, the participation of women as militants in pre-colonial societies can be viewed as a result of their indigenous traditions of discrimination against women. The organisation and operation of

their armies reflected patriarchal social practices which entrenched masculinity as the embodiment of power for the defence of society.

When colonialism was introduced in Africa, the colonial army was structured along the lines of the Victorian Army and was an exclusive institution for men. The legal evidence is clear and unambiguous. The 1895 Uganda Rifle Ordinance, King's African Rifles Ordinance 1902, and their associated amendments, limited military service to men. For instance, in Section 19 of the King's African Rifles Ordinance 1912, enlistment, discharge, and service in the military were specifically referred to with the male gender. It states that,

Every man who is enlisted, re-enlisted, or re-engaged or is a native officer is re-appointed in the regiment, as aforesaid, shall, prior to his being enlisted, re-enlisted, re-engaged, or re-appointed, make the following declaration and shall confirm such declaration by oath in his native language in such a manner as he may declare to be most binding his conscience (The Official Gazette 1912).

Other laws, such as the Military Forces Ordinance of 1958 and subsequently the Armed Forces Act at independence in Uganda, focused on men. The Act was later supplemented by the Legal Notice 1 of 1986 by the NRA which never referred to women as being part of the military. The major amendments

to Uganda's military laws were made with the enactment of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces Act, 2005 on 2 September 2005. On the nature of the Victorian Army on women participation in the military, it is quoted that,

The Army was deliberately designed for bachelors, and its regulations reflected traditional attitudes toward marriage, gender roles with domestic ideology, masculinity, and sexual behaviour...women lived on the fringes of the regimental community, tolerated as wives and daughters, and valued as prostitutes and casual workers (Kyerere 1990:67; Myna Trustram 1984).

This signifies that in the colonial cradle, women were never accepted as part of the military, and similar policies were fertilised in the colonised societies. Indeed, in Britain and other countries, there are records of many women who disguised themselves as men in order to join the military (Wheelwright 1989). However, the opportunity to serve would end when it was discovered that one had attained their military service status through disguise.

It is vital to note that during the colonial era, the guiding ideology was male domination of society, especially among those who tended to resist. African women find themselves under the structural constraints of both gender and racial discrimination. Consequently, many women joined

armed struggles, fighting for independence, believing that victory would not only liberate their nation but also provide women with greater freedom and opportunities. In other aspects, the colonial political economy is argued to have drastically altered gender relations and the role of women in the provision of security, relegating them to the domestic sphere (Juma 2009). This does not mean that women in pre-colonial Africa enjoyed the same rights as men; however, the scholarly consensus suggests that European gender roles imposed on African women relegated them to the private sphere of providing production labour in commercial crop farms and eroded some of their rights to engage in the defense of society.

In addition, the colonial army was driven by masculinity and martial characteristics, which informed recruitment criteria. According to Omara-Otunnu (1987:10),

the colonial authority did not attract educated men into the military at all for the first 60 years of its existence, and women were never identified as potential recruits. During colonial rule, the basic requirements for an African to be recruited into the army were a height of 5'8, speed and stamina, and the ability to easily open and shut one eye while the other remained closed.

Therefore, martial requirements for recruitment into the colonial military were highly unfavourable for women and lightly excluded them from the military and security forces. According to Major Iain Grahame, a British officer who made several recruitment tours across the country between 1940 and 1960, the record in his book shows that emphasis was placed on strong physique: Only the strongest and fit would be selected. Recruits would be made to stand against a stick notched 5'8, to run races, and to perform squinting exercises before their selectors. These requirements automatically excluded women in one way or another and alienated any woman who would have aspired to join the fighting forces.

The above narrative was emphasised in an interview with one UPDF Officer, who submitted that:

The colonial militaries that overran our fragile militaries in the colonies were, in terms of doctrine, forces of domination. The imperial forces and the nature of their doctrines were mostly male-dominated. He pointed out that “colonial forces came here and later moulded the King’s African Rifles into a male-dominated force. This is why, to confront these alien militaries, we had the later emergence of liberation forces.

It is also important to observe that structuring the colonial army promoted a division of labour that

was highly gendered. While men were designated to expand and protect the colonial government, women were left to concentrate on commercial agriculture by growing cash crops, mainly coffee and cotton, for the market. This nurtured women's involvement in domestic work as opposed to military service, which was viewed as much in the public sphere.

The Post-Colonial Military

Like other British Colonies, Uganda's military was constituted from the remnants of the British King's African Rifles (KAR) units. The issue of ethnic divisions formed a replica of the racial and marshal segregation that existed in the Western world, mostly in the Americas. For instance, prior to independence, the Kamba, Kalenjin, and Samburu ethnic groups dominated the Kenyan battalions of the KAR, with the Kamba in particular having been regarded by the British as a martial race (tribe) (Osborne 2014). During the 1970s, military heads were exclusively Kamba, Kikuyu, or British, except for the sole exception of one ethnic Taveta, who held the post of commander of the Navy from 1972 to 1978 (Osborne 2014). Likewise, in Uganda, Northern people, mainly the Acholi, Langi, and West Nile, dominated the police and the army, which practice was strengthened by the martial yardstick for recruitment (Omara-Otunnu 1987), adopted during colonial rule.

The martialisation of military activities was thus gendered. Most women were automatically ineligible to be members of the armed forces in colonial Uganda, negatively impacting their post-independence participation in military activities. Unlike in Uganda and other African countries which inherited colonial military structures, Uganda's military has grown in an environment of political instability (Rwengabo 2012; Kisembo 2021; Museveni 1997; Karugire 1980). The numerous political conflicts in Uganda denied the country the opportunity for the professional growth of the military, as has been the case with other politically stable countries. For instance, the consistent professionalisation of the Kenyan Armed Forces provided an environment that attracted female combatants, leading to the formation of the Women Service Corps as early as 1971. In contrast, Uganda was experiencing political and military upheavals which portrayed the military as a no-go zone for "peaceful women".

The Mama Chama in the NRA Armed Rebellion

The history of women warriors in Uganda is not well documented. While the country has experienced wars and instability over the last four decades, there is limited reference to women fighters. It was only during the NRA/M struggle in the jungles of the Luwero Triangle that women found their way to the ranks and files of the

fighting forces, thereby setting the pace of recruitment and employment of women as combatants. The embracing of the female gender among NRA fighters and their support agents led to the emergence of women cadres who largely played supportive roles in the struggle, later named *Mama Chama*.

In the NRA armed struggle, women who supported the struggle closely were referred to as “mothers” within this organisation. This shows that women were part of the struggle and played an important role. Moreover, the *Mama Chama* were strong women, mature in age, and most could not join the training. Like the Mau Mau in Kenya, they provided information, food to fighters, and property that contributed to the success of the armed war. They loved the military though their acts, and liberation was the reigning and motivating ideology. These included, among other names, Sankara, Late Jolly Rwakanenjere, Maj (Rtd) Gertrude Nanyunja Njuba, Mama Gumizamu, Late Maj. Olivia Zizinga and Late Malita Namayanja, Captain Janet Mukwaya, Joy Mirembe, and China Keitetsi. Other women joined the mainstream military, including Gen. Proscovia Nalweiso, Col. Joyce Kabanyoro, Brigadier Agnes Musoke, Lt. Col. Alice Kahwa, Lt. Col. Beatrice Kunihira, and Late Capt. Yasin Nakawunde. Future studies will explore other names of Mama Chama, numerous mentioned in media reports but with no documented evidence, such as Mama Kawempe, Maria Bata,

Sergeant Christine Nakiryowa, Lt. Night Nabunya, Commander Sarah Kamagoba, and Nalongo, among others.

Through interviews with militants, I explored who the *Mama Chamas* were in the context of the NRA’s armed struggle. In response, a senior female officer in the UPDF noted that *Mama Chama* were women who played support roles in mobilising and delivering food. This role was described as follows:

Mama Chamas were older women with strong hearts, who could not train with us. Such elderly women would have been in the military according to their hearts. They supported us in that way; that is why we used to call them *Mama Chama*. These were the ladies who had their properties to support the struggle financially, and they even used to give us food. They were very positive about the movement and contributed significantly to the NRA. So, such ladies became our *Mama Chama*, *Chama Cha NRA*, that’s the movement of NRA, and that is how we came up with the word. *Mama Chama*, like Mzee Malita, and others from Luwunga gave us cows. In Luwunga, we used to eat meat as meals, and cows were given by these people from the Luwero Bukomero-Kiboga area (P74: BGENF).

The Mama Chama were further described by another Senior Officer during an interview at the UPDF Headquarters in Mbuya, Kampala, who explained that they largely executed support work, although a few were part of the frontline. While some joined the mainstream military as fighters at the end of the war, the majority did not.

They were fighters but many did not participate in combat. They were female soldiers who were in uniform, had ranks, and were doing either staff work, or a few of them were doing command work. Most of them were doing staff work because, in the army, there is the staff branch and the command branch, and our ladies are effective in the staff branch. In liberation, not everybody is in active combat, but all of them are in the struggle. For example, being a midwife is regarded as a role within liberation. So, some did not become full-time soldiers in the sense that when we became a conventional force, they did not go into uniform, but they are freedom fighters (P76: MAJGENM).

The narratives about Mama Chama are unending but informative for appreciating women's roles in liberation movements. In a tribute to Mama Chama, the late Jolly Rwakanenjere, one cadre described her in an online posting, clearly

elaborating on how she played various roles in the war. Among these roles were cadres, support staff, nurses, and fighters. The Mama Chama enforced discipline and engaged in conflict resolution. The Mama Chama is described as follows.

... Mama Chama was a true NRM revolutionary but also a revolutionary guard ... A historical who cared to sow the NRM seed into the younger generation every day! ... was among the few women who took part in the NRA liberation war as a bush war hero! She was in the bush, not as a cook, not as a wife, not as a nurse, but as a soldier! ... was a soldier at the front. She was a fighter! But guess what? Her heart was kind-very kind! She was a no-nonsense tough woman, but she was quick to forgive and forget. When NRM cadres were fighting and bickering, Mama Chama would forge a way towards peace!" (Nameere 2021).

The narrative about the roles played by Mama Chama is further elaborated. When asked what Mama Chama meant to the NRA, a Senior Officer in the UPDF responded, indicating that women wielded a lot of respect and influence, which, by the nature of our policy, we look after them even after the liberation war. "The existence of the mothers of the organisation literally provided a mother figure to the soldiers, especially at a time when

we had young soldiers, we used to call them Kadogo. These women would be the mother figure now, but they also played a special role in giving the organisation or the liberation movement that motherly touch. Imagine when soldiers are moving with an old lady, there are things they will pose before they can do because of the presence of this mother figure” (P76: MAJGENM). In so doing, Mama Chama set an example for other women to join the military.

Mama Chama is an interesting component of Uganda’s historical storyline on women in military service, as they provided the foundations which inform the current posture of women’s participation in the Ugandan military. Some women joined the forces immediately after the war and were given regular ranks in the army. These included Mama Gertrude Njuba, who was promoted to Major; the late Olivia Zizinga, who died at the rank of Major; and many others. The institutionalisation of Mama Chama is deep in the UPDF to the extent that those who did not join the regular force after the NRA took over power in Uganda are today being looked after in their old age by the UPDF. It is clear that the recruitment of women into the military during Uganda’s War of Liberation set a new chapter for gender integration and women’s participation in the contemporary military in Uganda.

Discussion

Historical traces reveal a critical trajectory of women’s integration into military services that is reflected in contemporary militaries (Maninger 2008; Creveld 2001). For example, in the United Kingdom, the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 and the Equality Act of 2010 allow the armed forces to exclude women from posts where the military judgment is that the employment of women would undermine and degrade combat effectiveness. In Israel, women were allowed to have joint training with men in 2003, but only in the infantry force. In the USA, women were open to combat roles in December 2015, and in France, women can serve in all combat activities except submarines. In other countries, such as Australia and the United Kingdom, women were allowed to undertake frontline combat roles in 2013 and 2016, respectively. These examples reveal that women’s participation in the military is influenced by the country’s cultural context and legal and policy regimes.

Therefore, the issue of the small number of women in the military is manifest and prominent in the advocacy for inclusion against exclusionist debates. Like today’s military, a few women have historically stood out as heroines in male-dominated institutions in the past. The history of the Greek Amazons, the British Girl, the Black Jacobins in the Americas, the HUKs in the Philippines, and African warriors

in liberation struggles, women are identified and presented as minority actors. However, historical narratives reaffirm that women have always been part of military operations. However, their contributions are blurred by patriarchal societal norms that have shaped humanity in almost all societies worldwide. The stereotype of keeping women in subservience has been carried forward in perpetuity over centuries. It is also vital to note that the inclusion and participation of women in military activities cannot be described as linear progressions but as irregular patterns of incremental integration into military activities. As pointed out in regard to world wars, the desire for more fighting soldiers led to an increase in the number of women accepted into the military, thereby underpinning the drivers of women's recruitment across time and space.

It is vital to note that while history points to a more egalitarian pre-colonial society in Africa, the colonial military was largely patriarchal. The majority of the colonial army was for men not women. The Women Service Corps that came to the colonies were basically doing clerical and medical duties as supportive roles which institutional practices carried forward in post-independence countries. Therefore, colonialism exacerbated the gender gap in the defence and maintenance of security in the clans, kingdoms, and chiefdoms, where young and strong men were already an embodiment of defence. Colonialism

entrenched the historical exclusion of women from military activities, as was the case with the King's African Rifles, the designated official colonial army.

In analysing the trajectories of women in Uganda's current military and armed forces of other former colonies, the differences and similarities come to the fore. In Uganda, there was no protracted uprising of the magnitude and level of organisation of the Mau Mau in Kenya. The Mau Mau, as a pre-independence or anti-colonial uprisings, provides the historical foundation for women agency and cannot be divorced from post-independence military formations in Kenya. Similarly, in Uganda, the 1981-86 civil war is a comparable movement where women are seen to play similar roles as in the MAU MAU, both as fighters and offering support to the fighters. The Queen of the MAU MAU and Mama Chama in the NRA point to the early foundations of contemporary women in the armed forces in Uganda. The limited and existing data further indicate that the foundations for positive gender relations in Uganda's post-war military had roots in the bush war, where women were cherished and valued as an important component of the fighting forces, irrespective of their roles.

In the NRA/NRM, the masculine argument of protecting women places women in a subservient status. It is important to note that despite

women's contribution to the civil war, the female heroines of the war have been tied down to care, nursing sick combatants, searching for food, mobilising recruits, and sharing information, among others. Women's support roles for the fighters are very prominent. In the NRA/movement, the ability of women to recruit fellow women and men into the army constituted a form of positive mobilisation and appreciation of the roles that women play in building the military and conducting military operations.

Moreover, the NRA civil war in Uganda had many varied actors, but the component of Mama Chama presents a historical perspective of interest to the analysis of gender and women's inclusion in contemporary military and peace-building processes. Unlike colonial military recruitment or post-independence military, the liberation movements were more open and portrayed an all-gender embracing stance that attracted women to join the movement. In other words, the all-welcome ideological orientation in liberation movements can be credited for opening up the space for more women's participation in military activities, thereby breaking the exclusivity of the military as a male institution.

The description of Mama Chama as powerful in terms of voice and influence in society contributes to the strengthening of women's agency in the military and the deconstruction of masculinity. The positive relations

between Mama Chama and the NRA/UPDF can be pointed out to have lessened the negative construction of hegemonic masculinity that is associated with the military, thereby inspiring more women to join the military in the post-armed struggle period. On the other hand, Mama Chama, like the Queen of the Mau Mau depicts the gendered social relations of the military about a "woman" that traditionally emphasised peacefulness, mothering, care, and interdependence rather than violence. As in the NRA/NRM, Mama Chama cared for the hungry, angry, and wounded, but also the young ones known as the Kadogo (Nsereko 2021; Kalibala, 2022). The association of women with peace is therefore essentialised with reference to their roles as mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters. As alluded to in this paper, the roles that require women to be nurturers and life givers, preferably in the domestic context, play a big role in excluding them from the public sphere, especially where combatants are expected to lose their lives.

These notions of peaceful and generative femininity limit the space women can occupy within traditional security sector institutions and deny women agency within the military through the expectation that they will fulfil roles that support but are not actively involved in warfare. It should be acknowledged that placing women in combat roles creates tension between the feminist demand for equality and the culturally embedded

view of what it means to be a warrior, fighter, and personification of violent masculinity (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007; Tickner, 2001). It also fundamentally disrupts the combat taboo that those who give life (DeGroot 2001) should not take life, an inevitable expectation for soldiers given the nature of the military mandate. I acknowledge that women's experience of warfare and their participation in peace movements are still relatively uncharted areas, but this does not nullify the fact that the history of women's participation is as old as warfare itself. Similar to the *Mama Chama*, as more women join military institutions, a new era of women's inclusion is setting in for the transformation of gender relations in the military.

Conclusion

The *Mama Chama* constitute the flag-post for women's participation in Uganda's military beyond playing supportive roles. The documented narratives about women in the NRA counteract the dominant representations of women's suffering, endurance, selflessness, helplessness, and betrayal during the wars. Instead, women have fought in defence of peace in any given society. From the successes recorded by Fu Hao and others, we can hardly doubt that women have been and are active participants in military exploits. The stories of *Mama Chama* and others are alive to women's exhibition of bravery and courage.

However, it is vital to note that women in the military remain trapped in subservience. Compared to men, many women who have excelled on the battlefield remain undocumented or unrecognised. During hot debates in the early 1940s, on whether Black people, specifically women, should be freely allowed to join the military, Col. Eugene R. Householder, on December 8, 1941, is quoted to have said: "the Army is not a sociological laboratory" (Honey 1999; Bolzenius 2018). This statement emphasised racial exclusion and gendered discursive discourses that expressed the dominant ideologies that Blacks and women should not be in the military and that no experiments should be undertaken to prove otherwise. However, with the collapse of gendered barriers, the relations between women and men in military institutions and the roles they execute therein cannot be limited by sex differences but are convoluted by historical and social stereotypes of what men and women can do in society.

In many instances and in most countries around the world, traditional male-dominant ideologies intervene and prevent women's empowerment. Women who played warrior roles in liberation movements had to convince their male counterparts that they, too, were good fighters. This paper reveals the extent of *Mama Chama's* association with the NRA, primarily as support allies, with a few directly joining as fighters. Those who participated in active combat

diminished the negative narratives about women in the military. Rebel movements that pursue an open ideology regarding the recruitment of both men and women enable those, such as the crop of the Mama Chama, to constitute the foundation of the post-war military ethos. The current posture of women's participation in the UPDF is viewed in this light.

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Application of Narrative Analysis in Studying Youth Mindsets from a Socio-Cultural Perspective

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Abstract

The developing world is experiencing a youth bulge, with the majority of this youthful population in sub-Saharan Africa. In Uganda, youth account for more than 70% of the population. It is vital to empower this population of youth to gain the demographic dividend. The effect of a positive mindset on empowerment outcomes has been demonstrated, and the concept of mindset has been part of Ugandan youth empowerment ediscourse in the last decade but without clearly operationalising it. Several contemporary theories on mindset exist in the field of psychology; they view the mind and, therefore, mindset as the interior processes of a single individual. At the root of these theories is the assumption that the human “mind” can be measured and explained through experimental psychology, which emphasises the use of natural science principles applied to humans, to the exclusion of cultural influences. I argue that these conceptualisations of mindset do not provide an appropriate approach to understanding mindsets in an African context like Uganda, whose socio-cultural fabric upholds the aspects of community and “*Ubuntu*”. I propose a conceptualisation of youth mindsets from a socio-cultural perspective based on Bakhtin’s dialogical view of the mind, which explains the mind as emerging from narratives within the socio-cultural context. In this paper, I describe the methods I used to carry out a narrative exploration of youth mindsets using both structural and dialogical narrative approaches, thus operationalising the term mindset in context.

Keywords: Mindset, Youth, Narrative Analysis, Dialogism, Socio-Cultural Psychology

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Background

The developing world is going through a youth bulge (World Bank, 2017) with about 1.2 billion people under the age of 25 and, 90% youthful population which is struggling with formidable challenges is in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, 2023). In Uganda, youth account for more than 70% of the population (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2016). It is vital to empower this population of youth to gain the demographic dividend, as described by Lefko-Everett (2012), who otherwise describes them as a ticking time bomb. Indeed, empowering this youthful population has been at the forefront of the country's agenda, as explained in the Uganda Youth Policy (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development [MGLSD], 2001, 2016). The literature on international youth empowerment programmes demonstrates the efficacy of empowerment interventions that target the cognitive processes of youth alongside providing funds and skills (Lerner & Lerner, 2016; Youth Power, 2018). The effect of a positive mindset on empowerment outcomes has also been demonstrated (Ojo, Abayomi & Odozi, 2014; Polirstok, 2017; Verberg, Fenneke & Overbreek; 2018), although none of these studies have been conducted in Uganda.

A search of literature on the mindsets of youth in the context of empowerment, using multiple indexed journals, did not reveal any studies specifically targeting the concept of mindset in the Ugandan

Youth Empowerment context. Nonetheless, the concept of mindset has been part of Ugandan youth empowerment discourse over the last decade. The Ugandan 2016 youth policy, for example, was guided by the theme of “mindset change for national development” (Mukwaya, 2016), although the implementation strategies laid out in it are entirely economically focused. The mindset question was therefore only alluded to rather than operationalised. The youth's mindsets were not clearly explained or targeted for change, and therein lies the dilemma for youth empowerment programming in Uganda.

Recently, the Ugandan government took more concrete steps to address the issue of mindset among Ugandans through its National Development Plan (NDP) version III (National Planning Authority, 2020). The NDPIV Reference mindset fosters economic growth by shifting away from negative social norms and cultural practices. Although the NDP III and IV endeavour to describe what is wrong with the Ugandan mindset and lay out the steps that their architects believe would remedy this situation, the factors underlying and driving this mindset are not conceptualised with a local socio-cultural understanding in mind. Rather, they are premised on a view of mindset proposed by the Mind Education Programme based in South Korea and explained by the concept of “Who is not Me but in Me” (Park, 2017). Consequently, the

dilemma associated with not fully appreciating the nature of youth mindsets that need to be targeted for change persists.

Several contemporary theories on mindset exist in the field of psychology, which have been summarised by French (2016). These mainstream psychological views of mindset have long been criticised for undermining the contribution of the context within which the individual is operating (Cahan & White, 1992; Cole, 1995; Hermans & Salgado, 2010). They include cognitive, social, and organisational and positive psychology (fixed versus growth mindset) (Dweck, 2008). These conceptualisations of mindset described by French all have one common underlying aspect: they view the mind and, therefore, mindset as the interior processes of a single individual. These contemporary psychology sub-disciplines evolved from the founding of experimental psychology after Wilhelm Wundt's work in 1879 (Cole, 1990). This wave of psychology proposed that the human "mind" could be measured and explained through experimental psychology, which emphasises the use of natural science principles applied to human psychology (Cole, 1990). As Cole (1990) noted, Wundt also emphasised that this experimental approach to studying the human mind was not sufficient to understand how culture influences cultural processes. Despite Wundt's warnings, however, all psychological functions came to be studied through a unified

experimental methodology modelled after the natural sciences, complete with standardised questionnaires and psychometric tests (Cole, 1990).

I argue that these conceptualisations of mindset do not provide an appropriate approach to understanding mindsets in an African context like Uganda, whose social cultural fabric upholds the aspects of community (Kikooma, 2006; Mkhize, 2003; 2012). Therefore, I proceeded to propose a conceptualisation of youth mindsets from a socio-cultural perspective. I based my conceptualisation of mindset on Bakhtin's dialogical view of mind which explains the mind as emerging from the narratives within the socio-cultural context, and the individual constantly positions and repositions him/herself within these narratives. This paper describes a narrative exploration of youth mindsets in Buganda. I focus on the methods and approaches used to conduct the study and the rationale thereof. I start with the research approach, focusing on the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying the study. This is followed by the research design, which is qualitative in nature, and specifically, a narrative approach is taken. In this paper, I also describe several methodological decisions made in line with the exploratory and narrative nature of the inquiry. I examine the participant selection and research procedure, detail the validity and reliability measures supporting the study, and the key

ethical considerations for the study. I follow this with a description of how data were collected, managed, and analysed, specifically using the structural analysis approach and the dialogical narrative approach to answer the two research questions for my research which were: 1. What are the salient narratives within the social cultural and historical contexts of youth empowerment in Uganda? 2. How do youth position themselves within salient societal narratives around youth empowerment? Finally, I provide a brief overview of the results obtained using this methodological approach.

Research Paradigm

This study adopts a relativist stance in which ‘reality’ is seen as dependent on the ways we come to know it (Lyons & Coyle, 2016). Relativism is an ontological question; ontology deals with beliefs about the nature of reality, and reality from a relativistic ontology cannot be distinguished from the knower’s experience of it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Levers, 2013). In essence, reality is subjective and dependent on how we come to know it (Lyons & Coyle, 2016). Relativism as an ontological question contrasts with realism, the ontological assumption that reality exists independent of an observer or knower (Lyons & Coyle, 2016).

In this research I also take on a social constructionist perspective or framework, in which the world and ourselves is understood as built up through social processes, especially

through linguistic interactions (Lyons & Coyle, 2016) and as a product of particular cultural and historical contexts, is not fixed or necessary (Lyons & Coyle, 2016). A social constructionist framework focuses on examining the ways of understanding social reality that is available within a particular cultural and historical context and the implications they hold for human experience (Willig, 2013).

The social constructionist framework used for this research runs counter to the positivistic worldview that underlies a lot of psychological research and indeed the extant theory on mindset.

Positivism holds that the relationship between the world and our perception of the world is straightforward as long as our perception is not distorted, for example, by our vested interests in the things we perceive (Lyons & Coyle, 2016). Psychological approaches such as the ones that gave us cognitive views of mindset and the positive psychology views of mindset (French, 2016) assume that it is possible to obtain accurate knowledge of the world... “provided we can adopt an impartial, unbiased, objective viewpoint” (Lyons & Coyle, 2016, p. 26).

Research Design

To understand the broad patterns of youth mindsets, set as they are in their socio-cultural and historical context, I used a qualitative and specifically

a narrative inquiry approach (Durdella, 2018). Narrative inquiry is a relatively new design in qualitative research compared to ethnography, phenomenology, and discourse analysis (Butina, 2015). It is both a view of people's experiences and a qualitative design for studying these experiences over time and in context (Clandinin & Caine, 2013). The choice to use narrative inquiry is based on the contribution of this approach to research that seeks to appreciate people's complex interpretations of their experiences (Ospina & Dodge, 2005). This method captures the context of the research and allows the representation of various voices in the phenomenon of interest. As such, narrative inquiry is viewed as the appropriate method by which to explore the socio-cultural and historical narratives and processes that have influenced youths' mindsets, based on their youths' interpretation of their life circumstances.

The specific approach used in this study was narrative constructionism (Sparkes and Smith, 2014). This narrative approach conceptualises human beings as meaning makers who use narratives from their socio-cultural world to interpret their experiences, make sense of who they are, and communicate ideas (Lyons & Coyle, 2016). These narratives, consistent with Bakhtinian thinking, do not "belong" to the individuals who use them but are passed down from their social and cultural communities (Bakhtin, 1984; Lyons & Coyle, 2016).

A key characteristic of the narrative approach important to understand for the current study is that narratives are the resources available by culture and social relations from which people construct their personal stories and understand the stories they hear (Lyons & Coyle, 2016). Narratives provide people with templates or scaffolding to build and organise their own stories. Even when people tell stories that are seemingly very personal, these stories do not originate from inside their minds but are instead put together from the narratives that surround them (Lyons & Coyle, 2016).

The narrative constructionist approach used in the current study differs from another narrative approach, termed the narrative constructivist view. This is an individualistic approach that conceptualises narrative as a cognitive structure or process found inside the mind (Schiff, 2013). The narrative constructivist view is more similar in its underlying perspective to the cognitive psychological views of mindset that have already been rejected in the current study.

Participant Selection and Procedure

The sampling strategy I used to select participants was purposive (Byrne, 2004; Palys, 2008). Purposive sampling signifies that the researcher makes strategic choices about how, where, and with whom to conduct their research, based on the research objectives (Palys, 2008).

To obtain a wide variety of viewpoints on beneficiary experiences in the programme, participant selection within the selected empowerment programs was based on maximum variation sampling, as described by Pals (2008) as a type of purposive sampling. Maximum variation purposive sampling allows the researcher to access a variation in perspectives, ranging from experiences that are viewed as typical to those that are more extreme in nature. The maximum variation was considered at the level of respondents, as described in the data collection section below.

Data Collection

Three participants were selected from each of the three youth empowerment programmes in Buganda. These included i) Uganda Youth Livelihoods Programme, a Uganda Government initiative that started in 2015 to empower youth through livelihood support, skills development, and infrastructural support. Beneficiaries of this programme are generally older, out-of-school youth between the ages of 25 and 35. ii). The Mastercard

Foundation scholars programme: This is an American-founded scholarship programme that offers financial aid to academically bright but economically disadvantaged youth in Uganda to obtain University Education. Beneficiaries of this programme are undergraduate students, usually between the ages of 18 and 23. iii) The CottonOn Foundation Education scholarship programme, an Australian based programme operating in the Rakai district of Uganda that seeks to empower youth through education. The programme targets children and youth in primary and secondary schools. This study focused on secondary school graduates above age 18.

From each of these, three participants who had completed the programme were selected: these included i) a beneficiary whose story is likely typical of the expected programme outcomes; ii) a beneficiary whose story represents remarkably good outcomes; and iii) remarkably poor outcomes on the empowerment programme.

Table 1: Study Participants

Cottonon Foundation (Rakai) All in S6 Vacation Ages 18-21	MasterCard Foundation (Kampala) Graduates (2019-2020) Ages 23-25	Youth Livelihoods Program (Kalangala) Small business owners Ages 25- 30
FGD* 5 female 5 Male	FGD* 5 female 4 Male	FGD* 4 Female 5 Male
KII 1: Male (Average performance at UACE)	KII 1: Female (2 nd Upper, steadily employed)	KII 1: Female (owns small salon, normal progress)
KII 2: Female (Excellent Performance at UACE)	KII2: Male (2 nd class, unemployed)	KII2: Male (Boda Group chairman, both failure and success on programme)
KII 3: Female (Poor performance at UACE)**	KII3: Male (2 nd class, many retakes, self-employed)	

*FGD's were used as a basis for selecting KII participants, Findings are not included in the final analysis

**This interview was removed from the final analysis for ethical reasons

Quality Control: Validity and Reliability

Since narrativisation assumes a narrator's point of view (Reissman, 1993), the "Historical truth" (Spence, 1982, p.30) of the individual narratives is not the primary concern is the current study. Nonetheless, Noble and Smith (2015) provide some methodological considerations that can ensure the trustworthiness of findings in qualitative research, and some of them were applied in the current study, as explained below:

Accounting for personal biases which may influence the findings,

this was done through a continuous process of reflexivity to ensure that my reading of participants' narratives was not unduly influenced by my personal experiences and position. To further explain the possibility that my own background may influence my reading of the participants' stories, my personal story is summarised below, followed by an analysis of how this background may influence the analysis of participants' stories

I was raised as the youngest child of a single mother. My parents separated when I was in Primary Three, and this left my family and I with considerable financial

constraints. My mother struggled to provide the best education that her meagre resources could buy for her youngest child. This was ostensibly to empower me. As a result, I attended some of the most expensive primary and secondary schools in Uganda at the time. Despite my mother's efforts to empower me, I struggled with feelings of inferiority and feeling "Not good enough". This came as a result of constantly comparing myself to my peers at the expensive schools I attended. They seemed to be richer and had both parents as far as I was concerned that they were better than me. The effect of this negative self-view on my mother's empowerment efforts was disastrous. At its height, my negative self-view morphed into a full-blown depression during my advanced level of education. In Senior Five, I was constantly ill, but medical examinations could not find anything medically wrong with me. I also kept hearing a voice in my head that insisted that I should do things to make myself "worthy". This involved constant prayer and fasting. Due to my intensely Christian background, I named this voice "god" and continued to do whatever this voice ordered. This continued to the point where I was ready to drop out of school in Senior Five to become a street preacher; this is what "god" was ordering me to do so that I could be "worthy". Fortunately, a close friend started to counsel me and challenged my beliefs about myself and insisted that the voice I was hearing was not God. This is when I started to recover,

and my health and grades improved. I went on to successfully complete my A-level education and obtain a successful university education, and I am currently a lecturer and psychologist who supports various youth empowerment programmes around Uganda.

In the story above, I explore my own experience with the concept of "voice", and how it can negatively affect the empowerment process. This experience put me at an advantage in that I am able to relate to the participants' stories. My position as a psychologist who supports various youth empowerment programmes also provides the advantage of being able to reflect on the participants' stories in juxtaposition with the objectives of various youth empowerment programmes.

By the same token, however, I had to constantly check that my position did not bias my reading and analysis of the participants' stories. Some of the factors that I had to keep in mind to ensure that they did not create bias were my background as a child from a poor economic background that could create over-identification with participants and reduce objectivity; my current power position as both a lecturer and psychologist that could reduce empathy with the young people's experiences; and the fact that I am female while some of the respondents were male could be grounds for some gender biases. Being aware of these potential biases helped me to constantly reflect

on my analysis and assumptions to reduce this bias. The fact that I am a Muganda who was studying Baganda also deserves mention in the assessment of my positionality. My understanding of language, culture, and idiomatic expressions was an asset rather than a hinderance to the analysis of the interview transcripts. Other methods to maximise validity and reliability in qualitative research have also been used as mentioned below.

Acknowledging biases in sampling and ongoing critical reflection on methodological decisions to ensure sufficient depth and relevance of data collection and analysis. The sampling in this case was purposive, based on which respondents were available and willing to share their life story; the research therefore makes no claims to generalisability.

Meticulous record keeping, demonstrating a clear decision trail, and ensuring the interpretation of data are consistent and transparent. This was done by keeping a research journal of all ideas that came up during the course of data collection and decisions made along the way such as what to include as “data”.

Including rich and thick verbatim descriptions of participants’ accounts to support the findings. This is clearly demonstrated by keeping the participants’ verbatim accounts in the presentation of their life stories after the process of structural narrative analysis.

Respondents were invited to read and comment on the life stories developed from their interviews and to ascertain whether the final themes and concepts created adequately reflected what they shared.

Data Management and Analysis

Data analysis can be viewed as a process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of data collected (Miles & Huberman, 1994). First, all recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. This process was aided by a research assistant that I trained, After the verbatim transcription was completed by the research assistant, I also reviewed the transcripts and edited them following the transcription conventions laid out by Silverman (1997).

Repetitions and comments were removed to obtain a free-flowing narrative from the participant. My field notes were used to clarify unclear sections. The full transcripts obtained through this process are presented in the appendix.

It should be noted here that the data management and analysis processes overlapped; for example, right from the process of reading the verbatim transcripts, I was taking note of the emerging ideas that formed the participant’s narrative. In addition, structural narrative analysis (a process described as an analytic approach to storied data (Labov, 1982), where full, meaningful stories are obtained from what the respondent says) was

also used to make sense of the large volume of data obtained. Structural narrative analysis, as explained below, should therefore be understood as both a data management and data analysis process.

Structural Narrative Analysis

To obtain the participants' account understanding of the empowerment process and an account of their behaviour, I summarised the transcripts of each of the individual interviews into "narratives" according to Labov's (1982) structural approach. I also selected structural narrative analysis because it allowed me to obtain a broad overview of the stories and, therefore, identify emerging themes across stories (Smith, 2016).

According to Labov, a fully formed narrative contains an abstract (a summary of what the narrative is about), orientation (participants, setting, and time orientation), complicating action (turning points or crises in the story and what sense the participant makes of them), evaluation (significance or meaning of actions, or the attitude of the participant), resolution (the outcome of events), and coda (the end, and may mark a transition to another narrative). The evaluation is of key importance for this study because it focuses on the meanings and significances of actions and the attitude of the narrator (Labov, 1982) which can provide insight into the narrator's mindset.

It should also be noted that not all narratives contain all the

elements, and the elements may occur in varying sequences in some narratives (Reismann, 2003). Within the stories included in this research, the reader will notice that some narratives contain sub-plots representing different periods in the respondent's life. I did not analyse these sub-plots separately, but kept them as part of the whole narrative of the respondent's life story. Below is an example of a narrative obtained through the above process, the story of Kalema (pseudonym).

The Chapatti-selling Graduate: Kalema's Story

Plot Summary Taken to a high-class secondary school after growing up in a poor, rural area, Kalema always compared himself with his rich peers. This comparison led him to give up on doing medicine at university and chose to do agribusiness so that he could employ himself and earn money faster. At the time of the interview, he had lost his entire tomato growing investment and was selling chapatis, but was confident that things would get better; he had no qualms about his current position because no one in his current neighbourhood knew about his university education.

Kalema (not real name) comes from a humble background; he was raised by his father after his parents separated because they were from the same clan. His mother left his younger sister and Kalema to take care of his grandmother and father. He went to a primary school in a small

town where his father was working and always obtained a good grade. This good performance continued into secondary school. Kalema and his father at first did not believe that the BRAC representative who asked Kalema to apply for a scholarship with BRAC was serious. Although sceptical, he applied and was called for an interview which he passed. BRAC offered to cover “everything” pertaining to Kalema’s secondary education. From a humble school in a village in south western Buganda, BRAC enrolled Kalema in a high-class international school for his advanced level education.

Kalema wanted to do sciences for his ‘A’ level, but the school administrators and other teachers strongly encouraged him to do arts because sciences “were not for everyone”. He insisted and did Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

... “when I joined (school name) they were admiring us that we’re are doing sciences eeehh scincers... you people you have brains because we found in the school they were only two biology students... seven were doing chemistry and physics and others were doing arts. Even the Director of Studies, when you would go to apply for PCM or PCB, they would say, “Aahhh people, will you manage these courses? Even teachers would ask, “ Ehhh PCM?... You got 13 from (name of A level school) ... where is it located?” Finally, the DOS said, “Okay let me give you your course with time never know you will

change,” and when things become hard, you come back to my office and I give you another course.

During his time at the expensive International school, he continuously compared himself to other “rich people’s children” who did not seem to need to work hard in school because they already had businesses waiting for them at home. One of his friends was the manager of a water-bottling company in Kigali. He was also aware that other students looked down upon him because of his poor economic status. However, he took solace and pride in the fact that he was an “academic giant”, who other students also admired.

“Then, students ...they thought we were of the village... you know students could be on tablets on weekends tapping Wi-Fi ... they could even look at us badly... we could go round in our poor clothes ... we had one cloth for the week. But now these students started admiring us after term 1 when they pinned our points... I think the worst was 12 and others were in 17 points 18 “eehhhhh!” They said, “You people! That is when the school woke up (laughs).

He was also comforted by the fact that his tuition and school needs were covered by a scholarship, and he never needed to go home for school fees. Although there was a temptation to behave in a layback manner concerning academics like his rich peers, the scholarship directors always reminded Kalema about his humble

background and why he had come to school.

“...they used to tell us know where you came from, the students were chiller but me as me

... they used to tell us know where you came from do not just come here and waste time and the environment takes you... they used to counsel us. They would say we are giving you everything but do not get spoilt and know where you came from, know your family... knowing what your parents go through and know why we have brought you here ... that one I think helped us not to get taken away by the environment.

Kalema was also been assigned a mentor by the BRAC programme. This mentor kept Kalema straight and narrow, so to speak. He wanted to make sure they succeeded because he too was from a humble background. However, Kalema still compared himself to the rich kids, and this comparison led him to an agribusiness course at the university. He felt there was no need to struggle with biology and pursue a medical degree, yet he could do agriculture which to him was nearer to the experience of Uganda, and he could employ himself. As he explains,

“...I applied for agri-business because my biology was not good at A level and it could not enable me go for medical courses so I said now... ehrrrrrr and that life at Hana changed me ...I would see sons and daughters of big people they are just

chilling and what they know is to run business at home... so now why should I suffer with books... medical course five years (laughs) there was that social life I think... so reaching Senior Six, Biology became hard for me and I could not change it... now I said people are here their families are rich and students are just chillaxing... me why should I go for heavy courses at campus?... let me just go for the one which is in the environment... as in Uganda as you know, our backbone is agriculture... that's when I started to like agriculture, at senior six when biology is becoming hard for me. I said, now let me just go for a course at Makerere which might be profitable in daily life... it's in the environment and you cannot suffer with the environment because also agriculture is where you can start business ... other than other businesses where you need experience.

Kalema was accepted at Makerere University, and his education was once again paid for by a scholarship under the MasterCard Foundation Scholar's programme. As a “scholar” (as MasterCard beneficiaries are referred to at Makerere) Kalema received not only tuition and stipend, but also talks from different speakers about a number of issues that would better his academic and career journey.

Kalema eventually graduated with a second class degree. He decided to start his self-employment by growing tomatoes. He felt he did not need to look for a white collar or “Big” job

because many of his fellow scholars were also doing similar small ventures and were not ashamed. Moreover, he had been told in a number of the talks he received at Makerere that his career did not necessarily have to follow the path prescribed by his degree. He reasoned...

“I have seen people like even my fellow (MasterCard) scholars, someone is loading matooke from Isingiro and is moving on trucks at night and brings them here to this side like Busega market and Kalerwe, so I said if now this one is doing that. And other people during our training tell us what you studied is actually not what you do...”

He therefore used the money he had saved from his MasterCard stipend to rent land and plant tomatoes. He rented land in an area far away from his home village, partly because that is where he was able to acquire fertile land, but also for his later reasons; nobody knew him. Thus, he started his agribusiness venture, but unfortunately, the rains did not come on time, and he lost his entire investment. He did not want to go home empty handed and he stayed around the area looking for something to do while waiting for the situation to improve.

“...I’d gotten some good land that side and had prepared land because I was going to do tomatoes... but now the season changed. It rained between February and May.

Many farmers faced constraints because the season changed, people

prepared land and others planted, but things did not come up. So I got stuck from there...that’s where I said, “Now what next?” I had gone there just to farm; the good land was there because around Kampala and my home area I could not get good land for cultivation. So when the season failed I said, “Now let me begin life...I can’t go back home!”

He got a job with a man in the neighbourhood who was making and selling snacks like chapatis and eggrolls, and earned between six and twelve thousand a day which catered for his feeding and other living expenses. This was a stopgap measure for his survival while he waited for things to change, as he explained:

“During those times when I was preparing my land, there was a man around there... he did not have workers so he could tell me, “Please stay for me here as I first finish this... sell for me this...”. Because I was not busy all the time, we were just there waiting for rain. Later, when the (agriculture) business collapsed, I had to learn what he did...because I saw I could do nothing else by that time other than just first helping this man to give me something to eat. That’s how I joined, but originally it was not in my mind.

When asked about how he deals with people’s attitudes towards his current work, Kalema said he did not mind this because he knows that it is temporary, but no one in that neighbourhood knows that he is a graduate.

“People did not know about my background although I’m a graduate or what they did not know about me... and me I did not want to over expose off my academic levels or what... because now I thought people now can start judging you saying, “Now you see this man is a degree holder now look at the business he’s doing”. I did not get many people talk about me because they did not know me... I was new in the area, so I just kept doing something to earn a living for that time.”

“I did not get scared that aahhh the project had collapsed and what I was doing according to my academic level because by that time

I said, “Now what next, let me just earn a living things will work out with time... yeah, I did not mind about my academic levels with what I’m doing now.”

Narratives with a similar structure were developed for all seven interview transcripts. Summaries of the other six stories are presented below. All names used are pseudonyms. The full stories are provided in Appendix 1.

Leave Mathematics immediately: Mukasa’s story

Mukasa wanted to do sciences, specifically mathematics at ‘A’ level. When he did his first Mathematics test, the teacher returned his test script with the words “LEAVE MATH IMMEDIATELY”. Although embarrassed, he persevered and went on to perform well in mathematics.

Needing a father’s blessing: Nantaba’s story

Nantaba was raised by her mother after her parents separated. Nantaba’s father disliked her because she had taken mother’s side and constantly embarrassed her at school. She worked hard to pass her senior six so that she does not shame her mother who worked so hard to support her, but believed she might never do well in life because she did not have her father’s blessing

Choosing overalls over suits: Muwanguzi’s story

Muwanguzi learned entrepreneurship at the tender age of twelve to support himself and his brother. He missed several years of school, but still performed well at the secondary level, earning him a place to pursue a mechanical engineering course at Makerere University. When he graduated, he first got a white-collar job but soon quit starting his own company, much to the disappointment of his mother and girlfriend.

Do not get married before we benefit from you: Namuddu’s story

Namuddu was raised by her maternal relatives and learned to motivate herself despite the negative views that they had about her. After graduating from Makerere University with a second-class upper degree, she defied her relatives and mother to get married to a man who was working as a driver rather than work so that her relatives could benefit from what

they viewed as their “investment” in her or be independent, as her mother thought she would be.

***Earning my father’s approval:
Nalunga’s story***

Nalunga got pregnant and dropped out of school in S4. Her boyfriend started for her a salon and introduced her to the Youth Livelihood Programme. Now relatively successful in her business and has earned the approval of her father who was disappointed that she had wasted his money when she dropped out of school.

***Prepare the youth before you
support them: Sebudde’s story***

Sebudde obtained Youth Livelihood funds twice. First, he bought a cow which died. Next, he started an association of boda boda riders and is now a successful association chairman who mentors other younger youth in life and business. He insists that youth must be prepared before they are empowered.

To obtain insight into the social cultural and historical narratives that respondents pick on to construct their own life stories (Objective 1); the positions that respondents took on in relation to these narratives (Objective 2); the actions respondents took based on the narratives that framed their experiences (Objective 3); and the participants’ outcomes on their empowerment programmes (Objective 4); I critically reviewed and deconstructed relevant sections of the transcripts and participant life

stories (now structured according to Labov’s narrative structure).

This is in contrast to taking them at face values. In this process, my point of view and knowledge of the social and cultural context were brought to bear on analysis and interpretation.

To facilitate this process, I carried out another level and type of narrative analysis, the dialogical narrative analysis, as explained below.

Dialogical Narrative Analysis

A dialogical narrative analysis (DNA) examines how a story is combined in terms of the narrative resources used by the teller to construct their own story (Smith, 2016). DNA goes beyond the narrative resources that the teller uses and also focuses on the effects of telling the story or what the stories do for the narrator (Smith, 2016; Frank, 2010a, 2012). However, the latter part is not the focus of the current research. In this case, DNA was specifically used to tease out the broad narrative resources in the respondents’ socio-cultural and historical settings that they drew on to frame their experiences and tell their stories. Narratives in this research focus on the language that respondents use to frame their experiences, as narrative as language is representative of the meanings that are shared within a particular society (Kikooma, 2006).

Carrying out DNA typically begins with obtaining the story from available sources such as interview transcripts, and “coming to grips with

the story” (Smith, 2016, pg 220). This process, which gave rise to a complete narrative, was achieved using Labov’s structure, as described in the previous section. The next step in creating a DNA which opens up the analytical dialogue involves *asking questions* (Smith, 2016) of the narrative. The questions that the researcher will use depend on the research questions they seek to answer. In the current research, because the aim was to tease out the narrative resources that respondents use to construct their own stories, I used specific resource questions (Smith, 2016) to further analyse these narratives. The resource questions used in the current research were as follows:

- a) What resources do storytellers draw on to shape their experiences?
- b) What narrative resources shape how their story is told?
- c) How does the story reiterate, borrow or counter these narratives?

I used these questions to obtain responses to both research question one (What are the salient narratives within the social cultural and historical context of youth empowerment in Uganda?) and research question two

(How do youth position themselves within these narratives?) of the current study.

The illustration in Figure 3 below is a screenshot showing the close reading and reflections done for each transcript while asking resource questions as per dialogical narrative analysis.

Based on the responses relevant to these research questions, I elicited themes from the participants’ stories, as explained by Smith (2016). For example, in relation to the first research question on the narratives that participants used to frame their stories, multiple themes emerged, such as narratives of hope, resilience, success, and narratives related to validation.

According to the process described by Smith (2016), the next step would be to summarise the narrative trajectories that participants’ stories took; were they stories of progression, decline, or stability? However, this summary does not meet the needs of the current research, which seeks to understand the narratives of participants at a deeper level.

Figure 3: Illustration: Asking resource questions

<p>It was in senior three that Mukasa got a sponsorship opportunity with Cottonon Foundation. He was grateful for the opportunity to have his school fees paid for, although his mother struggled to pay for his other school requirements, because Cottonon Foundation did not provide them. He however persevered with school because he did not want to let down his mother who constantly reminded him to remember where he came from.</p> <p><i>“...she told me that I should know where I am coming from and I should not be over taken by the storm of growing up ... being an adolescent... not being taken by all that but I should first remain where I am studying from. That really gave me a challenging time because I had not to do what I wanted in order to be what I wanted to be. I would love also to leave but whenever I remember those words I go the other way round of getting back to the line so I am not easily taken by the distractors ...”</i></p> <p><i>“... I hear them every day in my mind so whenever that gets to me... it's like they open my mind every time I think of them and I think of being a good man, being a good man who has to work hard such that where I am coming from doesn't resemble where I am going... or where I am heading to. So I try to work hard so that my future looks different from my past. Whenever I just hear the voice I see it that it is not good where I am coming from... the situation at home, the poverty, the way how life moves at home... so whenever I remember that where I am coming from is not good I just want to work hard so that I live in a future that looks better”</i></p>	<p>Lynda N Remember where you come from...Many respondents reference the same e.g. Kalema. For Mukasa, it pushes him to work hard to escape his background. For Kalema and Namuddu, it was sort of remember where you come from so that you do not let your parents down? Is there a difference in the way young people respond to this statement?</p>
<p>At school, one of Mukasa's favorite subjects was Mathematics. He got good grades in it at his Uganda Certificate of education, also known as ordinary or "O" level. He wanted to do mathematics at his Advanced or 'A'. Level. However, chances for getting into the math class were slim. Mukasa felt that the teacher did all he could to make the math class as small as possible. In this effort, Mukasa was the casualty of a very embarrassing incident as he narrates</p> <p><i>“...There was a teacher who used to ask many things... he was looking for a way to reduce the number of people in the class so he wanted to do everything to make people scared so that some people get out of the subject and he remains with a little number... which is maybe easy for him to mark. He was looking for a way to reduce the number of people doing math and then... what I can say ... he gave us a tough paper, although I had the passion for doing math... the remark he made on my paper... I remember I had got 35% and he wrote on my paper “LEAVE MATH IMMEDIATELY!”. I had love for the subject and I felt like I can't do anything without math when I was selecting for subjects because I had passed it so well in O level. When I looked at that statement I almost felt so I was wondering... how are they going to see me getting back to class?...”</i></p>	<p>Lynda N June 10, 2021 Leave math immediately is similar to sciences are not for everyone as told to Muwanguzi and Kalema.</p> <p>Reflection 1. how does this relate to government's efforts to increase STEM students? 2.Only boys in this sample tried out sciences, and they all faced the same statement: sciences are not for everyone. How does this relate to society beliefs that boys are better at sciences than girls? 3.Also Muwanguzi depicts some kind of bias about girls doing sciences...or at least points out how it affects their chances of being perceived as feminine and "marriageable"</p>

Instead of focusing on the narrative trajectories of the stories, I paid more attention to the themes emerging from the participants' stories. I subjected these multiple themes to what Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) refer to as “Subsuming particulars into the general” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014, p. 250). Miles et al. (2014) note that it is sometimes necessary to cluster together smaller themes into a more abstract and wider encompassing concept based on the research questions one is trying to answer. As such, I subsumed the multiple themes coming out of the narratives that participants used to frame their experiences and tell their stories into larger categories,

including narratives of Resilience, Identity and Validation. Figure Four illustrates and summarises the analysis process from the structural narrative analysis, dialogical narrative analysis, and obtaining major themes subsuming particular subthemes into more general themes.

A summary of results obtained from the narrative inquiry

Figure 5 provides a visual summary of the major themes and subthemes that emerged from the narratives and stories presented by the respondents. The major themes were resilience, identity, and validation.

Figure 4: Data analysis summary

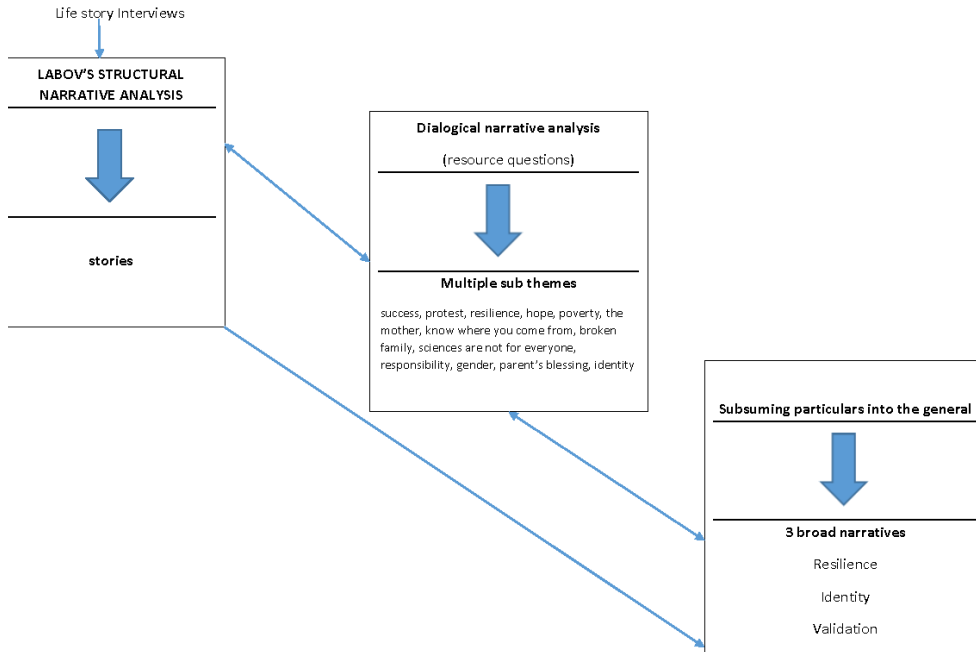
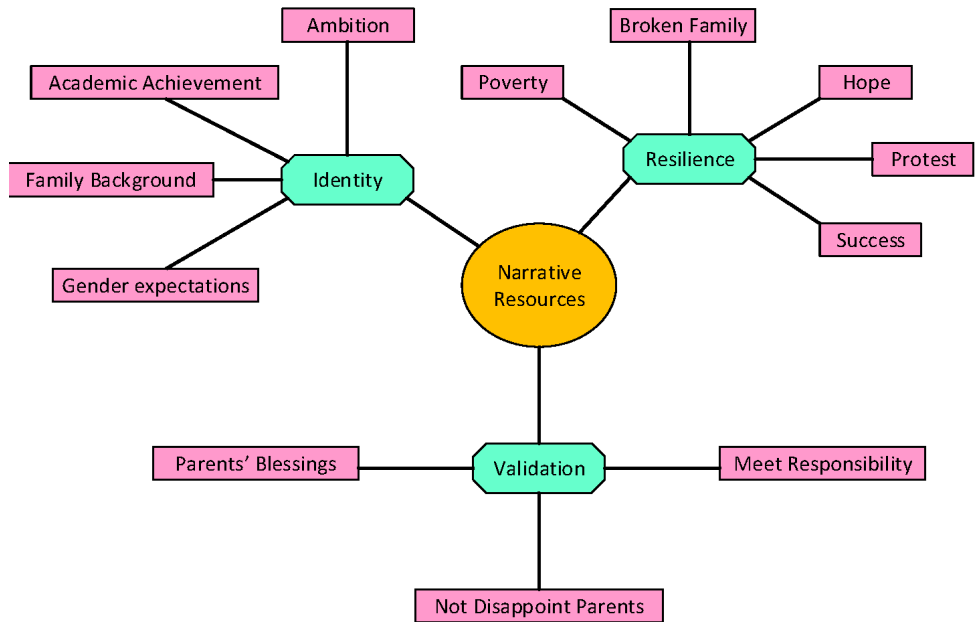


Figure 5: Themes and sub-themes of narratives resources that respondents use from the youth empowerment context in Uganda to tell their own stories



In the resilience theme, coming from difficult circumstances such as poverty and broken families, keeping up hope, and protesting against some negative voices in their communities, the participants finally tell stories of success from their point of view and from the point of view of significant others. It is important to remember that in looking at the youths' mindsets in Buganda, notions of resilience should not be discounted.

In the identity theme, participants used the identity narrative to construct their stories, picking on aspects such as their ambition, academic achievement, family background, and perceived gender expectations to describe their sense of self. The narratives were interlinked, and these four sub-themes were woven together in the participants' stories. This is consistent with Bakhtin's view that voices influence and make up the human mind. Bakhtin (1986) states that individuals, in all their thinking, are influenced by a multiplicity of voices that they are constantly in dialogue with. The concept of voice and voices runs counter to theories of mind and mindset that view the human mind as the domain of a single individual, such as the cognitive view of mind (Gollwitzer, 2012), the growth versus fixed mindset theory (Dweck, 2008), and the mind theory advanced by Park (2017) which underlies the Mind Education Programme in Uganda.

The theme of the narratives of validation in this study is how participants use narrative resources

that portray their need for approval by the people around them, such as parents and the community. Validation, resilience, and identity are all narrative resources that participants picked on from the narratives available to them from the socio-cultural setting contained within the youth empowerment context. I now turn to how the participants positioned themselves within these narratives in the youth empowerment context.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have described the methodological choices I made during a narrative inquiry into the question of mindset among youth, starting with the ontological and epistemological commitments I made. The qualitative research design procedures used for the study included participant selection and data collection procedures, validity and reliability measures, data management, and analysis. The analysis procedures I used were those specifically recommended for narrative analysis by Lyons and Coyle (2015), because I deemed them appropriate to the interpretivist nature of the study. However, in the data analysis procedure, I also borrowed from Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) to help tease out the broader themes in the participants' narratives.

The broader level themes and their specific sub-themes are the narrative resources that the youth respondents used to tell their stories represent the narratives that exist within their society and are, in essence, a window

into the socio-cultural fabric of their society. The focus on language used by the youth is consistent with the theorisation that the language and words people choose to use mirror the socio-cultural fabric of their society. According to the Bakhtinian theory of mind (1986); the views that people present do not spring from their own minds but are instead adapted from existing narratives within their context. As such, it can be expected that when the participants told their stories, they were in effect ventriloquencing (Volosinov, 1986), those views or narrative resources that are available to them through their socio-cultural networks. The narratives presented by the participants, therefore, are by this logic the narratives that are strong within the socio-cultural context surrounding youth empowerment in Uganda. Smith (2016) explains the strengths of narrative inquiry and the use of stories as having the ability to honour the fidelity of human lives in and across time. Smith explained that stories help individuals make sense of, organise, rewrite, and communicate their past, present, and even their understanding of possible futures. The narrative analysis approach used in this study has the potential to explore and reveal the contextual fabric of society, culture, and other people that shape the lives and stories of individuals. It is this special understanding of people in the social and cultural context that distinguishes it from mainstream psychology (Schiff, 2013). In a similar manner, this understanding of youth mindsets

from a narrative approach is a more contextually useful interrogation than existing theories of mindset in mainstream psychology because it situates youth mindsets within socially constructed narratives.

A useful working definition of the mindset emerges from this method of inquiry. Instead of looking at mindset as an individualised and essentially static mental frame, that guides the individual (Dweck, 2006), I describe mindset as

“A collection of socially constructed narratives that one calls upon to understand or engage with any given situation. The individual continuously positions and repositions himself or herself or is positioned by others within these narratives. They may protest or defy the narratives, internalise or modify these community narratives, with varying results on their decision-making and choices, behaviours and ultimately life outcomes” (Nakalawa, 2021).

As a recommendation for practice, it is vital that youth empowerment programmes take a step back and view their youth beneficiaries in context, taking into consideration their socio-cultural context and the narratives that exist within these contexts. In addition, mindset change programmes need to build in reflection sessions on salient narratives and voices within the youth’s socio-cultural environment, to know which narratives need to be targeted for change, in order to promote “mind-set change”.

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Africanisation of Adult Education at Makerere University College in the 1960s

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Abstract

Africanisation was a major concern of post-independence in East Africa, and particularly in Uganda, its pursuit at Makerere University College was deliberate in the 1960s. While it was a major preoccupation of nationalist leaders, it has hardly received the attention of researchers on the history of education at the university. How was university adult education Africanised at Makerere? This article answers this question using archival sources and interview data from former members of Makerere University staff. The article argues that the Africanisation of adult education occurred through the recruitment of Africans and the modification of the curriculum and entry requirements to incorporate African perspectives and relevance to the needs at the time. Financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation was influential in attracting Ugandan academic staff for employment. By 1969, 79 per cent of the staff in adult education were African. An admission criterion, the mature-age admission scheme, was introduced to support Africanisation of the country through retraining of adults for employment, while learning content and language were adjusted to reflect a concern with African topics and perspectives. Therefore, these were the strategies through which the Africanisation of adult education occurred at Makerere.

Keywords: Adult Education, Extramural Studies, Africanisation, Makerere, Uganda

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Introduction

After achieving political independence, the Africanisation of the country became a major preoccupation for East African leaders. Focusing on adult education at Makerere College, Uganda, this article answers the question of Africanisation in the first post-independence decade. Research on the Africanisation of adult education at Makerere College is scanty, thus the gap this article sought to address to show how Africanisation happened in the 1960s at Makerere. Data for this article were obtained from the archives at Makerere University Library and Uganda National Archives at the National Records Center and Archives located at Wandegaya, Kampala, Uganda. Key informant interviews were conducted with former staff members in adult education at Makerere, who worked as resident tutors in the 1960s. The findings were analysed chronologically and thematically, focusing on the activities and ideas that included elements of Africanisation in the years 1960 to 1969. The analysis was guided by the decolonial arguments of Mamdani (2019), Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018), and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986), who argued for the need to transform educational and other systems of former colonies. This article shows how, in the 1960s, efforts were made to Africanise adult education staff and the content of the courses offered at the Department of Extramural Studies at Makerere. This was done through the recruitment of

Africans, introduction of the mature-age admission scheme as an avenue for adults to join the university college, and modifying the learning content to ensure that the curriculum incorporated African perspectives and relevance to the needs of Ugandans in the 1960s. This article also shows that financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation, an American philanthropic organisation, was influential in attracting East Africans for employment in the 1960s. Although Ugandans were recruited as staff members at Makerere, it did not guarantee complete Africanisation of adult education. As illustrated in this article, the Africanisation of staff was almost complete by the end of the 1960s. The Africanisation of content in adult education courses was not complete because the courses offered maintained influence from British-oriented subjects. The use of English remained dominant over indigenous languages in adult education at Makerere.

Decolonisation and Africanisation

Uganda was a British colony, and the university was a colonial project, “a top-down modernist project whose ambition was the conquest of society, the frontline of the civilising mission” (Mamdani, 2019, p.17). The establishment of universities in the British African colonies and their subsequent attachment to the University of London or other advanced universities was part of the colonial policy to develop the African

university to the standard of the British one (Adams, 1975; Omolewa, 1975; Gordon, 1979; Khanakwa, 2022). Makerere became a college of the University of London in 1949, and the first students of the external degree programme graduated in 1953 (Goldthorpe, 1965). Whereas this relationship with the British was previously perceived as advantageous, following the achievement of political independence, Africanists became critical of the nature of the university and its educational offerings and sought to make it more African in character. The motivation to stop colonial and limiting tendencies was the main goal that inspired African nationalist leaders. National independence was therefore a landmark achievement, as colonial administration ended and nationalist leaders became the political leaders of independent nations. The nationalist movement and the actions of nationalists were the first critical reflections on subverting the colonising project by emphasising the need for the relevance of university education (Mamdani, 2019).

As one of the effects of political independence obtained by the three East African countries, the special relationship that Makerere had with the University of London was dissolved in 1963, and the University of East Africa (UEA) was formed (Makerere University College Report, 1963; Khanakwa, 2020). The UEA had three constituent colleges of Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, and Makerere. It was inaugurated amidst calls for

the decolonisation of the university and marked a significant point in Africanisation, setting off several changes in staff and curriculum to ensure that Africanisation did not stop with the political leadership taken over by nationals but included knowledge decolonisation as well (Khanakwa, 2020; Maringe, 2017). Mamdani emphasised that the university was colonised and therefore decolonisation involved undoing colonial legacies which included political, social, economic, legal, lingual, and epistemic/knowledge systems that were introduced by the British colonial power (Tobi, 2020; Mamdani, 2019). Academic staff at the university as a modern educational institution were classified as prisoners in the colonising project. Mamdani (2019) argued that the institutional form of the university and the discipline-based intellectual content therein were introduced to Africa by European colonialists who sought to civilise Africa in the image of Europe. Due to British influence, universities in Africa, such as Makerere, had little to offer that related to what existed in Africa before colonialism. Similarly, Khanakwa (2022) argued that Makerere developed basing on the British university, particularly the University of London, as the model, therefore emphasising the influence by the British university to which Makerere was attached. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) argued that imperialism of knowledge was more dangerous than physical political domination because it

involved control of the minds of the colonised people which he called epistemological colonisation and an articulation of Africans as inferior.

While identifying himself as one of the inmates of the university colonising project, Mamdani argued that, “I suggest we think of our task as one of subverting the project from within through a series of acts that sift through the historical legacy, discarding some parts, and adapting others to a new-found purpose” (Mamdani, 2019, p.17). The situation was similar in other former British colonies such as Zimbabwe, formerly Rhodesia, whereby as an affiliate of the University of London, the University of Rhodesia (renamed University of Zimbabwe after independence) adopted Western knowledge canons, and as a result, excluded Africans, their culture, and values (Mavengano, Maveresa and Nkamta, 2022). Ngugi wa Thiong’o, a renowned intellectual, emphasised the need for language decolonisation, arguing that decolonisation involved dealing with the problem of colonial languages and suggesting the adoption of African languages as a solution as (wa Thiong’o, 1986). Indeed, Africanisation as part of decolonising included efforts to address the dominance of colonial languages such as English, French, and Portuguese in Africa. Mamdani (2019) added that since the African university was a colonial project and a top-down modernist project, wherever colonial universities were established, the coloniser’s language

was emphasised. The single language was projected as the one capable of performing the transformation of the colony’s elite in line with the coloniser’s interests; English, French, or Portuguese.

By emphasising their own languages, the colonialists barred the majority of the colonised from engaging in the colonial intellectual project. Mavengano, Maveresa and Nkamta (2022), citing Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1986) argued that the dominance of English over African languages in Africa was linguistic imperialism and belittlement of indigenous cultures. Just as Ngugi wa Thiong’o emphasised that language was critical to decolonising education, Mamdani similarly emphasised that the decolonising project had to be a multilingual project to provide not only Westernised education but also resources to nurture and develop non-Western intellectual traditions. Mamdani (2019) argued that non-Western intellectual traditions were capable of sustaining public and scholarly discourse. Mavengano et al (2022), Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1986), and Mamdani (2019) agreed that the solution involved Africanisation as part of non-Western intellectual alternatives.

Bernard de Bunsen, the Principal of Makerere University College, referred to two aspects of Africanisation; members of staff and the content of education (De Bunsen, 1995). Africanisation emphasised manpower planning

and the relevance of the content of education “to the immediate problems facing governments and the public, but not to a localisation and narrowing of vision” (De Bunsen 1995, p.143). De Bunsen seemed to imply that Africanisation did not mean a focus on indigeneity, defined as localisation. De Bunsen suggested the need for a continued global outlook. Although De Bunsen never mentioned “African culture”, his argument against localisation almost tallied with Metz (2017), who argued that Africanisation implies preservation of African culture but added that not all indigenous African culture is worth preserving. The concept of Africanisation had a historical relationship with that of decolonisation because the need to Africanise arose in the light of the independence that the former British colonies attained. Africanisation was an indicator of decolonisation in former African colonies. Jansen and Osterhammel (2017) argued that whereas the concept of decolonisation could be found in literature of the period before the 1950s, “it was used more frequently in the mid 1950s at the apex of the developments that the term decolonisation described in terms of national independence from the imperial rulers” (Jansen and Osterhammel, 2017, p.3). The first meaning of decolonisation in Africa’s colonial history, therefore, included political independence and the change to African leaders.

Africanisation was one of the goals pursued following national

independence to recruit Africans as members of staff and, to bring to the forefront knowledge produced and held by Ugandans as one of the non-Western traditions. It was therefore an obvious expectation of the independent country, Uganda, and others like it, to Africanise all aspects of their countries. The first form of Africanisation in Uganda was the assumption of power by Ugandans, first to the Legislative Assembly, and then Ugandans becoming political leaders of the country as President and Prime Minister in 1962. However, political independence never guaranteed independence in a country’s educational, social, or economic aspects. Political independence of the country “makes possible, but does not guarantee, the independence of that country’s educational system” (Adams, 1975, p.51). When independence was gained by the colonies, only the political and legal frameworks were immediately Africanised by Africans taking leadership positions (Maringe, 2017). The expectation to Africanise all public institutions was reflected in communications prior to 1962.

One such communication was in 1958 from Uganda’s Chief Secretary’s office on the “Africanisation of the Civil Service” addressed to all heads of departments, including Permanent Secretaries, reminding them of the emphasis by the governor on the need for training indigenous people. It stated that “you will recollect that in his address to Heads of Department, His Excellency made it clear that the

main effort must be to accelerate the training and appointment of Africans” (A Correspondence from the Chief Secretary on Africanisation of the civil service, File EC8327/12, Uganda National Archives). Although Makerere was not directly addressed in the Chief Secretary’s communication, the correspondence illustrated that Africanisation was expected. The other issue illustrated by the Chief Secretary’s communication above was that the colonial administration was not ready to promote Africanisation if trained Ugandan staff were limited in number in 1958. It seemed like a last-minute thought, implying an unreadiness to end imperialism and grant independence.

Nyerere observed that, “the system of education inherited was both inadequate and inappropriate for the new state.” As he pointed out, “its inadequacy was most immediately obvious: so little education had been provided that at independence, we did not have enough people with the necessary educational qualifications” (Nyerere, 1968, p. 417). Nyerere lamented the few qualified people at independence, and the low number of qualified nationals was the reason for the failure to find enough Africans to recruit for socio-economic development and university work within particular countries after independence. The knowledge systems introduced by the colonisers in Africa were meant to serve the coloniser’s interests, especially the production of a limited number of Africans to work as clerks and occupy

other junior positions in the colonial government structure of each colony (Maringe, 2017; Nyerere, 1968). The education systems introduced in the colonies were never designed to meet the interests of the colonised people. Therefore, after independence, it was important that the new governments emphasised the need to tailor education to the needs of the country, such as the need to recruit Ugandans and offer relevant learning content.

Africanisation of adult education

Although the first department focused on adult education at Makerere University College was established in 1953 as the Department of Extramural Studies, the first African member of staff, Erisa Kironde, was recruited six years later in 1959-1960 year (Makerere University College Report, 1960). Of the six staff members in the department in 1959, Kironde was the only African. The other, Enock Rukare, was recruited three years later in the 1962-1963 year with increased recruitment of Ugandans and other Africans after independence (Makerere University College Report, 1962). Recruitment of Africans to replace departing expatriates was an immediate problem facing Uganda’s civil service, and its solution lay in training and recruiting Africans. The Report of the Commissioners for Africanisation in 1962 supported the training and recruitment of Ugandans as a strategy to fill gaps left by expatriates who were not expected to leave at once but gradually so

as to allow preparation for their replacement: “it would be wrong to remain dependent indefinitely on recruitment from other countries to the Civil Service” (Uganda Protectorate, 1962, p.1). This was a recognition of the need to recruit indigenous Ugandans as opposed to retaining expatriates. Training Africans to take over the positions formerly occupied by expatriates was a step in the redistribution of power in favour of the formerly colonised and powerless.

Julius Nyerere, a renowned advocate and promoter of adult education, in the first Five Year Development Plan for Tanzania (1964-1969) announced a commitment to adult education. He emphasised the importance of educating adults because the impacts of their education on society were realised faster than those of educating children (Bhalalusesa, 2020). Nyerere advocated prioritising adult education. Another emphasis in the 1960s was pan-Africanism, popularised as a strategy to achieve solidarity against neo-colonialism and the continued colonial influence. Many African academics and leaders supported pan-African thinking in education, advocating for curriculum change (Nkrumah, 1962). The commitment to review the educational curricula was reiterated in 1963 at a Summit Conference for independent African countries attended by leaders from thirty-two countries in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. At that Summit, the leaders emphasised African civilisation through educational reform,

strengthening educational and cultural ties, and cooperation among the people of Africa (Secretariat of the Organisation of African Unity, 1963). Uganda’s Prime Minister, Milton Obote, in his speech, emphasised the need for unity among leaders to achieve economic and social freedom and transform the mental attitudes and orientation of the people of Africa for them to have a better life (Secretariat, 1963).

Adult education was important in the educational process to achieve the goal of transforming the mental attitudes and orientation of Africans as was deemed necessary after independence, thus an element of Africanisation in terms of relevance. Following the independence of East African countries, extramural studies became the responsibility of each university college. In June 1962, the University College Dar-es-Salaam took over the responsibility for extramural work throughout Tanganyika, while in July 1963, University College Nairobi took over the responsibility for extramural work in Kenya (Makerere University College Report, 1963). Makerere University College no longer had responsibility for extramural studies across East Africa, as it had before 1962. This was because each East African country had acquired its university college under the University of East Africa, which was launched in 1963, thus each gained autonomy over its activities. Educational activities organised by the Department of Extramural

Studies at Makerere included African-oriented topics.

The Curriculum

The Annual Study Vacation (ASV), a yearly 10-day residential adult education event, was an example of educational activities respectful of African topics. The Report on the first ASV emphasised that the aim of the annual study vacation “was to bring together people who were interested in the discussion of public affairs in the atmosphere of impartiality appropriate to a university”. The Report added that the ASV was important as it set out “to offer a chance for isolated educated Africans to come together and to demonstrate to those who take part in extra mural classes that they share interests with fellow students throughout East Africa” (First Annual Study Vacation Report, 1957; AR/MAK/122/6). The ASV aimed to have participants share as much as possible with fellow learners and tutors, and this was maintained throughout the annual study vacations that were organised by the department. Sharing through seminars and meetings during the ASV resonated with Africanness because of the value of community. In 1960, the fourth ASV was held at Makerere between 19th and 30th April that year. Activities at the fourth ASV reflected an emphasis on African topics. The theme of the fourth study vacation was “The Arts in Africa”. The activities included a visit to the Uganda Museum, followed by a general lecture on “African

Sculpture”. The ASV included a visit to the National Theatre and Cultural Centre, a general lecture on recent African writing, and another lecture on African Crafts (Fourth Annual Study Vacation Report, 1960, AR/MAK/122/6). The visits to the cultural centres and the title of the general lecture promoted an appreciation of African culture. The focus on African writing was decolonising in as far as the title of the lecture suggested concern with Africans’ writing.

The fifth Annual Study Vacation held at Makerere University College between 11th and 22nd April 1961 included topics on nationalism, freedom, and the need for unity. These were tailored towards the African reality, enabling adults to develop awareness of the dangers inherent in the adoption of Western ideas. Particular courses included: “Writing in Africa” and participants at the writing seminar were encouraged to read some of the following before going for the seminar: *The Dark Child* by Camara Laye; *No longer at Ease* by Chinua Achebe, *The Palm-wine Drinkard* by Amos Tutuola, *Down Second Avenue* by Ezekiel Mphahlele, and *The African* by William Conton (Fifth Annual Study Vacation Report, 1961, AR/MAK/122/6). These were relevant to raising awareness among participants about nationalism and independence from colonial administration. The above texts by African writers promoted the appreciation of the need for political independence and for Africans not to lose their

values and traditions. For example, *No longer at Ease* was a criticism of Western education that separated the youth from their parents and culture. Having works by African writers at the seminar was Africanisation of content in adult education.

The study of African music as part of extramural studies was an Africanising aspect of the programme. In October 1961, Solomon Mbabi-Katana, a music tutor, secured a five-year grant of 17,930 pounds from the Rockefeller Foundation which enabled him to pioneer African Music as a taught programme at Makerere. This laid the foundation for the scientific study of African music, dance, and drama as disciplines at Makerere (Mngomezulu, 2004; Blacking, 1965). Similarly, Ssempijja (2022) argued that in the 1960s, the Department of English was the first to introduce a Certificate course in Drama. The course focused on writing and producing plays, offering Ugandan playwrights an opportunity to showcase their work through inter-hall drama competitions at Makerere. Mbabi-Katana was based at the Institute of Education of Makerere University College. He collaborated with the Department of Extramural Studies in teaching music and African musical instruments. Through the African music programme, he taught many musically talented teachers and students in East Africa (Blacking, 1965). In 1963-64, he started broadcasting lectures in English on Radio Uganda, reaching wider audiences in schools, colleges, and the

public. Radio Uganda also allowed him airtime on Saturday evenings to broadcast lectures on African Vocal Music using Luganda and Runyoro as indigenous languages of Uganda (Blacking, 1965; Mngomezulu, 2004).

One of the adult learners of music in the extramural classes was Zadok Adolu-Otojoka. He was a Grade II Certificate teacher. His music career started at the Annual Study Vacations, where Mbabi Solomon Katana and George Wilberforce Kakoma were the music tutors. Adolu-Otojoka recounted his experience of extramural studies: "...I had not studied music. I used to go for extramural studies at Makerere University every year... for 2 weeks" (Zadok Adolu-Otojoka Interview by Milton Wabyona on 6th April 2019 and quoted by Wabyona, 2022, p.11). Zadok was happy that he went through the extramural studies because they set the foundation for his music career on which later achievements were built. He remembered that the adult education "program was for people outside the university admission programs", the adults who could not be admitted like the younger students (Zadok interview by Wabyona 6th April 2019, in Wabyona, 2022, p.11). Adolu-Otojoka exemplifies the way extramural studies offered adults like him a chance to pursue their desired career paths.

The sixth Annual Study Vacation held on 29th April-10th May 1962 at Makerere University College had elements of African content; for

example, Seminar 11 on music had a topic on “The development of African music” with the tutor as George Wilberforce Kakoma (Sixth Annual Study Vacation Report, 1962, AR/MAK/122/6). These activities marked the pioneering efforts in teaching African music. In 1963, there was an increase in the number of extramural language learners for Luganda, Swahili, Advanced English, and French. It was Africanising to have Luganda and Swahili taught in the extramural activities as this reduced the dominance of English. The Director of Extramural Studies reported that 1963 was a great year “with considerable increases in class attendance with a large number of successful classes in Advanced English, French, Luganda and Swahili” (Makerere University College Report, 1963, p.116).

Language classes in Luganda and Swahili marked linguistic nationalism, similar to the efforts of Julius Nyerere, who successfully popularised Swahili in Tanganyika which was spoken across the country, uniting the people (Chacha, 2002). Nyerere mentioned that Swahili helped in the struggles for independence: “It was the unity of the people of Tanganyika which brought Independence. Language was a great help. I was able to express myself anywhere in Tanganyika directly in Swahili” (Nyerere, 1962, p.2). This was in line with Ngugi’s assertion that the liberation and unity of marginalised communities lie in the common language used (wa Thiong’o, 1986). However, the use of

indigenous languages in extramural studies remained limited to Luganda and Swahili. The lack of a national language intelligible to all Ugandans, selected from the many indigenous languages spoken, was a limitation to the Africanisation of language in education.

The Annual Study Vacations were not aimed at offering qualifications to the participants. However, Africanisation and the need to recruit Ugandans, especially in the civil service, led to a craze for qualifications among extramural students who lacked vocational training and certification (Makerere University College Report, 1963). As a result, the Department of Extramural Studies started offering vocational training as its major role. The Mature-Age Entry examination, introduced in 1963, provided an avenue for adults to join the University of East Africa. The admission scheme targeted adults holding at least a certificate and aged at least 25 years. However, but also the adult had to be one who was not attending any school-based education at the time of application and so must have been out of school (Okech, 1999). One of the study participants, names withheld and anonymised as RFC to ensure the safety of the study participant, recalled that the mature-age entry scheme was a brainchild of someone at University College Dar es Salaam to help “those people who had missed out in the school system but had the intelligence, the ability to go to university” (Interview with RFC, 11th November 2021).

Preparing adults for mature-age entry examinations became one of the department's activities in the 1960s. This certificate courses offered by the department contributed to the preparation of such adults to qualify and increase their chances of passing the mature-age examination. Another former member of staff who used to work as a Chief Clerk revealed that "there used to be a private arrangement between students and tutors to prepare for mature-age entry exam. This would be on Saturday and Sunday as Weekend courses" (Interview with WK, 3rd July 2024). The mature-age admission scheme supported adult education and Africanisation by offering an opportunity to adults who wished to pursue degrees; ; as such, the scheme supported the need to train Ugandans and build their capacity to take on jobs.

In 1964, *The People* newspaper on 11th April, p.16 reported on planned new courses for Makerere, noting that "the extramural department was proposing to establish regular full-time residential courses and each would lead to a certificate awarded by the University College". This was in respect to the beginning of residential courses which were not a regular provision before the 1960s. Chaired by Erisa Kironde, a former extramural studies resident tutor, the Kironde Committee was tasked with reviewing the Department of Extramural Studies (Atwaru, 1992). It recommended the introduction of certificate-oriented courses and the

change of the department's name to the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE). These recommendations were adopted immediately, although the writing always referred to the Department of Extramural Studies long after the name had changed (Kwesiga, 1969). The name change to CCE was an indicator of the intention to move away from the British tradition of Departments of Extramural Studies. It also implied a widened service in terms of content, target learners, and goals of the certificate courses. The name of the department in charge of extramural studies also occurred in Tanzania to become "The Institute of Adult Education", and in Kenya, it became "The Institute of Adult Studies" (Titmus & Steele, 1995, p.126).

At Makerere, the widened service was indicated in the introduction of the Certificate of Adult Studies (CAS) in 1965 as a one-year residential course, and admission was by special examination. The content of the CAS included English to improve one's ability to communicate effectively with others; Economics; to enable students to appreciate the use of natural resources and scientific discoveries; Political Science to assist students understanding the processes of government and national economies, enable students to analyse social problems of developing nations, and grasp the background to nation building and East African Social Institutions and Man and his environment (Nsamba & Atim, 2004; Slee, 1965). The offer of the

Adult Studies course and its pursuit by adults to earn the Certificate of Adult Studies as a qualification was, however, a European legacy on academic credentials as the main outcome in university education. Nonetheless, the CAS content was designed to build learners' ability to analyse their communities, and understand the social, economic, and political situations. This type of content made the certificate course relevant to the participants. Relevance was an important component of Africanisation, and the CAS content was tailored to be relevant learners' need for social and personal development.

In his memoir, one of the former expatriate staff members of Makerere University College noted that an Adult Studies Centre was established in 1965 as a constituent part of the Department of Extramural Studies to offer the Certificate in Adult Studies. It was a residential unit, admission to which was by examination. "Applicants largely came from extramural classes around the country. Successful applicants undertook the Certificate of Adult Studies for one year in three subject areas: English and Communication, Government and Society, and Economics" (Clarke, 2018, p.2). Although the entry examination and certificate course were important to enable adults to increase their chances of joining other academic programmes and to obtain promotion at work or acquire a new job in the civil service, it was ironically part of the colonial modernist project

alluded to earlier by Mamdani (2019). This was a continuation of the dominance of Western education. Ironically, to Africanise required training in non-African ways to fit in formal employment opportunities such as the civil service.

The University of East Africa was a case of formal employment that required Africans trained through non-African ways if they were to be able to perform the duties expected of them by the institution. At the formation of the University of East Africa, only 9 percent of the academic staff were East Africans, and this situation called for enhanced efforts to ensure training of staff for the university of East Africa. De Bunsen, its first Vice Chancellor, argued that "Makerere entered national independence vulnerably, with no overriding policy for the Africanisation of its staff" (De Bunsen, 1995, p.141). Later, opportunities and funds were sought for the "academically ablest of our graduates to deepen their qualifications through post-graduate work overseas, in the hope that some would become colleagues" as members of staff at the university college (De Bunsen, 1995, p.141). One of the deliberate efforts to Africanise the staff was supported by funding provided by the Rockefeller Foundation of New York. In 1964, the Rockefeller Foundation funded the first Staff Development Programme aimed at East-Africanisation, to attract East Africans to occupy teaching and research positions at Makerere. The staff development

programme was called the University of East Africa Staff Development Special Lectureship Scheme, and it started with a grant of 392,000 United States dollars. It aimed at “increasing the number of East Africans of outstanding academic promise into establishment posts within the University College” (East Africanisation Report, p.2, Bernard de Bunsen Reports 1954-1965, AR/MAK/6/9). The Report mentioned that there were: two types of appointments: The Special Lectureships and the Special Assistantship. The Special Lectureship appointments were intended for mature scholars who were, or would soon be, fully qualified for established posts. The Special Assistantship appointment was intended for young East Africans, the quality of whose work at the undergraduate level gave promise for eventual university appointment after pursuing a higher degree (East Africanisation Report, p.2, Bernard de Bunsen Reports 1954-1965, AR/MAK/6/9).

Donor funding and Africanisation of staff

Support from philanthropic organisations such as the Rockefeller Foundation contributed significantly to Africanisation at Makerere University College. The Rockefeller support was guided by the main objective of assisting in the development of a strong university “staffed by indigenous scholars that were capable of meeting critical manpower needs and committed to

applying relevant knowledge in fields responsive to national development objectives” (Coleman and Court, 1993, p. xvi). Donor support led to an increased percentage of East Africans, among the academic staff at the University of East Africa although the increase in real numbers recruited was small in the 1960s. There were still fewer African staff members than expatriates because there were still few people with the required qualifications. Bernard de Bunsen, the Principal of Makerere University College in the 1960s observed that at the Conference of university administrators held at Makerere from 4th to 7th September 1969, in a paper presented on Staff Development, it was emphasised that “it was desirable that the majority of those who taught and ran the Institutions of Higher Education were of the same nationality as their students” (East Africanisation Report, p.1, Bernard de Bunsen Reports 1954-1965; AR/MAK/6/9). There was an emphasis on the need for staff who were East Africans, just like the students. A senior university administrator at the same conference responded to the paper on staff development by lamenting that “We all realise the need for East Africanisation but the problem is how to achieve it” (East Africanisation Report, p.1, Bernard de Bunsen Reports 1954-1965, AR/MAK/6/9). There were very few trained East Africans at the time of independence.

The Rockefeller Foundation grant and establishment of a

Special Lectureship Scheme for the appointment of lecturers led to the increased recruitment of African staff members. In 1965, the percentage of East African academic staff had increased to eleven, while in 1968, the percentage had increased to 29.3 percent (East Africanisation Report, Bernard de Bunsen Reports 1954-1965, AR/MAK/6/9). It was also possible to elect East Africans to the positions of Directors or Chairs of academic units. In particular, Senteza Kajubi was appointed Director of the Institute of Education, Kenyan Ali Mazrui became Chair of Political Science, and Joseph Lutwama became Chair of Preventive Medicine (Makerere University College Report, 1965; Khanakwa, 2020). There were recognisable efforts to recruit Ugandans during the 1960s. Semakula Kiwanuka, a former member of staff, applauded the action of Yusuf Lule, the first Ugandan Principal of Makerere University College: “When they wanted to Africanise Makerere, Lule came as the first Principal. I met him in London, and he later put me on the payroll even before I returned to Makerere in 1965” (Interview with SK, 5th April 2022). SK was a member of staff of the Department of History at Makerere University College who participated in teaching the extramural classes whenever invited. At the 1965-1966 extramural session, SK gave extramural lectures on the History of Uganda (Makerere University College Report, 1966) as part of the collaboration in delivering extramural classes between the

Department of Extramural Studies and other departments of the university.

Makerere University College in the early 1960s was determined to recruit Ugandans, as depicted in the incentives used. TA and CK, former members of staff at the Centre for Continuing Education whose identities were anonymised using initials, shared experiences regarding the way they got the university job of a resident tutor in the 1960s: “We were looked for to take up jobs, each one was given a house, a car loan, we left work at 4pm and went for tea and discussion with colleagues” (Interview with TA, 17th May 2024). There were many attractions about the job at Makerere University College and she added that “back then, we were not as many members of staff as it is today.” CK said that life changed for the better “after the appointment as the resident tutor (Interview with CK, 22nd May 2024; Kabuga, 1975). Favourable policies were adopted by Makerere to attract East Africans to take up jobs, facilitated by funding provided by the Rockefeller Foundation in 1964. By the end of 1969, only three out of a total of 14 members of staff at the Centre for Continuing Education were expatriates (Makerere University College Report, 1969). With 11 Africans out of a total of 14 members of staff, Africanisation of staff in adult education was 79 percent by the end of 1969, marking a high level of Africanisation of staff within the first seven years of independence.

Donor aid by the Rockefeller Foundation to Makerere's staff development programme, however, attracted criticism, especially the danger it posed of making Makerere less national since the largest percentage of funding came from external sources. Being less national had nuances of questioning the independence status of the country because it depended heavily on American donor aid. A Reporter writing for *The People* newspaper on Saturday, January 10th, 1970 observed that "Rockefeller Foundation pours money into the University of East Africa. A total of 4,114,000 United States dollars was granted to the University of East Africa in the period July 1963-July 1968" (Staff Reporter, 1970, p.1). The other concern was that the American team that monitored the funds was stationed at the University Colleges in East Africa and was paid high salaries. Therefore, those who monitored the grant indirectly repatriated a large share of it. The Staff Reporter argued that "in East Africa, by 1968, there were at least 15 Rockefeller field staff stationed at the University Colleges." (Staff Reporter, 1970, p.16). The Rockefeller Foundation dictated the policy of the departments it financed, and in January 1970, "nearly all members of the Department of Economics were American" (Staff Reporter, 1970, p.16). Although the Rockefeller Foundation's influence on the recruitment of Americans

was contradictory to the policy of Africanisation, it was possible that, as noted earlier in this chapter, the action was motivated by the limited number of qualified Africans who could perform expected duties in the immediate post-independence period.

Conclusion

The Africanisation of adult education in the 1960s at Makerere University College was achieved through the recruitment of Africans and the introduction of courses leading to qualifications required as proof of the attainment of a particular educational level. The Mature-Age Entry Admission Scheme was introduced to support the Africanisation process by enabling adults of at least twenty-five years of age to enrol in academic programmes at Makerere University College. The course content also reflected Africanness, such as the topics handled at the Annual Study Vacation and the Certificate of Adult Studies for adults who lacked such a qualification. The teaching of languages like Swahili and Luganda, and the recruitment of East Africans was almost 80 percent by 1969 due to the support of charitable organisations like Rockefeller Foundation. The Africanisation of staff received more attention through the Special Lectureship scheme, while the review of content and language was slow. Africanisation continued in the 1970s and beyond.

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Ethical Impropriety in the Curriculum Review Process: A Case of Uganda’s Lower Secondary Curriculum

*Naomi Namanya**

Abstract

This article delves into the ethical considerations of the Curriculum Review Process (CRP) carried out in Uganda’s Formal Education System (UFES) in 2020, with a focus on the well-being of the learner, made in the image of God. It employs the Kantian theory of the categorical imperative to posit that the revision of the provided curriculum did not align with the core principles of the CRP, leading to ethical shortcomings in the process. Through a convergent mixed methods approach, the article illustrates that the management of the CRP in formulating the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) presented challenges in its implementation, impeding students’ ability to fully realise their Divine Mandate (DM): “...be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28) NIV. The article underscores the significance of adhering to proper technical protocols in curriculum reviews to ensure that students derive maximum benefit from the process and that the resulting curriculum effectively enables them to reach their full potential.

Keywords: Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), Formal Education, Ethics, Divine Mandate, Provided curriculum

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Introduction

This interdisciplinary article examines curriculum in theory, practice, and ethics. It examines the ethics upon which the Curriculum Review Process (CRP) was handled to develop a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Uganda, aimed at helping learners reach their full potential. The CBC focuses on applying knowledge, rather than just acquiring it, to meet the needs of individuals and nations as a whole (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 2017). This approach, which prioritises skills, practical experience, and application, has been adopted in many educational systems globally to enhance educational quality and better equip students with the challenges of the twenty-first century, a move that Uganda embraced.

Background

Historically, education in Uganda has been heavily influenced by colonial legacies, with the curriculum originally designed to meet the needs and interests of the colonial powers (Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019; Khadidja, 2014; Rodney, 1973; Ssekamwa, 1997; Tiberondwa, 1998). Following independence, Uganda continued to use the British-designed curriculum, often referred to as the old/ provided curriculum, with some minor adjustments to few subjects of history and geography (Ssekamwa, 1997). However, this old curriculum, originally created during colonial times to train African clerks for the colonial

civil service, became outdated and no longer met the needs of Ugandans in the 21st Century. This led to the necessity for a curriculum review, resulting in the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) (Chemonges, 2024; Gyagenda, 2023; Mwesigwa, 2014; NCDC, 2019; Ssekamwa, 1997).

The British-designed curriculum (provided curriculum) posed a challenge within the formal education system, leading to multiple educational reviews (Ssekamwa, 1997). The most notable review being the Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC, 1989), which resulted in the Government White Paper (GWP, 1992) that has governed the education landscape in Uganda until the recent Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC) in 2022. Among the issues raised by the EPRC Committee in was the necessity to enhance the quality of education through curriculum changes at all levels. This requires significant changes in the curriculum at all levels, as well as the provision of adequate number of textbooks and instructional materials (EPRC, 1989).

In response to EPRC's (1989) recommendation, partial curriculum reviews were conducted instead of comprehensive ones. For example, the primary curriculum was changed to a thematic curriculum (National Curriculum Development Centre [NCDC], 2008), followed by the recent transition to the CBC in lower secondary schools in Uganda (NCDC, 2020), and the Abridged

Curriculum that was developed immediately after the COVID-19 pandemic (NCDC, 2023). However, during the data collection phase of my doctoral research, respondents expressed anxiety about the newly introduced CBC curriculum in 2022, the results of which have influenced the content of this paper.

Before addressing the curriculum review process (CRP) and examining how the process was handled in Uganda to develop the CBC, it is important to first explore a few concepts: Education, Curriculum, and Divine Mandate. What is education? What is it for and for whom? What is curriculum, and how do most Ugandans understand it? These concepts create a context in which these essential questions help us assess the learners' ability to fulfil their Divine Mandate. Divine Mandate ideally means full potential, which is derived from Genesis (1:28, NIV¹). Learners are created in the image of God with inherent potential. This implies that education in its aim under any curricula in place is to help learners fulfil their purpose of creation.

What is Education, What is it for, and for Whom?

Education has varying definitions depending on its use. Etymologically, it is derived from the Latin '*e-ducere*' which means to 'lead forth' or 'bring out', to rise, 'to bring forth' or 'to train'

or 'mould' an individual's potential with proper care and nourishment as a lifelong process for social continuity (Dash, 2015; Dewey, 1916; Mukhopadhyaya et al., 2018; Parihar, 2017). It is a process of unwrapping the gem of the child to let the internal become externally visible (Froebel, 1895). So, education, in its aim, draws the inert potential of children to live to their full potential. In view of this, a curriculum is designed to enable learners achieve their full potential.

Meaning of Curriculum

The term "curriculum" has both broad and narrow meanings, as well as prescriptive and descriptive definitions. Like education, it is defined differently by various individuals with different intentions related to the educational programmes to be achieved (Kelly, 2004; Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). Dewey (1902: 11-12), views curriculum as "a continuous reconstruction, moving from the child's present experience out into that represented by the organised bodies of truth that we call studies... studies are experiences". Accordingly, a child's present experiences are core to every curriculum, as Bobbit (1918:43) concurs with Dewey: "Curriculum encompasses the entire range of experiences, both directed and undirected, involved in developing an individual's abilities." For Kelly (2004:8), the curriculum is "the totality of experiences that the pupil has as a result of provision made." UNESCO (2017:5) defines curriculum as "how a country empowers its citizens with the

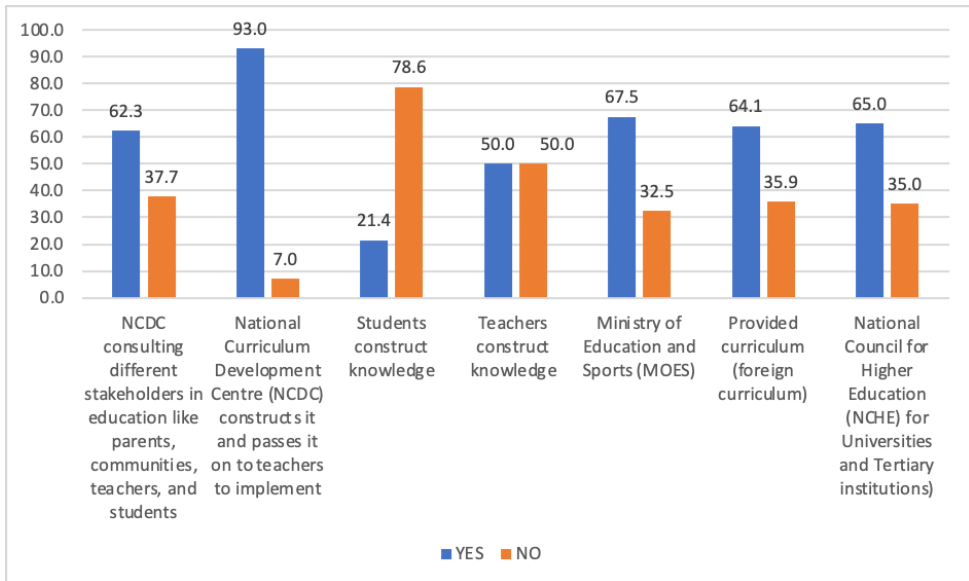
¹ New international Version

necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values for social and economic engagement and empowerment, both personally and nationally.” However, in a narrower definition, curriculum is often limited to academic content that translates into a syllabus (Phenix, 1962). As a result, the intellectual planning, infrastructure, and philosophical perspectives that are central to the curriculum are not given much attention (Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). All of these definitions lead to the conclusion that curriculum

includes both planned and unplanned activities that a student experiences in life while considering the values and beliefs that contribute to a meaningful life in any society.

However, the curriculum in Uganda’s formal education system is defined narrowly, which raises questions about CRP. It is considered more as a syllabus, limited to academic content that is designed, developed, and reviewed by a specific group, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure.1: Construction of Academic-Knowledge in Uganda



Source: *Adopted from my thesis: “Ethical Implications of Uganda’s Education System on Graduates”*

In a survey administered to Teacher Graduates (TGs) (n=78) to collect views concerning the Ugandan curriculum, they were asked, “How does the formal education system in Uganda shape academic knowledge?” This question aimed to assess their understanding of the curriculum

and identify the organisations and stakeholders involved in its review.

In response, the TGs displayed a limited understanding of curriculum as learning experiences primarily focused on academic content that is reflected in a syllabus. They also noted that different organisations

and education stakeholders were involved in curriculum development with varying levels of participation: National Curriculum Centre (NCDC) (93%), Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) (67.5%), National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) (65%), Education Development Partners (EDPs) (64%), teachers (50%), and students (21%).

The National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), which is responsible for curriculum design, received a high score of 93% in 1973. Figure 1 illustrates that the NCDC, Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), and Education Development Partners (EDP) all play roles in the curriculum construction process. However, this division of responsibilities leads to challenges with accountability, conflicts of interest, and overall impacts on the curriculum process.

Furthermore, the direct implementors, teachers and students, had the lowest scores of 50% and 21%, respectively. This indicates that teachers and students who interact with the curriculum daily are not receiving sufficient attention. The curriculum remains prescriptive as students do not have the autonomy to choose their own learning path, leading to passive participation and a perception of formal education as a banking system (Freire, 1970). Consequently, students are unable to fulfil their responsibility to engage and contribute to the expansion of

knowledge, hence denying them the opportunity to realise their Divine Mandate.

Divine Mandate

The term “divine mandate” refers to a particular task that God has assigned to humanity in order for them to bear His image on earth. It specifies the meaning of individual life’s and the purpose of contributing to the betterment of the universe in both being and doing. The concept is derived from (Genesis 1:28) “...Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it...” In the context of education, learners are to be instructed to consider themselves as God’s representatives on earth to be fruitful, multiply, fill, and subdue the earth. Thus, any curriculum should enable every learner to unleash their full potential without regard to social or biological origins.

Problem Statement

The curriculum plays a crucial role in providing the direction to achieve educational goals in any society; hence, its review process is important. However, the way the Curriculum Review Process (CRP) was handled in Uganda is questionable and raises serious ethical concerns regarding curriculum design. This is necessary to enable learners to achieve the intended objectives of the 21st century and to realise their full potential. Despite limited preparation, Uganda embraced this approach, leading to additional challenges within the

curriculum review education system. This article argues that the flaws in the CBC review process hinder the affirmation of learners' human capabilities and their potential to fully realise their Divine Mandate (DM), namely: "...Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it..." (Genesis 1:28) NIV. It presents empirical data that questions the effectiveness of CBC.

Literature reviewed and the gap

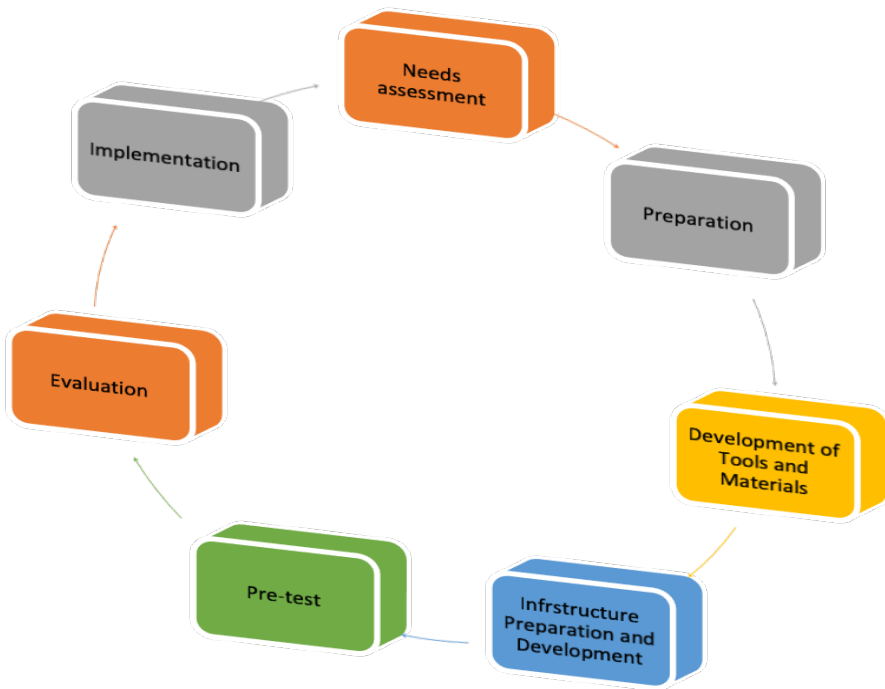
Currently, there are few researchers on the CBC in lower secondary schools in Uganda. Among these are, Kembabazi (2023) and Kidega and Khaing (2023) have focused on its implementation. Muwanguzi et al. (2023) studied the impact, Mayende (2022) handled gaps, Emuria (2023) looked at the challenges, and Tumuheise et al. (2023) assessed the factors affecting its implementation. Altinyelken (2010) and Mabonga (2021) researched thematic curriculum at the primary level. Other discussions on CBC include opinions from teachers and concerned educationists in newspapers and websites (Chemonges, 2024; Kiwalabye, 2023; Musimenta, 2023; URN, 2024). The way the process was handled and its resultant ethical implications for learners about their DM have not been thoroughly analysed. The rest of the article presents the theory, data sources, results and discussions, conclusions, and recommendations.

The Process of Curriculum Review

The CRP is an evidence-based process used to address questions related to educational programmes (Dyjur et al., 2019). It aims to determine the current status of the programme and where it is headed in terms of educational achievements (UNESCO, 2015). Since curricula vary between contexts and countries, the review process may be shortened or extended; however, there are basic stages in the CRP.

This review takes two forms, namely thematic and full review. The former assesses the effectiveness of curriculum delivery, whereas the latter involves internal and external stakeholders. CRP involves the reviewer, content, instructional materials, and alignment with national and educational objectives. The process further involves stakeholder engagement through pretests and implementation. From the literature review and fieldwork findings, it is clear that a CRP follows specific interconnected stages of needs assessment, preparation, development of tools and materials, infrastructure preparation and development, pre-test, and implementation, and the cycle continues, as summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Stages of Curriculum Review Process (CRP)



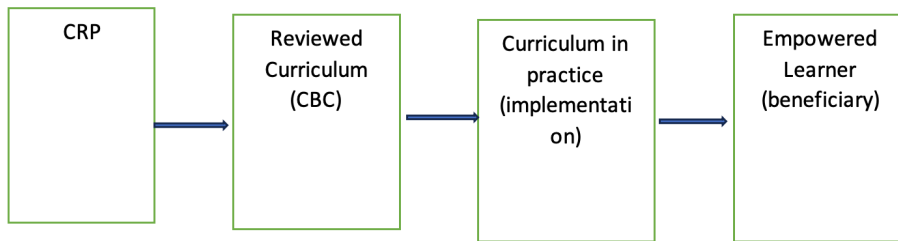
Source: Prepared by the researcher based on a review of the related literature and collected data.

Theoretical Framework

This article is based on the Kantian theory of categorical imperative, which he referred to as the Ethics of Duty. According to this theory, it is our responsibility to act in a way that we would want others to act toward us (Pecorino, 2006). Kant believed that ethics consists of commands on what we should do, which he classified as a categorical imperative, translating it into a command of the self (Kranak, 2019). Kantian principles are applied to curriculum review, emphasising the duty of all stakeholders to act responsibly. This theory calls upon the universal acceptance of different stakeholders

to actively participate in the CRP to initiate new ideas and question the status quo, thereby providing a practical solution that depicts the ownership aspect in Uganda. When changes are proposed, stakeholders should be consulted to ensure the proper unfolding of one’s potential. All stakeholders must ensure that the beneficiaries understand the purpose of the curriculum review concerning their education. The CRP which led to the CBC is then translated into implementation: curriculum in practice, which finally empowers the learner to live to their full potential, as illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 3.

Figure 3: A diagrammatical representation of theoretical underpinning of process of a linear CRP and the final beneficiary.



Methodology

The data used in this article were obtained from a convergent mixed-methods study conducted in 2022. Qualitatively, the article utilised participant observation and seven interviews with education professionals, including a head teacher, professor of education, curriculum specialist from the College of Education and External Studies (CEES), NCDC official, a Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) official, teacher, and the *Twaweza*² East Africa, Country Director-Uganda. These interviews were supplemented by two Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with lecturers (three females and five males) at Uganda Christian University (UCU)-Mbale Campus and Gulu University students (teacher trainees - six girls and four boys). In addition, an Education Group Specialist (EGS) was considered to provide further expertise on educational matters. It comprised of four male Heads of Department at

Gulu University (Head of Curriculum Studies, Foundations, Geography, and Psychology). Quantitatively, a survey was conducted among graduates (n=385) using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of samples. The sample included two categories of graduates: general and teacher graduates. A proportion of 80%:20% arrived at, leading the latter number of graduate teachers (n=78) that participated in the study in 2022. Relevant documents were reviewed to highlight the disharmony within the Curriculum Review Process (CRP) in the Formal Education system in Uganda. The results were thematically analysed along with document analysis and quantitatively analysed using univariate analysis.

Presentation and Discussion of the Study Findings

The objective guiding the presentation and discussion of the study findings was to examine the ethical aspect of the Curriculum Review Process (CRP) of 2020 in Uganda's Formal Education System (UFES) with the intention

² *Twaweza* means "we can make it happen" in Swahili.

Twaweza works to enable citizens to exercise agency and government openness and responsiveness in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda, especially in the area of education.

of benefiting the learners made in the image of God. This objective was accompanied by the following research question: To what extent did the CRP in Uganda adhere to ethical standards in meeting the needs of learners created in the image of God? Given the nature of the paper, the findings are presented following CRP and concurrently discussed at the same time. The discussion of the findings follows what CRP entails (stages) in comparison with what was done in Uganda before the 2020 implementation of the CBC.

Needs Assessment Stage

Stage one is an evaluation phase that involves situational analysis. It evaluates the existing curriculum in relation to current needs by conducting a needs assessment to gather feedback from industry and employers (Dyjur et al., 2019; Kelly, 2004; Sedere, 2011; Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). Ideally, during the needs assessment stage, the reviewers design a needs assessment survey and conduct it among nationals with representative samples. The NCDC which is in charge of curriculum matters in Uganda (NCDC, 1973), prepares for this process by first reviewing the existing curriculum. The NCDC ought to have ensured that the curriculum is aligned with the country's priorities, underlying philosophy, vision, and feedback from industry. While realigning with Uganda's priorities, curriculum reviewers should have identified the country's needs from the relevant

documents with the existing philosophy and constitution to ensure that the curriculum content includes pertinent information (Assuring Quality in Higher Education in Sierra Leone, 2019; Dyjur et al., 2019; Kelly, 2004; Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). The Constitution, which outlines aspirations for Ugandans, is reviewed to capture Uganda's vision and aspirations. Ultimately, recommendations should be made for Ugandans to start a discussion on the necessity of CRP.

It was important to consider several relevant questions, including, but not limited to why are we reviewing? What is the country's focus? What are our goals? How practical is the programme? What is the feasibility of the new curriculum? What are the costs involved? What resources and infrastructure are needed for the new curriculum and who are the learners we are designing for? How will this be assessed? What content should be covered? What are the priorities of the schools and countries? What are the expected learning outcomes of the reviewed curriculum? Unfortunately, the clues from the respondents, such as *Twaweza* Director-Uganda, head teachers, teachers, lecturers, and university students whom the researcher interacted with in 2022, were still asking the same questions, pointing to the failure of the curriculum reviewers to address these questions sufficiently. The CRP that led to CBC did not follow a right procedure instead it was ignited by the directive from MoES, as echoed

by the NCDC Executive Director Baguma (2023) at a conference:³ “The necessary procedures were followed to develop the CBC curriculum.” In clarification, the NCDC Executive specifically mentioned the initial stakeholder engagement and emphasised the directive by the MoES under Cabinet Minute 45 to review the curriculum in 2006. The NCDC Executive Director was in agreement with the NCDC official who stated in a personal interview (June 24, 2022) that “we followed a scientific method in reviewing the old curriculum.” However, a needs assessment tool was not availed to the researcher.

However, data from other stakeholders consulted did not agree with NCDC official’s assertion that the CBC procedure was followed in Uganda. They instead shared their views on the lack of a needs assessment stage and expressed mixed feelings about the future of the CBC. For instance, the Director of *Twaweza*, Uganda, when asked about how CBC came up, wondered: “Up to now, we have never had a scientific way of determining how some things should be done. The NCDC is talking about the new curriculum; what tools did they use? Whom did they involve?” (*Twaweza* Director, Uganda, personal interview, June 23, 2022). The same concern was pointed out by

the headteacher from Valley College in a personal interview (July 4, 2022): “Talk of the new curriculum, the CBC; whom did they consult?” If the headteacher in Bushenyi Town was not involved in the CRP or was not aware of the process, what about the schools in more remote areas? To this, the Education Specialist Group (July 16, 2022) noted that “the success of the curriculum review depends on implementation, and a situation analysis should address all concerns and integrate them at the implementation level.” The quotes clearly indicate that the fundamental questions and the scientific stage of needs assessment were not considered at the beginning of the review of Uganda’s CRP; hence, the needs of the learners were not given priority in the reviewed curriculum, and they were not enabled to realise their potential while using it.

Once again, the lower secondary curriculum review was not related to the needs- assessment stage. It was based on elitist principles that did not consider the needs of the curriculum beneficiaries, as stated:

The review was based on the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP, 2009-2018) which set out strategies to improve the quality and relevance of secondary education. The ESSP’s sub-objective 2.2 was to ensure that “Post-primary students [are] prepared to enter the workforce and higher education”. This is also in line with the current strategic plan for 2017-2020. To achieve this objective, one of the

³ This conference was a stakeholders conference held on Munyonyo-date Available here: <https://youtu.be/wFeaEO6OPuE> On which the executive director clarified on the ‘o’ level curriculum was reviewed. This seemed to show that the curriculum review was a product of a directive other than a comprehensive needs assessment that should have been done by the NCDC.

Ministry's strategies was to revise the curriculum and improve instruction and assessment by eliminating the current curriculum's shortcomings. The review focused on: producing a secondary school graduate who has the competences that are required in the 21st century; promoting values and attitudes; effective learning and acquisition of skills in order to reduce unemployment among school graduates...(NCDC, 2020, p.3).

According to the long quotation above, various stakeholders were not involved in the CBC review process. It was left to the MoES and NCDC to improve the quality of education through curriculum review without necessarily considering the needs of the learners at hand to develop their God-given abilities. Because the reviewers were not given guidance on their needs prior to the review, this prevents students from benefiting from the reviewed curriculum and, therefore, reaching their full potential.

Preparation Stage

At this stage, two major activities are carried out namely; benchmarking and stakeholder engagement (Dyjur et al., 2019; Kelly, 2004; Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). Since it was a new innovation, benchmarking countries where the CBC had been implemented with minimal challenges in a similar context would have been helpful in this study. However, benchmarking was sought after facing numerous implementation challenges. For instance, the MoES Uganda visited Kenya for benchmarking from

September 24-30, 2023, in the third year of implementation (International Development Research Centre, 2024). Hence, the stage was skipped, and the resultant implication is that the learners are not guided on their competences, leaving their inherent potential untapped.

Benchmarking is related to stakeholders' engagement to determine what learners should be educated on (Sedere, 2011). Stakeholder involvement at various stages of the CRP is crucial. Representatives from different sectors, such as leaders of educational institutions, technocrats from the MoES, teachers, subject matter experts, administrative leaders, students, industry representatives, alumni, and parents, subject specialists from various levels of education are also included to ensure representation across the country are selected to participate in this process (Dyjur et al., 2019; Kelly, 2004; Sedere, 2011; Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). Curriculum committees have been formed nationwide, with preliminary meetings held to inform stakeholders of the need for review. The committees assess the current curriculum, instructional materials, facilities, and assessment methods, and explore the availability of new instructional materials (Assuring Quality in Higher Education in Sierra Leone, 2019). However, the availability of these engagements was minimal, as indicated by the *Twaweza*, Director- Uganda and the head teacher of Bushenyi (also see Secion 4.1).

Again, the inadequate consultations were identified by the lecturers at UCU-Mbale Campus who unanimously concluded that instead of consulting the stakeholders, the curriculum reviewers simply adopted a “copy and paste”/ “copycat” style.

The challenge in Uganda is to copy and paste. This has affected many Ugandan bodies, including the NCDC. The new CBC may have been copied from the Western world, which made education more practical and hands-on. In their case, education has facilities and amenities that may not be readily available in the context of this study. There is still a gap in preparing our learners for the new education curriculum (UCU Lecturers, FGD, August 22, 2022).

The views from this FGD quotation suggest that if stakeholders were consulted in different regions of Uganda, they would have addressed the issue of relevance and ownership which was further amplified by the College of Education and External Studies (CEES) Curriculum Specialist who underscored the importance of ownership, stating that: “When the stakeholders are not involved, there is no ownership and, therefore, challenges within the implementation process arise” (CEES Curriculum Specialist, personal interview, November 10, 2022). He added:

Curriculum review requires stakeholders’ engagement in detail. Have we done enough consultations? Sometimes, NCDC has, but the consultations have not been

comprehensive enough. If you are to do things with a review of the curriculum, you consult; you do not come up with a finished document and ask stakeholders to consider it. By the time you bring a document, you have already biased me. You are supposed to ask me what I think about the curriculum, such that I own up, but with CBC, there is no ownership. But handing over and saying things will work has been a problem. And this has been the mode of doing things in Uganda. I compare it to the police officer, who does not make laws but is supposed to implement them; maybe this could be counted on the existing education system (CEES Curriculum Specialist, personal interview, November 10, 2022).

The curriculum specialist at the CEES indirectly noted that the NCDC often informs stakeholders rather than consulting and involving them in the process. Because many people, including representatives from lecturers, were not involved or even aware of the review, the innovation was reduced to simply ‘copy and paste’, which does not allow the learners to realise their God-given abilities. This ultimately affects learners, who feel compelled to simply move through the curriculum to progress to the next level, hindering their ability to connect what they are studying to their life purpose and causing them to miss out on realising their full potential and being fruitful.

The data from the *Twaweza* Director and Head teacher in Section, 4.1 revealed that many teachers were not involved in the preparation stage, leading to difficulties in instructing the learners. Only a few teachers from certain schools in Kampala received five days of training (Kidega & Khaing, 2023). This relates to the results obtained from the Teacher Graduates in a survey when asked, *How is academic knowledge in Uganda's formal education system constructed?* In response, the teachers' consultations were scored at 50% and the learners' at 24.01%, on the lower side (see Figure 1 on p.30). The implication here is that stakeholders like teachers and the beneficiary-learners at the heart of CBC disown the new curriculum, other than the NCDC, which is responsible for designing it. This results in the failure of learners to meet their needs and leaves them feeling unfulfilled and disconnected from their purpose, ultimately dehumanising them. In addition, teachers and other stakeholders were denied their duty to participate in the CRP.

Development of Tools and Materials Stage

Stage 3 of the CRP involves reviewing and developing materials, tools, assessment forms, and delivery methods (pedagogy) (Dyjur et al., 2019; Kelly, 2004; Sedere, 2011; Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). The appropriate tools and materials for the revised curriculum were developed, along

with appropriate forms of assessment. These instructional tools include textbooks, teachers' guides, learners' guides, e-learning materials, and the necessary technology to support the reviewed curriculum (Sedere, 2011).

However, there is a lack of sufficient instructional tools and failure to retool all teachers on how CBC works (Kidega & Khaing, 2023). A few schools that received textbooks, which were meant to be working books, had far fewer than the number of learners, as reported by the head teacher in Bushenyi during the interview. "The CBC would be effective if it were given time to re-tool teachers, with the facilitation of the equipment needed for the projects. If we are concerned about what to use in towns, what about those in rural areas?" (Head Teacher Valley College, Personal interview, July 4, 2022). Many schools located far from the city of Kampala received inadequate materials, and some received none (Kidega & Khaing, 2023; Muwanguzi et al., 2023). The same challenge of inadequate instructional tools was experienced during the thematic curriculum discussed by Altinyelken's (2010) earlier argument about thematic implementation being rushed, which hindered its effectiveness. Without adequate resources, students cannot fully engage with the CBC and translate it into meaningful learning because the CBC does not enable drawing the best out of the learner to be fully equipped to fulfil the DM of being fruitful and subduing the earth.

In conjunction with materials, assessment tools are developed to accompany instructional tools to measure the expected learning outcomes of learners (Dyjur et al., 2019; Sedere, 2011; Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). These assessment tools take various forms, depending on the goals of the reviewed curriculum (CBC). However, in Uganda, the assessment tools were not yet prepared when the researcher collected data in 2022, as the head teacher of Valley College responded:

We have always asked the UNEB officials how they want to assess the students using this curriculum, and it has now been two years, but with no apparent response as to how students will be evaluated. Therefore, we do not know the future of our students in Senior 1 and 2. (Head Teacher, Valley College, Personal communication, July 4, 2022).

This quote clearly indicates that the assessment materials were not prepared by the reviewers. It was later determined that formative assessment would be used, but it was not ready by the time the CBC was rolled out. This caused a great deal of pressure and uncertainty for many Ugandan schools accustomed to summative assessment, and they ended up adopting a dual curriculum to have clear assessment, as I observed while on School Practice Supervision in June/July, 2023, in the third year of CBC implementation.

In an interview with a UNEB official, it was clear that although learners were using CBC, there was no clear assessment roadmap in place. The official stated that “the relevant authorities are expected to prepare assessment forms towards the end of 2024, with the first students of the CBC expected to be in Senior four” (UNEB Official, September 15, 2022). This was followed by the NCDC Executive Director releasing the assessment guidance circular for Senior 1 and 2 in 2023 at the end of each year (Kitubi, 2023; NCDC, 2023). However, there is no clear assessment roadmap for schools to follow. Between 2020 and 2023, when the assessment circular was released, there was considerable anxiety among stakeholders regarding the assessment of students using CBC. This was particularly evident among private school owners with whom the researcher interacted in 2022. They were concerned about how the CBC assessment would be conducted. This anxiety was also felt by students, who could envision a future without guidance, leading to feelings of helplessness, hence being subdued rather than subduing the earth.

According to the assessment guidelines, summative assessment accounts for 80% of the assessment, while formative assessment accounts for 20%; however, formative assessment is at the core of the CBC. The 20% allocated to the projects does not receive enough attention to fully implement CBC objectives (NCDC, 2020). Focusing on 80% of

summative assessment neglects the learners' abilities and leaves many students ill-equipped for the revised curriculum. This issue is reminiscent of a situation in 2022 when a Senior Six (S.6) candidate wrote to the Executive Director of UNEB as follows:

'Dear Mr. Examiner, you are still wasting time on me when there are more serious candidates. Now, listen to my story in a short poem: I am the stone the builder rejected...' Then, the candidate listed the names of some famous musicians and their songs. Another candidate copied and rewrote the questions several times (Atukunda, 2023).

After being declared a failed student with a score of 0%, such a statement highlights the unmet needs of the learners, the grumbling, and the inability to increase and fill according to his capabilities, leading to a disconnect between theory and practice, as well as descriptive and prescriptive curriculum (Kelly, 2004; Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). Despite changes in curriculum and assessment, learners are still limited to being evaluated through traditional high-stake examinations. However, the CBC is designed as learner-centred with a holistic approach, focusing on the head, heart, and hands (3Hs). This is not reflected in the reality and practice of CBC in Uganda (Kembabazi, 2023; Kidega & Khaing, 2023). This results in learners feeling

inadequate in areas where they may not excel naturally, suppressing their strengths and leaving them subdued, feeling useless, and dehumanised with no sense of duty.

Pedagogy which is the method of how teachers teach in theory and practice, is an important component of a reviewed curriculum because it addresses how learners are assisted in achieving the learning objectives (Kelly, 2004; Sedere, 2011; Yaşar & Aslan, 2021). Therefore, having an appropriate pedagogy is crucial for the successful implementation of the curriculum. However, since formal education was introduced in Uganda by Christian missionaries, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in 1877 and White Fathers in 1879 (Ssekamwa, 1997; Tiberondwa, 1998; Wandira, 1972), the teacher-centred pedagogy has been predominant in Ugandan schools for delivering curriculum content. This can be traced back to the missionary education of tutorship as a method for teaching and learning (Wandira, 1972). According to Wandira (1972, p. 119), "learners memorised their letters through repeated recitation." Over time, this evolved into literacy skills and eventually included the ability to write. Despite the curriculum being reviewed to CBC, the same methodology is still used, even though the lower secondary level curriculum is said to adopt a learner-centred approach, as stated by an NCDC official:

CBC is a learner-centred curriculum. By changing the curriculum, we have tailored it to cater to a holistic learner; we ask teachers to be observant of the attitudes of the learners, be practical, and have generic skills which integrate knowledge, behaviour, and practical skills. The teacher is tasked with coming up with an activity to integrate these three components to cater to the three Ks- knowledgeable, knowhow, and know-being of a learner (NCDC Official, personal interview, June 24, 2022).

While the reviewers intended to design CBC as a learner-centred curriculum, the reality is different, as revealed by the Gulu University students in an FGD who unanimously commented the following:

The education system is teacher-centred and is not so good because it is only the teacher who is supposed to know the content delivered to the students. On the other hand, students do not know what they are supposed to take; therefore, when they reach Senior Four, they are still confused about the subjects to take (FGD, Gulu University Students, July 15, 2022).

The response by Gulu students above was given in the third year of CBC implementation, as discussed by the teacher trainees. This demonstrates

that the traditional method of instructing students is still being followed even after the CRP. The same was also mentioned in the parliamentary watch as follows:

There is no way to obtain different results when things continue to be done in the usual manner. The dilemma is that presumed practical subjects such as ICT, woodwork, and metalwork remain being taught in theory. If learners are not exposed to actual practice in these subjects, it defeats the purpose for which the curriculum was reviewed (Chemonges, 2024).

This article discusses how the reviewed curriculum is delivered, using an old-fashioned approach to what Freire (1970) referred to as a banking system. When learners are not allowed to participate in curriculum construction and are continually subjected to theory presented by teachers, they are unable to fulfil their duty to be creative and innovative, which goes against the natural creativity given to them by their Creator.

Infrastructure Development Stage

Stage 4 involves infrastructure development, which includes many things in the educational setting (Dyjur et al., 2019; Sedere, 2011). It includes professional infrastructure (re-tooling teachers), physical infrastructure such as building classes, laboratories,

libraries, and dormitories, as well as the general training setup (Emuria 2023; Kembabazi, 2023; Kidega & Khaing, 2023; Tumuheise et al., 2023). However, during the implementation of the CRP in Uganda, this stage did not receive the attention it deserved. A Professor of Education in a personal interview (August 31, 2022) noted that “for proper implementation of CBC, there was a need to change all the infrastructure, such as physical buildings, IT, and professional infrastructures.” Specifically, CBC, as a learner-centred curriculum, is expensive and requires many resources. However, with poorly equipped libraries and laboratories in the country that were not addressed before implementation as I observed, the focus shifted to pay raises for science teachers which compromised the newly reviewed curriculum. One student in an FGD had this to say: “The government is paying a science teacher in Palabek in Lamwo District 4 million and there is no laboratory and equipment, the hours of work have not been increased and have not upgraded their knowledge at school...” (Gulu University student, FGD, July 15, 2022). This quote indicates that certain infrastructure buildings, such as laboratories and workshops intended to support the CBC, were not prioritised before implementation. The overall condition of some government-aided schools in the country is not conducive to adopting the CBC (Mwesigye, 2015; URN, 2015).

Professional infrastructure is also a crucial element for the success of any curriculum, as stated by Akankwasa (1997) and Nakabugo et al. (2011). Teachers play a key role in implementing educational changes, and they should be retooled as stakeholders. They should also be given orientation on how to implement changes, use new approaches, and adopt new methods of teaching and assessment. However, in the case of Uganda's CBC, many teachers were not adequately retrained nationwide, as reported by the head teacher of Valley College: “The NCDC officials trained teachers in Kampala. We were then trained by other teachers who were confused and did not know what to do. The CBC would be effective if it was given time to retool teachers...” (Head Teacher Valley College, Personal communication, July 4, 2022). From this quote, failure to retool teachers was a concern, and it was further unanimously amplified by Gulu University students with a concern about leaving teachers out of the curriculum review, despite the critical role they play in implementing the curriculum.

The problem with the government is that it designs the curriculum without considering the implementers, mainly teachers. Out of all the teachers in the country, only a few were given curriculum training, which did not reach some regions due to problems they know best. The

government should be aware of this and find a way to train all teachers. The government complains about teachers not performing, but the problem lies in not providing adequate training (Gulu University Students, FGD, July 15, 2022).

The same point was further substantiated by a student in the same FGD as follows:

The people who reviewed the curriculum mainly trained teachers in schools in urban centres and left out schools in rural areas. Yet, the curriculum is for the whole country; they do not know the challenges that the schools in rural areas face (Gulu University student, FGD, July 15, 2022).

From these three consecutive quotations, it is clear that the retooling of teachers was not done adequately, leading to the continued use of the old curriculum pedagogy. This information is consistent with a report from MoES officials who confirmed that only 35% of teachers had been retooled by the end of 2023 (NTV Uganda, 2024). The gaps observed at this stage raise concerns about the quality of instruction in the CRP and the type of learners it produces. On the contrary, the NCDC official claimed that the failure of implementation was due to the teachers and school directors, as stated:

Teachers are scared because CBC is involved, especially in

private schools, although it cuts across public schools. Some private institutions are afraid of losing their jobs so, up to now, they are still teaching using the old curriculum. The directors of the schools have to follow what they are used to (NCDC official, personal interview, June 24, 2022).

This evidence shows that the CBC is not running smoothly in lower secondary schools in Uganda because they are not adequately equipped to implement it. Their role in implementing the programme is underestimated, resulting in a failure to help students benefit from the CBC and become fruitful.

In a subsequent interview, an official from the NCDC revealed that the limited resources available made it impossible to retool all teachers nationwide. The official stated, “We rely on the government for resources to do our work. We work when the budget allows, and when it does not, we wait” (NCDC official, personal interview, June 24, 2022). Despite the Minister for Higher Education urging teachers to embrace the new CBC, many schools still preferred to stick to the old curriculum. This reluctance was mainly due to a lack of understanding of how the new curriculum worked in practice. As a result, many teachers were unprepared for the change, leading to confusion among learners, and hence, hindering their ability to reach their full potential. Some teachers also

struggled to adapt to their new role as facilitators in the CBC, raising ethical concerns about how effective it is to educate students.

From observations, it was evident that most of the schools in Uganda that the researcher visited were overcrowded. In Mbale, the Director of Studies (DoS) acknowledged the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), but emphasised that it could not be effectively implemented due to the large number of students in the school as a result of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE) in the system. He mentioned that classes for senior one and two, where the CBC was introduced, had 200 students in each stream (DoS Mbale, personal interview, August 2022). Furthermore, the numbers were deemed too high to properly implement the CBC in comparison to the Ministry of Education and Sports' policy of a 1:40 teacher-student ratio (*The Independent*, 2023). Concerns about large class sizes have also been raised by columnists in newspapers and other scholars (Editor, 2022; Mwesigye, 2015; *The Monitor*, 2021). However, the CBC, being a learner-centred curriculum, is more effective with smaller class sizes and well-trained facilitators who can help students explore their interests and abilities. During an interview, a National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) official suggested that teachers address the issue of overcrowded

classes by creating scenarios (NCDC official, personal interview, June 24, 2022). Consequently, many schools have chosen to continue with the old curriculum because it is easier to understand than the CBC (Masaba, 2022; *NTV Uganda*, 2023). These challenges hinder students from reaching their full potential and becoming successful.

Pre-testing Stage

A pilot study was conducted in Stage 5. A few selected schools within the country were chosen to verify whether the reviewed curriculum meets the set objectives of the review (Dyjur et al., 2019; Sedere, 2011). The significance of this stage is to assess the feasibility of the new changes within the curriculum, consider the context, and evaluate the practicality within the educational landscape to minimise technical and ethical errors. At this stage, a small number of schools are selected, and the pilot study is conducted over four years, focusing on lower secondary education. This was illustrated by the double-shift system⁴ in the Universal Secondary Education (USE) pilot study. When ethical issues were identified, the system was discontinued and replaced with streaming, resulting in schools abandoning the double-shift system of education (New Vision, 2020, December 3). However, this stage also had its issues, as important elements such as the timetable in the

⁴ Learners were expected to learn in shifts where the 1st batch would start in the morning session and another one in the afternoon session.

new curriculum were not adjusted to accommodate the integration of activities for the learners. Instead, the timetable remained unchanged, as noted by a teacher in Bushenyi during an interview: “The CBC is fine, but the current structure does not align with the 30-40 minute lesson timetables in schools. It is unrealistic to expect students to participate in various activities with large class sizes in Ugandan classrooms” (personal interview, July 5, 2022). Additionally, the school closing time under the CBC was modified to 2:30 PM. However, a typical school day extends beyond 4:00 PM, including weekends, which deprives learners of time for personal growth, as they creatively and innovatively solve challenges and fully realise their potential.

Instead of conducting a pilot study, the CBC was implemented and gaps were discovered during the implementational stage. For instance, lack of examination for the course that had been under the CBC for three years, as reported in the article “Government halts the O-level vocational exams” in the *Monitor* (Mukhaye & Sabano, 2023) was unavoidable. It was found out that the requirements for CBC had not been properly checked, leading to insufficient resources, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of re-tooled teachers. This resulted in glitches and roadblocks to the implementation of CBC which finally limit a learner from realising their full potential.

Evaluation Stage

The purpose of evaluation at this stage is revision and adoption (Dyjur et al., 2019; Kelly, 2004; Sedere, 2011). It is necessary to determine the reasons for the review and visualise the entire review process (Dyjur et al., 2019; Sedere, 2011). At this stage, an evaluation is conducted to determine whether the reviewed curriculum is effective (UNESCO, 2015, 2017). Once the reviewers are satisfied with the fieldwork reports from the pilot study (also refer to stage 5), they implement the reviewed curriculum in all schools. However, as noted earlier, this stage was skipped.

Implementation Stage

At this stage, everything is completed in the CRP, and the curriculum is ready for implementation. This is the final stage, with the report guiding curriculum users on what to do (Dyjur et al., 2019; Sedere, 2011). However, the NCDC official claimed that the implementation of CBC faced challenges as listed below: “... Resistance from Ugandans including some parliamentarians, Makerere University lecturers, lack enough funds...” (NCDC official, personal interview, June 24, 2022). The unpreparedness of the CRP resulted in implementation challenges that made the State Minister in charge of Primary Education inform the Parliament of Uganda on the progress of reviewing the curriculum at the Advanced Level (AL) in the system. He noted, “The current S.4 learners will not transition

to the CBC when they get to upper secondary next year, as it will not be ready by then. This implies that they will continue their studies under the existing A' level curriculum" (URN, 2024). The same concern is also highlighted by Altinyelken (2010) also highlighted this concern, noting that the implementation of the thematic curriculum was rushed, leading to various challenges in implementation, including inadequate training, materials, and overall ethical management issues. Similar challenges were faced by CBC (Kembabazi, 2023; Kidega & Khaing, 2023; Muwanguzi et al., 2023). The Minister's response to the CBC's continuity and transition from Senior Four to Senior Five raises questions about its future. It depicts curriculum rejections, non-ownership, inadequate training tools, and assessments that point to disjointed processes. This creates uncertainty, confusion, and anxiety among parents, and mostly learners, preventing them from realising their dreams. As a result, many learners are not benefiting from the changes in the curriculum and consistently fail to be fruitful, hence failing to realise their potential while in school, leading them to remain subdued and unable to fulfil their dreams.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The CRP did not follow the basic principles stated in the CRP. It was merely a directive from the MoES. The resultant (new) curriculum, CBC, may not be adequately

integrated into the larger Ugandan formal education system, especially in rural areas. It was hastily implemented, similar to the thematic curriculum. The CRP excluded many stakeholders, and technical steps were not followed. The concept of ownership was disregarded, leading to the perception that it is distant from stakeholders. Indeed, some stakeholders labelled it as a "copy and paste" approach due to the CRP challenges.

The curriculum in Uganda appears to be more of a political tool than a social service change soliciting for social duty; it is prescribed and not descriptive. The curriculum review intended to achieve holistic education followed a frail process. While it initially raised hopes for change, it contains numerous loopholes that hinder its successful implementation, hence limiting learners from realising their full potential.

An ethical recommendation is that before any curriculum review, the necessary technical steps should be followed, namely needs assessment, preparation, development of tools and materials, infrastructure preparation and development, pre-testing, evaluation, and implementation. This process should begin with the recognition of all stakeholders, as Kant advises in the *Ethics of Duty*. Parents are encouraged to interest themselves in the educational matters of their children, teachers, and learners participating in the review, while the MoES and NCDC take responsibility

for prior preparations by availing enough resources to make CRP work for proper implementation. When this is done, learners realise their God-given gifts, abilities, and talents, and are modelled by retooled teachers who facilitate them in the learning process. Learners become fruitful, creatively

innovative, become original creators rather than mere consumers, and fill and subdue the earth, thus fulfilling their DM. Therefore, the importance of considering the ethical outcomes of these changes on learners and the entire education system should be emphasised.

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Moving the Discourse from Prostitution to Sex Work in Uganda: Beyond Abolitionist versus Positivists Debate

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Abstract

The discourses surrounding prostitution and sex work in Uganda present two prominent positions in the debate, which have informed the practice and identity of sex workers in Uganda. On the one hand, there are positivists who insist that sex work is work; it can earn income to empower those who practice it. On the other hand, are the pro-abolitionists who argue that sex work is immoral, violates women's dignity, and should be abolished. This study analysed the discourses surrounding sex work and prostitution through field research among female sex workers in Uganda. The findings show that sex work is associated with three themes; the economic, pleasurable, and degrading discourses. The findings show that the majority of those engaged in the practice do not consider what they do to be 'work' because of both the stigma attached to the identities and the social and economic conditions that force sex workers to engage in the practice. The article suggests a need to move beyond pro-abolitionists and sex positivists debate to focus on the unique contextual experiences of the sex workers to facilitate a better understanding of the gendered socio- economic and cultural conditions that the sex workers operate in.

Keywords: Sex work, Prostitution, Discourses, Identity, Experiences

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Prostitution has been dubbed in social discourse as ‘the world’s oldest profession’ (Monto2004, Coskin 2018; Garner 1999), and yet the “professionalisation” of prostitution in some countries and (re)naming it as sex work has not liberated it from the social stigma that it evokes. It is prudent to ask why this stigma continues to exist even when society seem to have lived with prostitution for a long time as evidenced in the popular axiom ‘a practice that is as old as humanity.’ What are the new debates informing the identity and place of the prostitute¹ who is now referred to as the ‘sex worker’? How are these debates changing perceptions of identity and the practice of sex work in Uganda? This paper interrogates the discourses surrounding prostitution and sex work to understand their for the identity and position of prostitution and or sex work in Uganda.

A historical background of sex work situates the practice within class and gendered identity politics, where those who sell sex for money were and are still looked at negatively and labelled prostitutes. Within this background, there are contextual, socio-cultural, historical, and time-specific differences in the way sex work has been perceived. Two major

positions inform the discussion about prostitution; the abolitionist school of thought, where selling sex is castigated and viewed as a practice that objectifies those engaged in it, often erroneously viewed as women only, and the sex positivist school – the neoliberal school of thought where sex work is perceived to be a profession that people can choose freely to engage in to earn income. With this broad lens, debates are used to analyse the data on discourses about the identities of female sex workers obtained from the fieldwork done in the Kampala and Gulu Districts.

Historical context and Debates about sex work and prostitution

While sex work has been legalised in some European countries, such as Sweden, Finland, and Germany, it remains illegal in most parts of Europe (Levy & Pye, 2014). In the United States of America, sex work is illegal in all states except Nevada and Maine². In Africa, some literature show that sex work is legal only in Ethiopia, Mali, Madagascar, Benin.³ Other literature includes Senegal as one of the countries on the African continent where sex work has been legalised (Tamale 2011). Most African countries consider sex work illegal (Mgabuko and Smith 2011). Activities such as living off

¹ In this paper, I use the label prostitute and sex worker interchangeably as I interrogate the meanings and attitudes towards each of the nouns. When analysing negative discourses, the term prostitute is more often used, and I focus my analysis on such meanings related to the negative side. When there is a level of affirmation, the discourse shifts to the positive, and the term sex worker becomes more applicable.

² Nevada Prostitution Laws found at <https://decriminalizesex.work/Nevada-prostitution-laws/>

³ See: <http://www.thrillist.com/travel/nation/legal-prostitution-world-map-of-every-country-that-has-legal-prostitution>

the earnings of prostitution and soliciting and procuring the services of prostitutes are equally considered illegal and criminalised by many African countries, including Uganda (The Ugandan Penal Code Act, 2014).

With globalisation, sex trade has become a non-circumventing global phenomenon. In practice, the movements of sex workers from rural to urban spaces have now become movements from developing to developed countries and vice versa⁴. With trade liberalisation, governments are encouraging private sector-led development, and the poorest of the poor women who sell sex in exchange for money are left unprotected from capitalist exploitation. The United Nations International Labour Organisation's 2008 Report calls for the economic recognition of the sex industry to be legalised so that sex workers can be extended legal working rights to enable them to operate in a free and safe working environment with good working conditions. For countries like Burma, Thailand, and some States in the United States of America that earn taxes and revenues from prostitution, the attempt to condemn and outlaw prostitution may not yield positive results because sex work is a huge source of income (O'Connell, (2002).

The study sought to determine the social perceptions of the place and identity of sex workers in Ugandan society. This article begins by defining

a prostitute and or sex worker. It then presents the discourses surrounding the identities of sex workers. Finally, it presents conclusions on how these discourses impact gender identity and the place of women and men involved in the sex trade in Uganda today.

There are two main debates surrounding prostitution and sex work in the literature. First, pro-abolitionists consider sex work to be negative and exploitative of the people engaged in it, thus advocating for its abolition. Second, sex positivists consider sex work as empowering and push for it to be regulated to give those involved the right to safety.

Pro-abolitionists, like Radin, (1996), argue that market forces coerce women to sell their bodies for sex. Barry (1984) refers to this sale as sexual slavery orchestrated by the capitalist industry. According to Pateman (1988), prostitution ensures that men have patriarchal rights and access to women's bodies beyond what Marxist critics focus on--the alienation and exploitation of the female body. Although it has been continuously recognised that men are also engaged in prostitution, it continues to be viewed as a predominantly female activity in most societies. Therefore, the oppression that comes with it is viewed as a form of gender-based violence that affects women more than men.

Dworkin (1981, 1993) also argued that commercial sex is a form of violence against women and a crime. To Dworkin, "... commercial sex

⁴ Coskun Emel, 2018 did a research on Ugandan migrants in Turkey who resort to sex work for survival.

work is a form of rape enforced by poverty,” and based on “... the assumption that women exist for men’s sexual enjoyment, that all men ‘need’ sex, or that bodily integrity of women is irrelevant...” (Dworkin in Chinyere 2011:351).

Gerassi (2015) complementing the latter scholar’s views argue that sex work is violence against women which is enshrined in the patriarchal culture of societies that consider women to be sex objects who should be exploited at will. To her, sex in exchange for money or materials can never be free of charge. In patriarchal systems, women’s bodies become market capital.

According to Gerassi, most societies are patriarchal, and sexism exists in such societies to exploit women sexually. Gerassi further argues that the patriarchal sex industry in such societies look at women as sex objects available to satisfy what has been a long line of male domination and sexual control of women. Gerassi also cites Dobash and Dobash’s (1979), study, which contextualises sex work as satisfying the patriarchal social order which gives men privilege and promotes gender-based violence and male dominance in all sexual relations. “Sexual commerce provides a patriarchal right of access to women’s bodies, thus perpetuating women’s subordination to men” (Gerassi, 2015: 80).

The second debate surrounding sex work comes from sex positivists. Sex positivists view sex work as a

human rights issue. According to sex-positivists, those who engage in sex work are engaged in a legitimate trade, and therefore, their agency should be protected. Monto (2004), states that prostitution is viewed as a commodification and selling of the body or self, as an exchange of sexual services for money or other goods and services (Marjolein 2001).

The term sex work has been viewed more positively by libertarian radical feminists as work performed by entrepreneurs, self-employed, and empowered agents who use their sexuality to make money. Wardlow (2004) argues that the term sex work gives women agency because it suggests an income-generating activity rather than a totalising identity. Those who advocate for the use of the term sex work perceive it to be culturally more neutral than prostitution which implies judgement. According to Wardlow, the terminology is a political assertion which indicates that monetised sex is a kind of labour like other forms of labour that should be remunerated, made safe, and legal. O’Connell (2002), discussed the merits and demerits of using both labels-prostitute versus sex worker-arguing that it breeds discrimination against people involved in the sex trade.

O’Connell (2002) argues that demonising prostitution through moral lenses makes it even more unsafe for women who engage in the trade. It shifts the debate away from protecting the rights of those who work in the industry and focuses only on morality.

To place the identity question in perspective, it is necessary to identify the debates that inform the practice and safety of sex work and prostitution.

Tong (2009) cites two perspectives within radical feminism that explain different views on prostitution. Radical libertarians such as Gayle Robin (1975) had views that contested the pro-abolitionist perspectives expressed earlier. Gayle argues that all sex is good; it is the judgement that we pass on to it that makes some sexual acts appear bad. She blames contemporary society for favouring sex between married heterosexual couples bent on procreating children. Such 'normalisation' of sexual relations, she argues represses other forms of sexual relations like "... causal sex for pleasure, bisexual, homosexual, lesbian, transsexual, transvestite, fetishist, sadomasochists", sex workers, and "those whose eroticism crosses transgenerational boundaries." (Tong 2009: 66). The sex positivist debate is enshrined in the pro-rights sex workers' movement which aims to protect the sex workers' rights by recognising sex work as a form of labour that needs to be protected.

According to Johanna Kantola and Judith Squires (2004), sex work is a service rendered to society to meet the needs of those who can pay for it. Citing the way sex work is performed in legally accepted places in the United Kingdom, Kantola and Squires argue that women can enter and exit sex work based on their free will. More

recent feminist scholarship from 2000 onwards tends to advance this debate further. Lena Edlund and Evelyn Korn (2002) argue that prostitution is business and it brings income to those involved and to the countries that have legalised it. By 2002, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand had between 0.2 and 1.5% of the female population working as sex workers. Sex workers contributed between 2 to 14% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of these countries. According to Korn and Edlund, these sex workers directly contribute to national development. In their study of patterns of prostitution in the developed world, Korn and Edlund found that there has been a steady decrease in the number of prostitutes because female incomes have increased. This means that the more women were employed in well-paying jobs, the less likely they would want to continue working as sex workers. Sex work is considered as legitimate labour, a trade that one enters into voluntarily to make money. Without other jobs, sex work remains an acknowledged source of livelihood in such contexts.

From another perspective, sex positivists view sex work as similar to marriage. To some sex positivists, sex, whether within or outside marriage, is a source of exchange for women for material goods or for children. This is based on the view that married women exchange sex for reproduction while sex workers exchange sex for money. "... a prostitute sells non-

reproductive sex, commercial sex, a wife sells reproductive sex (sex plus children) (Edlund and Korn 2002).” This perspective can be controversial because it assumes that all marital sexual relations end up with reproduction as the primary goal. There are different types of marital families, and these diversities ought to be recognised as well. However, it is not without merit.

In other feminist literature, married women have indeed been viewed more or less as prostitutes, as those who use sex to gain what they want. Jeffreys (2004) argues that marriage gives men strong entitlements to women’s bodies, and because of this, prostitution and marriage are the same. Among the Baganda, the *Senga*, a paternal aunt to the family, is instrumental in teaching young girls how to give pleasure to their men. Tamale’s study on the roles of the *Senga* in Buganda show that their advice to young girls joining marriage encourages girls to be like prostitutes using advice such as “Be a nice, humble wife, but turn into a *Malaya* (prostitute) in your bedroom!” (Tamale 2005: 27). It is this type of home schooling that teaches wives to use sex to gain what they need. There are common sayings that encourage women in need of favours from their husbands to introduce the topic in bed. While some women see this as married women exercising agency and using sex as a point of negotiation, others have tended to look at that form of negotiation as

warped, exploitative to women, and a discourse instigated by men for male gain. This cements men’s control over sex in marriage which limits women’s authority over the same.

Methodology

The study was conducted in the Gulu and Kampala Districts within the city centres. The two cities were chosen because the urban areas provided a market for trade, subsequently offering easier access to sex workers. In terms of positionality, Gulu was chosen because the researcher understood Luo which made it easier to communicate with the respondents. Kampala posed a problem with language, so the researcher had to rely on research assistants to conduct the interviews and translation. Secondly, the two cities provided the much-needed contrast; Gulu is mostly occupied by the Acholi and other Nilotes, while Kampala is a melting pot of different ethnic groups. Gulu therefore provided the rather closed, rural urban group while Kampala provided the variety of ethnic and socio-cultural differences that was needed to contrast cultural perceptions about sex work within the more cosmopolitan, and more urbanised city.

The study population comprised female sex workers. The study used snowball sampling which was more appropriate given the secretive nature of the sex trade (Artkinson and Flint 2014). Qualitative in-depth and open-ended interviews were conducted in

safe places where the women could talk freely. In Kampala, the sex workers were identified through the Reproductive Health Uganda-Bwaise Branch, which has had programmes and a good relationship with sex workers in the Bwaise neighbourhood for a long time. According to Apolot (2022), Kimombasa is a hotspot for sex workers. In Gulu, the sex workers were identified through establishing connections with *boda boda*⁵ riders, who then helped to randomly link the researcher to the sex workers who were working on the streets of Gulu town at night. A total of 18 women were interviewed⁶. All respondents' names were changed to ensure confidentiality.

Desk research was conducted to analyse the discourses surrounding sex work and prostitution in Uganda. Discourse analysis as a methodology helps uncover underlying socio-cultural meanings and power dynamics. Because language is socially constructed, the gendered meanings that language, especially nouns, carry show societal attitudes, norms, and power dynamics within them. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was used because it is significant for the analysis

of the power dynamics and ideologies that language reflects and shapes (Fairclough, 2020, Wennerstrom, 2016). From the fieldwork, personal narratives of labels were collected and analysed using content and discourse analysis (Fairclough 2020) where the meanings of the names and labels associated with prostitution and sex work were decoded in connection with gendered perceptions, socio-cultural forms of knowledge, and linguistic nuances. The analysis peeled back the meanings that lay beneath the surface of words, as explained by Jorgensen & Phillips 2002. The meanings of the words provided by the respondents were analysed, compared, and contrasted with gendered socio-cultural perspectives that defined those labels in Uganda as used in social discourse and as found in the literature reviewed.

Discourses Surrounding the Identity of the Sex Worker

Respondents were asked to identify how their clients refer to them and

⁵ *Boda boda* refers to motorcycles that are commonly used for quick transportation in most cities in Uganda.

⁶ My choice to interview women only does not run away from my earlier criticism of the societal discourses where prostitution and the prostitute are mostly identified as women. The scope of my study was limited to women only, even though I was aware that there were some men who were also prostitutes.

also to explain the meanings of those references or names. The details of the labels are in Figure 1 on the next page:

Figure 1: Names of Sex Workers and their meaning

Kampala	
Name	Meaning
Sexy	I have a slim body that appeals to men sexually
Call Girl	They get me clients on just a call a way and I am always at their service
<i>Nekoleragyange</i>	I do my own business/ I am self employed
<i>Kamaama</i>	I look after needy men (sexually)
<i>Neeko</i>	I do my own business/ I am self employed
<i>Kawomera</i>	My clients say that I am sweet in bed
Black	My skin is Black and beautiful
Chocolate	They sometimes call me Chocolate also because of my skin colour
<i>Kakumukila</i>	I am so sweet
<i>Ndibesa</i>	They are dying for me
<i>Malaya</i>	Prostitute
<i>Musubuzi</i>	I purchase penises only
<i>Kiteleke</i>	Because the person next to you can know what is in your (luggage) bag
Slut	Darling in prostitution
Prostitute	I sell my body
Tomato seller	This is also euphemism for prostitute
<i>Namazzi</i>	A person who ejaculates a lot of vaginal fluids'
<i>Nalwewuba</i>	A woman who never settles for one man
<i>Nsangayo</i>	You will find me there

Gulu	
<i>Malaya</i>	Means a woman with no husband of her own You do not want a husband and any man is yours
Spoilt	One who does not give respect to her people
<i>Agoo</i>	Men and women who roam around at night.
<i>Agoo</i>	is Chameleon in Luo; <i>Agoo</i> can therefore also mean someone who changes colour according to his/ her circumstance

<i>Aguu</i>	It means you have nowhere to stay; if evening comes, you have to go to the street.
<i>Jo Acate</i>	Those who sell themselves
<i>Apoli</i>	The duiker. To be called, <i>Apoli</i> means you are a parasite, a detoother ⁷ .

The above represents a selective sample of the names and meanings of prostitutes in the Ugandan parlance, especially on the Kampala and Gulu streets. Given the diversity of ethnicities in Uganda, these identities and labels are only representative.

The findings therefore show that the most common name used to identify sex workers in Gulu and Kampala is *Malaya*. *Malaya* comes from Kiswahili, where it means prostitute, and this word has been absorbed into most Ugandan languages. *Malaya* has a negative connotation. All the respondents expressed a dislike for the label *Malaya* and explained that it is degrading. This finding resonates with the literature which shows distrust for ‘city women’ in Kampala in the 1960s; they were historically referred to as ‘bad women’ (Musisi, 2001). When asked how these different names made them feel, the responses varied. Some respondents felt indifferent to some of the names they were called. The responses showed positive and negative representations of the sex

workers. For example, being called *Neekeo* made some respondents feel that their services were recognised and appreciated.

When called “Musubuzi,” I feel good because I am not insulted, and when I am referred to as “Kiteleke,” I feel that I am secretive. (Gloria 25, Kampala)

When people call me “Kawomela”, I feel praised, and when they refer to me as “Ndibosa”, it boosts my morale. (Angela 28, Kampala). The above constitutes the positive discourses surrounding the names *Musubuzi*, *Kawomela*, *Kiteleke*, and *Ndibosa* used to identify sex workers. The respondents felt happier with the more creative names were both derived from street slang and from the corridors of their workplaces; names that enticed clients to believe they were the best at their game, like *Kawomela* (the sweet one) or *Namazzi* (the juicy one).

The negative names given to sex workers include labels such as *Nsangayo* which loosely translates as ‘you will find me here,’ showing a sense of hopelessness and homelessness, a woman in waiting. This is a label given to women who had no address apart from the streets where they sat and waited for their customers, which was basically the only address they had. Other labels like *Malaya*, *Apoli*, *Jo Acate*, *Aguu*, the spoilt one and slut

⁷ A *Detoother* is a term used to identify people who do not like to spend on themselves but who enjoy to manipulate and use other people’s money especially when they are taken out for an evening. In most cases, *detoothers* are women. In social discourse, a *detoother* fits the image of a robber. The hole a detoother leaves in the victim’s pocket is equated to the painful experience that someone with a tooth ache undergoes when their bad tooth has been removed.

are negative and make the women feel insulted, as evidenced in the following response:

When people refer to me as “The spoilt one”, I feel pain and ashamed (Susan 36, Gulu).

These negative labels appended to sex work influence how society treats prostitutes and sex workers in Uganda.

When asked whether they considered what they do to be work, thus the label sex workers, some of the women interviewed from Kampala agreed that the work they do is selling sex and ideally they qualify to be called sex workers. Half of the women interviewed from Gulu also thought that what they do is sex work. They provided some reasons to justify their actions:

I do what I do consciously; therefore, sex work is a job. (Natasha 22 years old, Kampala)

It is my source of survival, she said. (Kay, 30 years old, Kampala).

“I can be called a sex worker rightly because in the evening that is what I do.” (Harriet 26 years old, Gulu).

“I also call myself Malaya because this is my source of survival,” (Nancy, 21 years old, Gulu)”

However, half of the respondents from Gulu thought that what they did was not work at all. To this group, sex work is not a job because they hate it and would like to stop doing it. Some explained that they joined prostitution because of the difficult conditions of their lives. To some, prostitution is not

something they would have wished to do if they had an alternative job. Even when they said that what they do can be called sex work, some of the women respondents argued that they may not consider themselves sex workers, citing the following reasons.

I just make my money; I do not see it as work. (Sophia 25, Kampala)

To me it is a hobby. Although sometimes I consider it a job, because others call me a sex worker, I hate it because it has many bad things. (Martha 22, Kampala)

Another said she could not call herself a sex worker because *she was not paid a salary. (Joyce 26, Gulu).*

From these responses, it was clear that the sex workers interviewed recognised that sex work earned them income and provided for their livelihoods, even though they were not very happy with it. Although several reasons have been advanced to explain why women engage in prostitution, economic hardship tops the list of reasons why most women join prostitution in Uganda. Ten of the 16 women interviewed joined prostitution to earn money for different reasons; five of the women were stuck with hungry children after separating from their fathers and had to sell sex to feed their children⁸.

A critical analysis of the discourses surrounding sex work, as mentioned

⁸ The numbers cited here are not meant to generalise for the whole population but rather to contextualise the representativeness within the sample chosen. This is a qualitative research, and I do not wish to claim that these experiences are generalisable to the entire study population. I claim that the experiences are singular but valid and contextual within the contexts quoted.

by the respondents above, can be clustered into three major thematic areas. The first discourse is derived from the economic reasons behind the decision to engage in sex work. The second theme deals with discourses surrounding the pleasurable aspects of sex work. The third discourse relate that exposes the sexist and demeaning nature of sex work.

Economic nature of sex trade and the accompanying discourses

The following were the economic reasons why most of the women interviewed engaged in sex work.

Economic Reasons for joining sex work

“I dropped out of school at 17 years when I got pregnant in Senior 4. I got my twin babies but could not look after them because the man denied responsibility. Since then, my friends told me about the fastest way of making money.” (Queen 27, Kampala).

“I had problems; my husband was a student, and I was staying with my mother-in-law, and she started abusing me. My mother picked me up and took me home, and I went with the child whom I had to take care of. Because I never went to school, no one wanted to employ me. So this was my last resort.” (Agnes, 21, Gulu).

“Sometimes you have children, but your husband has left you, and you have to feed the children. You think about how to survive; and how you are going to pay school fees for the children. You also want a good life among people. (Harriet 26, Gulu).

When my husband died, my in-laws took his bank account book away. My brother in-law grabbed all the property, and I was left with nothing to live on. That is why I joined prostitution. (Ayerango 29, Gulu).

“I was at Makerere in first year and my friend introduced me to a group of pimps who used to take us to night clubs and got money from men on our behalf.” (Nalulange 25, Kampala).

“When my husband rejected me, I started looking for money because I wanted a future for my child. My friends introduced me to sex work. The father of my child does not help me. He is not around but is away in Kapchorwa. He doesn’t know that I do sex work.” (Joyce 26, Gulu).

“My mother had died, and I had nowhere to start from. So I talked to my close friend Angel who introduced me to this business of commercial sex.” (Fatuma 27, Kampala).

“My Mummy died when I was seven years old, and my father remarried another woman with whom we could not coordinate. I moved in with my aunt, who lived in Bwaise at the time. I could go with her to the bar. Ever since customers started using me and after that they gave me money, it motivated me.” (Angela 28, Kampala).

“My sister invited me to Kampala to come and visit her, and on getting to Kampala, she was staying with other women (friends) in Kisenyi. She told me that a woman must find a way to survive in Kampala. Since then I joined sex work.” (Kay 30, Kampala).

Underneath these economic reasons, there are a couple of underlying gender issues that are responsible for women joining sex work. The mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship represents a relationship of power where the older mother exercises power, over the younger daughter-in-law. In one of the cases above, the absence of the husband made it difficult for a young woman to continue staying in her marital home with her mother in-law. This point to a gender concern; women who are married off young without any source of income are disempowered and struggle for survival if their husbands leave or die. Without personal finances, a woman is forced to sell her body to feed herself and her child(ren).

Another economic reason that comes out prominently in the above extracts is the economic pressures of daily survival, lack of school fees, lack of tuition, and managing pregnancy alone without a spouse. When these economic reasons are compared to the discourses surrounding sex work, the labels given to sex workers begin to reflect these economic pressures. The discourses that point to the economic nature of sex work that were identified by the respondents reflect this pressure.

Jo Acate - those who sell themselves

Tomato seller - I sell my body

Nekoleragyange - I do my own business/
I am self employed

Musumbuji - I purchase penises only.

All the above names given to sex workers reflect the economic nature of the sex trade in the country. Sex work is commercial and performed for profit. The people who belong to this school of thought are the positivists who want sex work regulated so that they are provided a safe space for the work which either the economic conditions have forced them into or that which they choose to continue doing.

Sex workers' experiences are central to the analysis of these discourses for feminist scholarship at a broader level. According to feminist standpoint theory, experience is the beginning of knowledge. While cognizant of the assertion that women's experiences constitute knowledge, it is important to recognise the differences in women's experiences as

a further basis for understanding and theorising women's experiences. The recognition of these differences is based on arguments made by several Afro-feminist scholars, including Oyeronke Oyewumi, Obioma Nnaemeka, Molaria Ogundipe Leslie, and Chandra Mohanty, who argue that there is no single category of women.

Mohanty (1984) argues that women should not be constituted as a homogenous group based on their sex because, besides the biological similarities, there are age, cultural, historical, ethnic, economic, and other forms of differences that define and constitute the category women. I use Mohanty's idea to develop my standpoint in this study and recognise the situated knowledge that Ugandan sex workers bring to the table in presenting truths – subjective truths about their experiences. These truths are situated, located, and differentiated by the categories of women represented in the sample of the women interviewed for this study in Gulu and Kampala. These differences further help to explain and interrogate the Western-centric debate between pro-abolitionists and sex positivists cited earlier. What were the experiences of sex workers? How did their experiences advance the empowerment and sex-positivist debates of Western feminism? What aspects of the 'situatedness' informed our understanding of the experiences of the Ugandan prostitutes? These are very significant questions, answers

to which I sought to understand the place of the sex workers in Kampala and Gulu.

The majority of the respondents had more negative experiences than positive ones while plying their trade. Negative experiences include customers refusing to pay them money after, some clients refusing to use condoms, some clients strip them and leave them naked, some want rough sex, and some verbally abuse them. Others complained about their clients stealing their phones. There are also customers who come and pick up a sex worker and pretend to request individual services, and then take them to a room full of men and force them to serve all of them. Other problems include condoms bursting and exposing sex workers to the risks of STIs and HIV/AIDS. At times, they are threatened with violence; threatened that their throats will be slit open or that they will be chopped with a Machete/*panga*, especially when the client wants to dodge payment after enjoying their services. Comparing the negative experiences of respondents from Gulu with those from Kampala, one finds that the two common negative experiences were found: customers refusing to pay and customers refusing to use condoms. This implies that there are more economic and health risks for sex workers in general, but the number of refusals to pay in Gulu was higher than refusals by clients to pay in Kampala. Sex workers are exposed to violence, and there is no mechanism to protect

them. The research shows that the sex workers in Gulu were more disempowered and disadvantaged than those in Kampala. One of the respondents shared her experience of violence as follows:

Other customers take you and say that there is no money. If you insist and say, 'give me my money', he picks a knife. There was one who took me to his house and did that to me. I do not know his name, but I know his house. (Joyce 26, Gulu). These are some of the forms of gender-based violence that sex workers are exposed to. In Gulu, there was a case where a sex worker had been strangled the night before I conducted the interviews, and one of our respondents narrated the grisly story to us.

Most of the girls who die do so because sex work has become very risky in Gulu. Yesterday, they killed one of us at the Custom Corner. We went and saw her. They broke her neck. They found an ID (Identity Card) and a wallet at the scene. It was picked, and the owner of the ID was traced (Ayerango 29, Gulu).

Unfortunately, it was not possible to follow up to determine whether the suspect whose ID cards were found near the body of the deceased was arrested. The sex workers collected money to take their friend's body home for burial. Such is the solidarity among street sex workers when crises arise. Overall, the ratio of negative experiences of sex workers in Gulu was higher than that in Kampala. Workers in Kampala complained more about police raids than harassment from clients. However,

not all the experiences were negative. The positive experiences of sex workers with customers in Kampala can be summarised as follows: customers are more understanding, friendlier, and good to the sex workers. The women have developed a network of people whom they alert in case they leave for the night and do not return. The respondents from Kampala also explained that they have semi-permanent clients who come specifically for their services, and these customers pay very well. They also have access to good health services because of organisations like Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU) and Most At Risk Population Initiative (MARPI) – Mulago, which help them access health services. Some can afford to visit good private clinics. In Gulu, the positive experiences reported were few in comparison, although some reported occasionally having customers who pay well. The sex workers also stressed that they have more customers on days when there are dances in town because many clients tend to come on those days. Overall, the findings show that money comes first in determining good or bad relations between sex workers and their customers. As if we see from the summary above, the majority of the sex workers entered the trade because of economic hardships, yet they also feel exploited by the trade, which means that there is a need for change. Unless the conditions surrounding sex work are improved, sex work will continue to be a risky venture.

The pleasurable nature of sex work

The question of class cannot be ignored in the situational analysis of the experiences of these sex workers. Kampala tends to have high-class prostitutes who ply their trade in posh hotels, compared to low-class prostitutes who operate from the streets. Of those interviewed, two were in the high-class category. They did not have any negative experiences to share because they said that they operate from high-class secure places and serve high-class customers only. The two respondents high-class sex workers shared this experience:

According to where I conduct my business from, my customers are a bit understanding and considerate so I don't have many issues with them so long as we negotiate (Natasha 22, Kampala).

It is not bad. Recently, when the Pope visited Uganda (in 2015), I spent a week with a Mzungu who gave me 150 dollars for being good in bed. (Nalulange 25, Kampala).

These were the categories that identified themselves as sex workers and not prostitutes. Their narratives showed that they had a choice of what to do and where. They were "Call girls"- whenever a client needed them, he would call, and they would negotiate their pay and the place to go ahead of time. In such categories, the discourses of sex work were associated with pleasure. Reflecting on the names identified earlier by respondents, the pleasurable nature

of sex work was captured in the following labels:

Kawomera: My clients say I am sweet.

Kakumikila: I am sweet.

Namazzi: A person who ejaculates a lot of vaginal fluids.

Ndibesa: They were dying for me.

To move the discourse from the negatives of the identity of a prostitute to sex work and pleasure, many things need to be considered. The social conditions of sex workers are critical. As long as they are not economically empowered, they cannot control their sexual activities. Economic control translates into the ability to negotiate fair transactions in a safe space.

The discourse surrounding sex work as pleasurable is therefore influenced by economic gains which depend on social class, as can be seen from the above discussions. The rich sex workers can negotiate better packages for themselves and they will identify sex work with pleasure, while the poorer sex workers are pressed by the need to make whatever little money they can and are usually disadvantaged, exploited, and labelled derogatively as prostitutes.

Demeaning and derogative discourses associated with sex work

All six sex workers interviewed from Gulu had at one time or another been arrested and were released after paying a fine of between five thousand to sixty-five thousand

Ugandan shillings⁹. In Kampala, only two out of the twelve women interviewed had not been arrested by the police, and their reason was that they operate from very high class locations that were not raided by the police. Some respondents accused the police of coercion and of getting sex in exchange for not charging or arresting them. Some accused the police of stealing their money when they were arrested.

The following labels reflect the derogatory nature of the identities associated with sex work. In fact, the label prostitute is considered negative in social discourse, as explained earlier.

Malaya/ Alaya - Prostitute

Musubuꞑi - The one who purchases penises

Kiteleke - the one next to you knows what is in your luggage

Nalwewuba – The one (woman) who never settles for one (man) only

Nsangayo - You will find me here

Aguu - Homeless

Apoli - the sly duiker

Agoo - The chameleon

The meanings behind these identities reflect discourses in the broader socio-cultural context, showing the relationship between meanings and societal perceptions. Prostitutes are considered homeless. She changes colour like a chameleon, implying that she cannot be trusted. She is a sly trickster like the duiker, who looks

beautiful and innocent on the outside, but steals from farmers' gardens. In fact, there is a song in Luo about an *Apoli* who chews money that has been recalibrated into modern rap which youngsters now enjoy from the Luo entertainment industry¹⁰.

The sex worker is considered a vagabond, a home-breaker, a woman who has failed to get married, and a woman who poaches on the husbands of other women who are properly married. She is a service provider of goods that most people will not mention in public discourse, yet, that is the identity she chooses to have—a *Musubuꞑi* -the one who purchases penises.

Conclusion

These demeaning discourses surrounding sex work point to the problems that sex workers face. The debate should shift from abolishing sex work because it disempowers women to more nuanced, concrete realities that social discourses expose us to. These discourses mainly emphasise the social conditions (class position) which drive some women to sell sex and the structural reasons that condition their engagement. The main critique of the sex positivist

¹⁰ *Apoli Apoli Camo Poto* is a song that was derived from oral folklore and modernised into a rap version available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daHtAUJj0LI>

In the original folk dance song, Apoli is a sly, beautiful animal that was notorious for feeding on the crops of farmers. In the lyrics, the farmer wonders how such a beautiful animal can be so destructive to crops. In the rap lyrics, Apoli eats money; the Apoli of Kampala wears trousers like men and can chew money so badly from their victims.

⁹ One (1) United States Dollar is equivalent to between 3500-3800 Uganda shillings depending on the rates in the stock market.

school is that they tend to argue that once sex work is legal, sex workers will have better access to safe working conditions. However, they tend to ignore the existence of gendered social structures that would make the operationalisation of sex work difficult in society, even if it were to be legalised. These discourses show examples of some of these gendered attitudes embedded in the social fabric of society. This implies that to make sex work potentially empowering, we must first focus on eliminating the structural reasons which make women more vulnerable to moral judgement, poverty, and exploitation. It is not only about the moral stigma attached to prostitution; it is about identifying the negative discourses and empowering society to look at the humanity of sex workers by understanding their lives as a whole.

Therefore, more emphasis must be placed on protecting sex workers from all forms of economic, gendered, attitudinal, and institutional exploitation. They should be provided a safe working environment, safe health services, and affordable judicial services as the work gets decriminalised. Alternatively, for those who are forced to go into the trade due to economic hardship, the

government should offer them loans as business start-up capital or offer alternative job opportunities.

In conclusion, sex work in Uganda is more about survival than work. Sex workers are mainly perceived as prostitutes, and vagabonds rather than as empowered women in charge of their bodies and destinies, as seen in the many negative discourses about sex workers. There is no significant difference in the perception of sex workers in Gulu and Kampala. It is a practice that is characterised by negativity, and the experiences of the majority of women have not been good. Given other opportunities, they would abandon it and earn money through other jobs. The debate around sex work should move beyond the Western-centric discussion between pro-abolitionists and sex positivists to consider context-specific realities that may warrant protecting sex workers from harm inflicted upon them by individuals as well as institutions. These discourses surrounding sex work can be used to rethink and redesign a middle position where social realities inform policy, activism, and identity politics of sex workers in Uganda to govern how they are treated by the public.

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***Tonto* – Archiving Memory of a vital socio-cultural Local Brew with a rich Vocabulary facing Extinction**

Gilbert Gumoshabe and Josephine Ahikire***

Abstract

This article examines *tonto* as an indigenous drink, its rich and specialised vocabulary, the indigenous knowledge process of making it, and the materials as well as the social and/or gender relations, rituals, and traditions associated with its making. *Tonto* is part of indigenous knowledge that has faced the wrath of forces of ‘modernity’ and its imperatives. According to Mulumba (2017), *tonto* is a short form of *tontomera* – (which means “Do not bump into me because of your drunkard state”). For centuries, *tonto* as a drink has been at the centre of all socio-political and economic activities among the Banyankore and other tribes, such as Baganda. However, key societal changes have significantly minimised the place of, and more or less demonised, *tonto* and its rich heritage in the social milieu. The specific interest of this article is that the rich heritage of *tonto* and the language associated with its production and consumption is rapidly disappearing and will soon become extinct. Fewer and fewer people are engaged in its processing and consumption, and the vocabulary for it is so specialised that inactive use will gradually lead to its extinction. The information was generated through extended conversations with purposively selected participants in the Bushenyi District. In essence, this archival initiative aims to preserve the specialised vocabulary associated with *tonto* and its threatened language register.

Keywords: *Tonto*, Heritage, Language Register; Vocabulary, Archive

Introduction

Tonto, according to Mulumba (2017), is short form of *tontomera* – (which means “Don’t bump into me because of your drunkard state”). For centuries, *tonto* has been at the centre of all socio-political and economic activities among the Banyankore and other tribes, such as Baganda. It does not have an equivalent name in English, as *tonto* is indigenous to the Banyankore cultural setup, although some sections of people erroneously refer to it as a wine. The indigenous knowledge associated with its production and its rich vocabulary have been passed on from one generation to another through action and word of mouth. At present, there is no known written literature on the process involved in its making, while its vocabulary has also not been documented, a situation that may make the vocabulary extinct. What exists are mainly the ‘evils’ or negatives associated with it as indicated in *Amaarwa n’eminywere yaago* by Benedicto Mubangizi (1978), and little of its positive importance.

In this sense, *Tonto* is part of indigenous knowledge that has faced the wrath of forces of ‘modernity’ and its imperatives. It is a question of time that the indigenous knowledge associated with *tonto* and its rich vocabulary associated with it shall no longer be, possibly in the next decade or two. Fewer and fewer people are engaged in its processing, and its vocabulary is so specialised that inactive use will gradually lead to its extinction. This paper examines *tonto*

as an indigenous drink, its rich and specialised vocabulary, the indigenous knowledge process of making it, and the materials as well as the social and/or gender relations, rituals, and traditions associated with its making. The usage or importance and threat from modern drinks, religion, and the future of *Tonto* are addressed to predict its future and its threatened language register.

This analysis shows that there are critical threats. First, banana varieties for making *tonto* have experienced stiff commercial competition from edible banana varieties as the cash returns on the latter are higher. Many people have uprooted *embiire* in favour of *enyamwonyo* for sale. Moreover, the majority of urbanites who get good money tend to drink beer, wine, or whisky which are considered prestigious compared to *tonto*. As a result, *tonto* remains a drink for low-income earners and its price remains very low. This also undermined its existence. As a result, *enyamwonyo* gained more commercial value than *embiire*. Similarly, there is a vivid threat owing to the rising popularity of ‘modern’ beer, wine, and spirits. These have undermined *tonto* and made it look inferior, despite its rich heritage. These drinks have substituted *tonto* at most functions where they play an important role.

Foreign religions have also not spared *tonto* either. Although it is not as addictive as spirits like *waragi*, which is now made from ethanol and water, it has been over-demonised

by different religious denominations. The Born-again section of the Anglican Church led the crusade against *tonto*, and it is virtually rare to find an Anglican household that engages in *tonto* production. This was followed by Catholics, especially the charismatic renewals who did the same. *Embiire* banana varieties were massively uprooted, especially in the 1990s in favour of the *enyamwonyo* varieties. Only a few diehards with *embiire* bananas remained.

The interest in this rather side-line phenomenon of *tonto* production originated from concerns about African languages and how some of the processes that contribute to their richness are now falling by the way side. This paper was based on in-depth conversations with respondents in Bushenyi. The respondents were from Kigoma, Kikuba, and Bunyarigi villages, and were selected through snowball sampling. The first two persons were selected through consultation with merry makers at a local bar selling *tonto* who then provided directions to the homes of those known for brewing *tonto*. Indeed, as a requirement for purposive sampling, all five key informants were quite knowledgeable about *tonto* and the associated language and practice. To further enrich this proposition, a video recording of some of the *tonto* processes was made with the consent of the participants in the same area. The video recording process also enabled deeper conversations on the associated vocabulary and its evolution.

The varieties of bananas involved in Making *tonto*

Tonto is extracted from an indigenous banana variety, *musa* spp. The exact banana type is not clear as encyclopaedia Britannica names classifies bananas under the botanical name of Musaceae, the banana family of plants (order Zingiberales), consisting of two general types namely, *Musa* and *Ensete*, with about 50 species native to Africa, Asia, and Australia. The common banana (*M. sapientum*) is a subspecies of the plantain (*M. paradisiaca*). The encyclopedia identifies both as important food plants and names plants that are not edible but as flowers.

Among the Banyankore, the banana variety used in the making of *tonto* is locally called *embiire*. It is primarily used for *tonto* brewing but may only be edible during severe famine. In such unusual circumstances, *embiire* varieties are made to become edible in the form of *rwabikona*, *empaate*, *ekicumbe*, and *oburiga*. The process of making them edible is deeply rooted in indigenous knowledge where the *empaate* involves peeling them while placing them in water and leaving them there for some minutes and rinsing them five times or more. *Rwabikona* involves peeling and drying on the sun for several days before cooking. For *ekicumbe*, this involves peeling and washing numerous times before cooking when mixed with beans. When fully cooked, they are mingled, allowed to stay overnight, and eaten when cold. If

this is not done, the prepared *ekicumbe meal* tastes sour.

There are different varieties of bananas, namely *embiire*, *engambaani*, *enyarukira*, *butende*, *musa*, *kayingya*, and *kabaragara*. The different types can be differentiated from *enyamwonyo* - the edible variety- by looking at the banana stem and the mature bunch itself. Initial identification is purely indigenous knowledge that can be passed on from one generation to another. The proven procedure for identifying the *embiire* varieties that resemble the edible varieties is mainly by knowing and earmarking their location within the banana plantation, with this information passed on by parents to the children as they grow. In a situation where one enters the banana plantation and does not know how to identify them, there are two distinct ways. The first one is through the banana sheath. The *enyarukira* variety has a slightly longer banana sheath when it is young. As it grows, with its exact resemblance to the edible varieties, especially after cutting off the sheath, it becomes difficult to differentiate, to the extent that some families cook it only for them to notice that it is an *embiire* variety when food is ready and is found to be dark and sour. The second identification method is conscious peeling, in which the person peeling looks at the amount of sap that comes out. When very fresh, *enyarukira*, like any other *embiire* variety, produces large amount of sap. However, this is insufficient. When the sap indicates a possible *enyarukira* variety, another banana

is harvested and peeled, and two or three banana fingers are identified and cooked together. At the time of serving, if the variety is *enyarukira*, it will be quite distinct from the rest of the food because it is dark and sour. It should be noted that if more than three fingers are mixed and cooked, the taste and colour of the food changes.

The process and language of making tonto

The process of making *tonto* is elaborate and labourious. It begins with the cutting of mature *embiire* banana varieties. The varieties are cut in a process called *okutema embiire*. They are carried mainly on the head in a process called *okushomba embiire* to one place where *orwina*- a hole dug to about three feet deep – is piled together in an open place and allowed to stay overnight before they are clustered, locally called *okuhagura*, or the bunch is dissected into two called *okushatura* the next day. Some people harvest the *embiire* by cutting the banana stem, bending, and leaving them on their banana trees the night before the *okushomba embiire* is done. After clustering them (*okuhagura* or *okushatura*), they are packed in that pit – *orwina* in an orderly and compacted manner that preserves heat. *Orwina* is an inverted cone-shaped circular pit dug in the ground with a small square pit dug on its side. The square pit has a hole that connects to the *orwina* and is called *karongyero* or *karongyezo*, depending on its place in Ankole.

After clustering, they are left to dry the sticky sap or gum called *amakanca* for a short time. In this process, the people involved in the preparations cut banana leaves and remove part of the midrib in a process called *okwoboora endeere*. This is done to make the banana leaves flexible. The *orwina* is cleaned, and dry banana leaves (*amashansha*) are burnt inside there to make it warm. This is called *okubembera*. It is thought that *okubembera* ensures that some warmth remains in the *orwina*. If the *orwina* is new, the process is necessary. However, this may not be repeated for the subsequent use of *orwina*. Its continuous usage depends on the texture of the soil and whether it can generate heat on its own.

Banana leaves are then carefully laid in the *orwina* by ensuring that the sides of the *orwina* are not visible. The clustered bananas are placed in an orderly manner, which we may call parking. The entire process is known as the *okubanika*.



Okubanika - Source: Video Capture June 2025

The banana leaves are bent on top of the clusters when packed. As this process is going on, some people

are collecting decaying banana trees called *embooreera*. The *embooreera* is placed on top of the banana leaves, forming approximately four to five layers. Thereafter, the soil is dug around the *orwina* as a circular trench made around to channel water away in case of rain, and is also used to add another layer from the bottom. The soil covers the now-buried bananas halfway. The soil is placed in such a way that when it rains heavily, water does not enter inside the *orwina*, but is absorbed by the soil or drains away.

In the meantime, the *karongyezo* that had been dug on the side of the *orwina* is also covered with banana stems and four layers of fresh banana leaves. In the evening, dry millet chaff called *omweziga* or goat and sheep dropping – *amahurunguru* – or both combined are placed in the *karongyezo* and burnt. These may burn for about 24 hours, and generate heat that passes through the small round channel that connects to the *orwina*. The heat is instrumental in quickly ripening the bananas. This process of heating, called *okurongyeza* or *okubuubira*, is performed once a day for two or three days, mostly in the evening. On the third or fourth day, checking is done to see whether the bananas are ripe by drilling a small hole using one hand to reach the bananas. If they are not yet ripe, the small hole is covered with *embooreera* to prevent the heat from escaping, and the same hole is used some days after to check again. When they are found to be ripe, the soil and *embooreera* are removed, also known as *okushuuruura*, which some people call *okuteera eitaka*.

Bananas are left for one or two days depending on how ripe they are. When the heat is high, the banana leaves are removed from the top to allow the heat to escape for a few hours. If the heat is high, it is allowed to reduce slowly without uncovering the banana leaves. It should be noted that at times, the bananas may not get ripe in what is called *okukona*. Although rare, it can occur for various reasons. If this happens, either the entire process of *okubanika* is repeated, or more *embooreera* is added. If there are some that are ripe while others are not, the ripe ones are removed and squeezed, while those that are not ripe are put back, and the *okubanika* process is repeated all over again.

The process of making *tonto* continues with ripe bananas, now called *eminekye* out of *orwina*, in a process called *okubanura*. The banana peels, which are now very soft and easily detachable from the *eminekye*, are removed by hands in a process called *okutondora*.



Okutondora in progress Source: Ankole Beauty Spot facebook.com/1000 657944101115/posts/tontostep...

The hand-peeled bananas are put in a boat-shaped wooden open

vessel called *obwato*, at times called *ekibya*. In places where they do not have *obwato*, they use *orureebo*, a hide placed in a shallow hole dug into the ground. It is important to note that while all previous activities could be restricted to close family members, men in particular, *okutondora* tends to be a more collective activity done by all family members and neighbours, in most cases, clansmen and women. It is a social activity, and children like it most as they are able to eat the sweet bananas as they remove the peels. At times, children overeat the sweet bananas and develop stomach upsets called *okugwa-empibi*, literally meaning englut. In case the bananas are plenty, the *okutondora* is done in the evening, and they stay overnight. This is known as *okuraaza emitangye*. In the morning, when all the bananas have been pilled, pressing the banana, locally called *okunyuuka*, starts. This involves putting the grass that has been cut into pieces into the boat and squeezing them. The grass used for squeezing bananas can be speargrass - *omushojwa*, *eyojo*, *egunga*, or papyrus spikes-*obugaara*.

The cut grass is always harvested on the eve of squeezing ripe bananas. Able and energetic men squeeze using their feet, which is unwashed in some cases¹, they hold sticks called *emibindo* to support them and

¹ At times, such men may even have jiggers in their feet or visibly dirty feet, but that does not stop them from participating in the activity of *okunyuuka*. In contemporary times, members of modernised homes would not like to consume the juice squeezed by such a person.

to prevent them from falling. After the bananas have mingled with grass, they are turned using a stick that a person squeezing holds as support, from the sides upside down, in a process referred to as *okubindura ebitookye*. The purpose is to ensure that all squeezed bananas are mixed well with the grass. The squeezing continues, and after a while, some foam starts to form. This indicates that the juice is on its way. In case the foam is not seen, it is an indication that little energy is being exerted, and caution is taken as they might fail to bring juice, which is called *okurita*. Upon the first turning of the bananas called *okubindura* using *omubindo* and one leg, squeezing continues and juice starts to form. Pressing continues until the bananas are no longer in the form of banana juice dregs, called *ebituna*. The process of sieving juice begins when the juice is ready. This is known as the *okukamuura*. It involves raising the boat on one side using a banana stump and piling the bananas on the raised side to enable the juice to collect together. The first juice is concentrated and called *eshande y'omuti*. The concentrated juice is drawn using *ekishbare*, a drawing container from a calabash that is cut on the side, sieved using a funnel called *omutabo*, made out of the long neck of a calabash or weaved using papyrus reeds, and placed in large pots called *enkuute*. The *omutabo* has grass to sieve dregs called *ebituna*, which are put back in the boat for further squeezing as *okukamuura* goes on. After the first round of *okukamuura*, water is added to the

omukambi, a mixture of grass used in squeezing and banana dregs. The amount of water is usually proportional to the *eshande y'omuti* or concentrated juice. If *eshande y'omuti* is five pots called *enkuute*, four *enkuute* pots of water are added into *omukambi*. Another round of squeezing and *okukamuura* commences thereafter, although for a short time and the juice got is called *eshande y'amaizi*.



Source: Video capture by researcher of Okukamura in the tonto making process (June 2025)

It should be noted that some of the juice is given to the neighbours as a gesture of good neighbourliness, especially those that have helped in *okutondora* or fetching water. This juice is usually given in calabash containers of approximately three litres or less volume. It is not a good idea to give diluted juice to the neighbours, although some individuals will add some little of *eshande y'amaizi* into *eshande y'omuti* for them.

Entabo, a place where juice is to be fermented is prepared. It is a shallow ditch where *obwato*, which was used for squeezing, is placed. Depending on the warmth of the soil in a certain locality, peelings of squeezed sweet bananas are placed on the floor. A part of the *omukambi* is added before the *obwato* is placed. All the juices,

both *eshande y'omuti*-concentrated juice and *eshande y'amaiꝑi* - dilute juice are mixed in the same boat with roast sorghum flour.

The process of roasting sorghum, called *okukaranga omugusha*, involves roasting an amount that is determined after squeezing is successful. The sorghum is half –roasted. Thereafter, it is ground with a grinding stone (*Orubengo*). Unlike other grinding of sorghum with the aim of obtaining fine flour, the sorghum for *tonto* making is done in such a way that it is more like splitting the grains in order to support fermentation. After mixing juice with flour of roasted sorghum called *okuteera omugusha* –soothing the flour sorghum with juice using hands, a banana stem is cut based on the size of the boat and divided into two. The stem sheaths, called *ebigogo*, are then placed on top of the boat in a ‘carpet’ way. *Omukambi* (a mixture of grass and bananas after squeezing out the refined juice) is then placed on top of them. *Omukambi* is instrumental in generating heat that enables fermentation. If the locality is a place that easily generates heat, the banana leaves that had been used for *okubanika* are placed last on the top. However, if it is a place that does not generate heat easily, the *embooreera* and banana leaves which had been used for *okubanika* are placed on top respectively.

It should be noted that sometimes the *tonto* can be much more and cannot fit in one boat for *okutaba*. In this case, the two boats are placed alongside each other and covered

together. Similarly, the quantity may sometimes be insufficient for boat usage in *okutaba*. If the amount was about one or two *enkuute* pots, they use those pots and do a similar procedure.

The following morning, an adult with the requisite skills checks the fermentation process using a hollow stick known as *orushbekye* got from a shrub called *ekisbekasbekye* (*Clerodendrum rotundifolium*). The person sinks it into the fermenting beer and determines the time at which it will be ready to be removed.

When the fermented juice is still sweet, it is referred to as *ebishande*. Fermentation may take one or two days. The family head and neighbours have to wait until it is ready, and they get the beer out, called *okutaba*. At this stage, when the *tonto* is still very warm, it is called *omutabe*.

When the beer is ready, it is removed from the boat and placed in pots. Large pots are called *rushengye*. If pots are not available in the home, they use large calabashes called *ebisizi*. Because beer must be lifted from the place in the banana plantation where it is brewed, the pots and calabashes are wrapped using a plant with long pliable stems called *enshuri*. If these are not readily available in the village, then dry banana fibres are used. *Enshuri* is preferred to dry banana leaves because the latter does not hold the calabash firmly, and hence, is risky. In a situation where *tonto* is a lot and the containers available are not enough, it is kept in an *embisho*, a silo, or underground beer storage place.

Upon placing the *tonto* in those utensils, and because the *tonto* is still warm *omutabe*, it develops froth that can lead to a serious reduction through bubbling and hence pouring to the ground slowly but over an extended time until it becomes cold. To avoid this, a plant called *orunyamajuta*, a grass with hairy leaves, is put on top of the alcohol. This grass stops the formation of froth at the moment it mixes with *tonto*. The froth that falls on the pot or calabash is called *embiriro*, and the froth tracks are clearly seen on the outside of the beer calabash or pot. *Orunyamajuta* is also known to reduce the availability of *tinsbengyeera*. *Tinsbengyeera* are very small insects known in English as *drosophila* that invade any place that has *tonto* or juice and their rate of multiplication is fast, although they are not known to transmit any diseases. The way *orunyamajuta* operates indicates that it has certain chemical compounds that are not known or have not been investigated but were invented by past generations to decisively deal with froth development.

Once *okutaba* is done, some *tonto* is shared with kin or neighbours using a utensil called *orugunda*. It is a long-necked calabash beer. It should be noted that buying came with the introduction of money and has since taken root, with *tonto* becoming a tradable and commercial item. In case one could not get free *tonto* during *okutereka*, he or she could buy. If one buys for another, it is called *okushengyeera*.

Vocabulary specific to stage, quality and type of *tonto*

The story of *Tonto* clearly demonstrates that the enormous indigenous knowledge developed and tested for generations is applied with perfection. Any deviations may lead to undesirable results. Successful and good quality *tonto* is determined by mixing sufficient quantities of the ingredients. The best quality *tonto* is called *omuguruka*. This is done by fermenting only concentrated juice called *eshande y'omuti* and sorghum in sufficient quantities. Its alcohol content is high, although no standard measures are available. When the concentrated juice is mixed with insufficient water, juice called *eshande y'amaizi*, the *tonto* fermented out of it, even when it has sufficient sorghum, becomes slippery and is called *erende*. When concentrated juice is mixed with more diluted juice, the *tonto* cannot be sweet and remains watery even when sorghum is sufficient. This *tonto* is called *gyuuri*. When the mixture of juice is done properly but insufficient sorghum is added, the taste is not good, and the fermented beer is called *omuceeri* or *katara*. There is, however, a situation in which the mixing of concentrated juice and watery juice is proper, but sorghum is more than it should be. The fermented beer is not sweet, as expected, and is called *encenku*. If the concentrated juice is properly mixed with watery juice but the sorghum is burnt even though the quantity is sufficient, the fermented *tonto* is called *embakire*. The local

beer that is prepared from the juice of bananas that had initially failed to produce juice, but after hard work, juice comes and is fermented is called *omurite*. All of these types are realised after getting the *tonto* out of the boat at the appropriate time, called *okutaba*. The quality of *tonto* is also determined by getting it out of the boat (*okutaba*) at an appropriate time. If the *tonto* overstays and becomes overheated before being drawn from the boat, it becomes burnt and is called *omusyokore* or *amaarwa gasyokwire*. It should be noted that at times and in some places, sorghum could become scarce and the little available is mixed with millet flour with proper mixing of *eshande y'omuti* and *eshande y'amaizi*. The resultant *tonto* is called *obuseetura*.

At every stage, *tonto* has a description or type and a name associated with it from the time fermentation begins, resulting in a total of twenty-one different types. Immediately after *okutaba*, it ceases to be *eshande* (banana juice) after it has been mixed with sorghum making the first stage of becoming *tonto* as the process of fermentation begins. At this stage, with a change in temperature going upward, this type of *tonto* is called *agaatagata*. *Okutagata* literally means warming up that begins a few hours after *okutaba*. The next stage, which occurs after approximately eight hours and is warmer, is called *agaahwamu ebigyere*. This is followed by *ekinyubwa-bakazi*, meaning what is drunk by women. Essentially, the *ekinyubwa bakazi* is not yet tough and is assumed to be

good for women to avoid making them drunk. At this stage, *tonto* is not yet fully fermented and is still very sweet, although not like the juice that it was many hours earlier.

When fermentation is complete, the *tonto* is removed from the boat in *entabo* into containers in a process called *okutaba*, the drawn out of the boat *tonto* is very warm and is called *omutabe*. This name remains, even when it is still slightly cool, which can be referred to as room-temperature *tonto*.

The *tonto* that has stayed for about one day is called *ebishande*, meaning that it still has a major characteristic similar to that of juice. When the *tonto* has stayed for two days, it is called *oruboro*. Thereafter, when the *tonto* spends more than two days after drawing from the boat, it is called *omubisi*. After spending more than three to six days, it is referred to as *omucurikye*. The moment *tonto* has stayed for over a week; it is called *amaarwa agakaikwire* from the verb *okukaikura* meaning aged. Thereafter, upon staying beyond this stage, it is called *obwengura*. This type of beer is bitter and has an acidic taste, although some people who are desperate can still drink it. Beyond that stage, when the *tonto* has surely overstayed beyond *obwengura* and is considered inappropriate for consumption because it is very sour, it is called *encunku*. The final stage of *tonto*, which is considered unfit for human consumption, is called *enyoshe*. At times, early intervention would be done by adding honey as a sweetener to reduce the acidity or toughness of

the *tonto*, which would again become consumable, though not liked. The process of making it consumable is called *okuturira*.

Another form of *tonto* is associated with storage. This includes *eibonde*, a type of *tonto* that remains at the bottom of the pot. It is a mixture of sorghum residues called *entooto* and unsieved *tonto*. This is rarely consumed, except under conditions of shortage. *Ekikanja* is another type. This *tonto* remains at the bottom of the pot, or the big calabash (*ekisisi*). It is drunk by inserting and sucking with long stick tubes *ebisbekeye*. Traditionally, this *tonto* was drunk by women during a time of happiness, called *okutereka*. *Okutereka* is the act of inviting friends and neighbours to come to your home for a drink on the beer brewed in the family.

As a form of long-term preservation, the last type of *tonto* is the boiled and distilled using airtight drums. This transforms it into gin *waragi*, making it the most potent, as *waragi* is steam from the boiling *tonto*. Considering that distillation is not under the industrial guidelines, the alcohol content is unknown, although it could be approximately 40% similar to whiskey's alcohol content.

Tonto - the beer in a social context

While various factors, demonised *tonto* to be a dangerous drink and has been demonised, it was and still remains an important drink among the Banyankore and their

heritage, and with layers of gender subtexts. For instance, there quite a number of rituals associated with its production and processing. The key ritual is that a woman cannot sleep with another man who is not her husband when the bananas are in the process of ripening. It is feared that bananas will not ripen. In addition, a pregnant woman who conceived outside wedlock is not allowed to put sorghum in the juice during *okutaba*. It is assumed that the *tonto* will take a long time to get ready. A woman does not drink with men during *etereko* because, accordingly, she might abuse the men and end up being beaten. Furthermore, a man who is of age and is not married does not drink with married men because he is considered to be a boy. Quite evidently, *tonto* was used as a tool in the mechanisms of social control and norm actualisation, reminiscent of Judith Butler's (1988) notion of performing gender. The gender division of labour also tends to place women and men differently, where women mostly participate in pre-beer activities and men are almost solely in charge of the product and its consumption. During the conversations, key voices emitted the fact that women were supposed to be protected from the ills of drinking the *tonto* and getting drunk because they needed to preserve the family's sobriety. Again, gender performativity and the sanctity of motherhood come into play in a powerful manner.

In terms of roles, the most obvious in contemporary times relates to income from commercial

value. Most local bars sell it. Initially, when beer was not available, only *tonto* could be found in bars in villages and peri-urban areas. At times, *waragi* was also available alongside *tonto*. Thus, it provided income to brewers, especially those with large banana plantations. There are still many people who attest to having been educated using the school fees generated from the proceeds of *tonto*. However, there are other socially embedded roles which also add to the richness of the vocabulary, as we proceed to elaborate

For centuries, *tonto* been associated with the entire process of marriage among the Banyankore. According to Mubangizi (1963) in his book *Emicwe y'ensi omu Banyankore*, the process of marriage starts with *Amaarwa g'ekigambo* which is *tonto*, presented right away before one mentions that they intend to request a daughter's hand in marriage. This is presented in one big calabash called *ekisisi*. The *tonto* is tasted in what is called *okuroza* or *okushogonyera*, and if found to be perfect, the leader of the delegation or the person normally referred to as a go-between is allowed to present his intention of the visit. Regarding the determination of bride wealth, *tonto* is given in sets, but usually in one set of *ebisisi*. *Tonto* also precedes the functions of the offer of *enjugano* which has been loosely translated into bride-wealth as well as determination of the date of commissioning the new family by the fathers of the girl and boy with the father of the

bride handing over his daughter to the groom's father, also known as *okubingira*. It is important to note that some English translations have watered down the notion that, for instance, *okubingira* has been loosely translated as give-away. On the day of *okubingira*, the bridegroom's party is required to bring a set or two of *tonto*, known as *amaarwa g'abakaikuru*. In case there is a delay in payment of bride-wealth, the bridegroom's side must keep bringing *tonto* in a big *ekisisi* to check on his bride until he finishes payment, before *okubingira* is organised for him. This continuous bringing of *tonto* is known as *okubuuta*. The entertainment of guests on all functions, small or big, is done with *tonto*. Because the amount required for entertainment in the case of *okubingira* or *okushwererera* was large, the neighbours contributed *embiire* to the family to enable them to prepare the right quantity of *tonto*. Failure to have sufficient *tonto* for the function was culturally taken as ungrateful to the visitors.

Furthermore, in a situation where *okugamba obugenyi* as a form of marriage was not followed as required, some suitors used other forms of marriage, such as *okusugura*, *okuteera oruhoko*, *okujumba*, *okuyamba*, *okukiriza*, and *okubungura*. To enable the family of the boy to inform the family of the girl, *ekiiru* which was *ekisisi* of *tonto*, had to be placed before the elders before saying anything. It should be noted that in all marriage-related functions, the visiting party was and is still given

amaarwa g'enkoni to go with and drink along the way or as they tell the story of what has transpired back home. This indicates that one has to go with sufficient *tonto* container numbers, mostly even numbers.

Tonto is also essential in resolving marriage problems. In case of disagreement or misunderstanding, a husband may chase the wife away from his home. The wife is expected to go back to her parents, but if they are no more, she goes to one of the brothers or close relatives. To resolve their issues and bring back the wife, the husband has to go with *tonto* that elders drink after resolving their problems/conflicts and counselling them. Going with *tonto* was a sure deal to be given back the wife with fewer reprimands. In general, *tonto* plays a significant role in local conflict resolution, especially land disputes, fights, and disagreements among relatives and neighbours. To convene neighbours, *tonto* must be available so that immediately after the discussion and resolutions, drinking *tonto* takes place.

In relation to divination, *tonto* was one of the basic requirements for offerings to spirits which kept the traditional religious value of *tonto* high. It was common to find calabashes filled with *tonto* in shrines for spirits to drink. The coming of foreign religions has greatly undermined this function. In local governance contexts, *tonto* was for long used to pay royalties to local chiefs as a form of appreciation for their services. Local

leaders called *abakungu ab'ekireku* (from *endeku* –calabash) were paid with *tonto* because they were not part of the paid government civil servants, although they worked under the parish chief who was and is still paid a salary. According to Mulumba (2017), local chiefs had some power and took charge of the parishes as areas of jurisdiction, but the local council administration system of governance rendered them useless.

There is also a clear space in labour and entertainment. *Tonto* was and still remains essential in collective labour, especially during the construction of houses, digging graves, village bridges, pit latrine digging, *burungi bwansi* road construction and maintenance, and any other activity that requires collective work. As long as *tonto* is available, labour is easily mobilised and there is no payment but enjoyment of *tonto* after work. In entertainment, *tonto* was for a long time essential in social relations, either by a few in a home or collectively in what is called *Etereke*. Initially, this was done when one brewed large quantities, sold enough, and kept some for collective consumption. Neighbours would be notified the day when *etereke* is to take place. In most cases, *okutereka* would preferably be on the evenings of Saturdays. Saturday came after the arrival of Christianity, which Sunday a resting day. A large pot was placed in the compound and a big straw, *orushekye*, was provided for drinking, which was used by all those present. On that day, women would not sit

with men, but would sit behind the house and were given *ekikanja*. This beer would remain at the bottom of the pot or calabash and would have lots of sorghum. The women used grass to make a sieve which was placed at the tail end of the long straw. *Etereke* involved dancing and merry-making to the extent that sometimes, if the family was rich, a goat was slaughtered, roasted, and enjoyed with the *tonto*. In short, *tonto* played a critical role in social life, and in *Ankole*, it can be argued that *tonto* was at the centre of most significant aspects of life.

Conclusion

The indigenous knowledge and vocabulary of *tonto* faces a serious threat unless there is an intentional effort to preserve this rich cultural heritage. According to Nakijoba and Kiyimba (2024), such efforts should not exclude indigenous people's

knowledge and perspectives. The rich vocabulary used in processing and consumption is not used for any other purpose, and the process may not be easily reactivated after extinction.

With the various forces working against the entire processing of *tonto*, it is a question of time that the indigenous knowledge associated with *tonto* and the rich vocabulary associated with it shall be no more, possibly in the next 20 years. Fewer and fewer people are engaged in its processing, and the vocabulary for it is so specialised that inactive use will gradually lead to its extinction since it is bound to reach a point when it will have no native speakers using its vocabulary because people will not be engaged in its production. This will be a big loss of heritage; hence, the need to archive this knowledge, the language, and all implements associated with it.

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The State of UPE Service Delivery in Uganda: Is Social Accountability the Missing Link?

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Abstract

This article analyses the performance of the UPE programme over the past 25 years. It argues that despite the great financial support from the government and donors, the standards have serious implications because of the government's preference for traditional accountability over social accountability. Using evidence from empirical research, this article demonstrated the effectiveness of social accountability in fostering downward accountability. This reveals that when community stakeholders actively engaged in UPE school activities, accountability and service delivery witnessed significant improvements. It concludes by advocating for a blended approach in which upward accountability is supplemented by demand-driven accountability championed by parents, CSOs, and mass media to enhance both financial and service delivery accountability in UPE schools.

Keywords: Citizens, community, power, public sector, public officials, social services, UPE accountability.

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Introduction

Investing in social services is considered a key driver of economic growth and poverty reduction in developing countries (WB 2004a). The attainment of quality social services, especially education, is crucial to building human capabilities to meet the socio-economic needs of society. For instance, education empowers people with both knowledge and skills, but especially with civic competence to demand social services from the government and hold service providers accountable. It is in this light that Higgins and Rwanyange (2005) asserts that education has been viewed as a powerful tool for socio-economic development and transformation in Uganda since independence. Moreover, quality social services are a catalyst for other socio-economic benefits, such as improved family planning practices, health, and economic productivity, which accelerate the socio-economic transformation of society. Nonetheless, Uganda continues to face serious limitations in the realisation of quality social services, largely due to governance deficiencies. Regardless of the cocktail of externally driven reforms implemented since the 1990s, governance factors, such as public-sector corruption, affect service delivery (Muhumuza 2016). The social services sector is characterised by gross inefficiencies, lack of transparency, poor accountability, and corruption (Daily Monitor 2013).

This article uses a case study of Universal Primary Education (UPE) to demonstrate how the quality of service delivery has been compromised by poor accountability mechanisms. It attributes this condition to the government's bias towards traditional accountability mechanisms that rely on salaried bureaucrats, paper accountability, and how funds are utilised instead of results. In other words, the government perceives accountability for UPE services, as Suzuki (2002: 250) calls a narrow sense where bureaucrats are preoccupied with accounting for the use of grants received in the form of a report. The traditional approach stresses upward accountability at the cost of social accountability, which manifests in citizens' active participation, downward accountability, and the quality of outcome.

It is against the foregoing discussion that this article discusses the two key mechanisms of public accountability. It adopts DFID's (2008: 1) definition of accountability as 'the processes, norms and structures that require governors to answer for their actions to the governed, and/or suffer some sanction if the performance is judged to be below the relevant standard'. Accountability, in this respect, entails a relationship between the citizens who are, in essence, the principals and public officials who are the agents in the process of delivering public goods (Mulgan 2000: 555). Accordingly, accountability concerns power relations, where

public servants entrusted with public responsibilities must answer for their actions (Moncrieffe 1998: 389). It is characterised by two dimensions of answerability and enforceability (Adibe 2010: 1243). This means that public officials, both elected and appointed, must explain and justify their behaviour and actions to the public which pays for and consumes public goods (Haque 2007: 435). It is within this context that this contribution is grounded in the principal-agent framework where public officials are perceived to be the servants of citizens who have the right to hold them accountable (Gailmard 2014: 90-105). In less developed countries, such as Uganda, the power of citizens is rarely exercised owing to political disenfranchisement. Oftentimes, citizens are denied the opportunity to exercise their power to hold public officials accountable (Grant and Keohane 2005: 40). Consequently, public officials perform their duties with less public scrutiny, which is the main cause of the high levels of corruption and poor service delivery. There is ample evidence that corruption undermines effective social service delivery (Mauro 1998). Indeed, empirical findings show that Ugandans' satisfaction with the quality of public services is low (Wane and Martin 2013; ROU 2011: 34) largely due to the adverse effects of poor accountability. This article asserts that little emphasis on social accountability and quality service outcomes is the main reason for the poor performance of UPE. It subsequently advocates the buttressing of bureaucratic accountability with

social accountability mechanisms to reduce the inefficiencies and financial leakages responsible for the poor delivery and quality of UPE services.

The article begins with an introduction, followed by a description of the accountability mechanisms used by the government in the UPE Programme. The next section critically examines the flaws within the formal-bureaucratic accountability emphasised by the government and discusses research participants' perceptions of UPE accountability. It then explores the alternative mechanisms of social accountability available in UPE schools, and finally gives a conclusion.

The data used in this submission were obtained using descriptive and critical case study research conducted in the three districts of Iganga, Lira, and Kabarole in 2017 and 2018. Lira and Kabarole Districts were purposively selected because they had vibrant communities and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) that were actively engaged with UPE schools and thus performed relatively better compared to Iganga District, where the presence of CSOs and civic engagement was low. Primary data were gathered from rural and urban settings using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) administered to central and local stakeholders. These were supplemented with secondary sources. The qualitative data collected were analysed using content analysis.

The Predicament of Formal-Bureaucratic Accountability Approach

Some analysts have tried to link social programmes such as UPE in Uganda to the introduction of competitive democratic elections in Africa. For instance, Stasavage (2005: 54) claims that electoral competition prompted African leaders to become more accountable and improve the provision of basic social services. While Uganda's UPE initiative may not be directly attributed to competitive elections since it predates them, its implementation can be explained by logic. Its roots can be traced back to the Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC), constituted by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government in 1987, to review Uganda's ailing education system. Despite the recommendation that UPE be implemented in 1989, this was delayed until 1997 because of funding constraints. The pledge to introduce UPE later featured prominently in President Museveni's campaign manifesto of 1996 at a time he faced stiff political competition from an alliance of opposition parties. He hoped to use the promise of free education to sway the electoral support of the majority poor that were finding it difficult to pay tuition for their children in basic schools (Deininger 2003). By then, about 44% of the population was the absolute poor (ROU 1996), unable to meet the basic necessities of life due to the adverse effects of Structural

Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). He pledged to provide free primary education to four children from each household if elected. During the first year of implementation, the net enrolment of pupils in primary schools increased from 2.8 million (57%) in 1996 to six million (85%) in 1997 (Bashasha, Benard, Margaret Mangheni and Ephraim Nkonya. 2011). When the limit of four children per household was lifted in 2001 to allow free access to UPE by all school-going children, enrolment increased to eight million.

Over two decades have passed since the government launched the UPE programme, but its performance has been disappointing. Not only do the majority of learners lack adequate competence in numeracy and literacy skills, but failure and dropout rates are also relatively high. According to the Republic of Uganda (ROU 2017), the percentage of learners reaching a defined level of competence in literacy and numeracy in grade six was 51.9 and 52.6%, respectively, while the survival rate to grade seven was 32%. The poor performance is largely attributed to the poor accountability mechanisms used by the government. Given that the promise of the UPE was a campaign pledge, its implementation and oversight processes were influenced by top-down and upward accountability approaches, respectively. This was in contradiction to the decentralisation policy which provided that the provision and oversight of basic social service delivery be under

local authorities (ROU 1993). In theory, primary schools fall under decentralised services, and local authorities are responsible for setting standards and monitoring them ROU (2008a: 26) but in practice a centralised approach persists. The top-down approach manifests in direct central government funding and control over the implementation process and oversight, with less leverage being given to local stakeholders, such as local authorities, parents, and CSOs. Less attention to social accountability is considered the main cause of inefficiency and accountability flaws.

There is evidence that developing countries are increasingly falling for vertical (supply-driven) rather than horizontal (demand-driven) mechanisms of public accountability, regardless of its underlying inadequacies (Gaventa and McGee 2013: S4). As a result, the notion of social accountability, which refers to the active engagement of community stakeholders to demand better service delivery and hold service providers accountable (World Bank, 2004a), has been marginalised. This entails direct intervention, where community stakeholders attend school meetings and ask for explanations about the utilisation of public funds and the state of service delivery. It also involves their participation in the monitoring of teaching and learning conditions at school, as well as making material contributions to support local school programmes where gaps exist. Direct intervention also

involves the election of competent and active parents' representatives to autonomous associations, as exemplified by the parent-teacher associations (PTAs) to oversee the management of UPE schools. Social accountability mechanisms have gained worldwide popularity because of their associated advantages such as transparency (World Bank, 2004b; Ackerman, 2005).

Notwithstanding the various advantages embedded in social accountability, it was stifled to the detriment of the UPE. Instead, the Education Act mandates public officials to supervise and monitor all UPE schools and prohibits the charging of fees (ROU 2008a). However, the supervision and monitoring processes have been compromised by human resources and funding limitations. As a result, neglecting social accountability prompted community stakeholders to disengage from participation. Withdrawal, coupled with the government's failure to adequately fund UPE, created serious oversight gaps, especially in the rural and remote parts of the country. This has been exhibited by, among other ills, laxity, rampant late-coming and absenteeism by both teachers and learners, high dropout rates, poor performance in primary leaving examinations and misuse of UPE grants (Bold Tessa, Deon Filmer, Gayle Martin, Ezequiel Morina, Brian Stacy, Christophe Rockmore, Jacob Svensson and Waly Wane. 2017: 186). Consequently, the

UPE standards have steadily declined and caused concern. The rapid expansion of private basic schools is partly attributed to liberalisation policies. Deininger and Mpuga (2005: 582) attributed the exodus of learners from public to private schools over the years to the poor quality of UPE. Therefore, a lack of emphasis on social accountability has serious implications for UPE service delivery. Within this context, we discuss participants' perceptions of UPE accountability.

Public Perceptions about Accountability in the UPE Programme

Interviewees revealed various forms of accountability lapses that marred the UPE programme at various levels. The first form involved inflating number of learner enrolments by the head teachers. The allocation of Capitation Grants (CG) is determined by enrolment numbers. The higher the number, the larger the amount sent to UPE schools and vice versa. The fraudulent head teachers made it a practice to create 'ghost' (fictitious) learners for private benefits. This vice endured despite the central government's countless verification exercises. An interviewee sarcastically commented that, 'verification exercises have become an industry for self-enrichment of central government officials rather than a solution for the problem'. The second form reportedly involved some head teachers conniving with District Education Officers (DEOs)

to inflate the number of teachers on the payroll and then share the money. This problem persisted even after the government introduced the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) and Integrated Personnel Payroll System (IPPS) reforms that decentralised and computerised salary payments for civil servants (ROU 2014). While the reforms greatly reduced the number of 'ghost' teachers, they did not effectively eliminate them. The corrupt head teachers retained the names of teachers who absconded or died on the payroll. Even teachers reportedly compromised head teachers to absent themselves for days to engage in private business.

Mismanagement of instruction time by teachers was also prevalent in UPE schools, especially in rural settings. Teachers reportedly started lessons late, delayed returning to class after lunch breaks, and departed from school earlier than mandated. Coupled with the cheating of the class instruction time, there was a lack of preparation. Often, teachers did not have schemes of work and daily lesson plans, dodged marking of learners' work, and wasted precious learning time making jokes in class. These demented practices were attributed to the high level of demotivation due to low wages, a serious decline in professional ethics among teachers, and inadequate supervision (Altinyelkan 2010: 164-66). The local oversight responsibility for supervising and monitoring school activities resides in head

teachers and School Management Committees (SMCs) (ROU 1998). However, the problem persists in public schools because of the laxity of the two parties. Therefore, the mere presence of teachers at school and the requirement of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoE&S) that they sign an attendance book every morning did not help make teachers accountable and improve their performance as expected of them.

Another form of accountability lapse reported in UPE schools involved connivance between head teachers and chairpersons of SMCs to defraud schools and make false accounts. There were also cases in which SMCs were weak and barely knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities, especially in rural settings. They mostly consisted of semi-literate members who lacked awareness of their roles. Moreover, the fact that they did not receive facilitation made them abdicate their roles. Consequently, the head teachers took advantage of manipulating them or acting as they wished in their absence and subsequently abused or misappropriated the school grants. The head teachers' manipulative relationship with SMCs had been highlighted earlier by Suzuki (2002: 250), who underscored the power asymmetries between the two, particularly in rural areas. Consequently, the government's assumption that SMCs were effective governing bodies at the school level was an illusion.

Interviewees also revealed cases in which head teachers in UPE schools unscrupulously sold scholastic materials provided by the government, especially textbooks and furniture, to private schools or diverted them to their own private schools. Fraud-related incidents involving district accounting officers and DEOs were also cited. Some of these included deliberate delays by district accounting officers to remit CG to schools by first depositing it on fixed accounts, with the intention of profiteering from it before releasing it to schools. In other cases, these officials diverted school grants to other activities, such as infrastructure construction projects, which earned them kickbacks from private contractors. The delays and diversions negatively affected schools' performance. Interview reports indicated that the CG reached schools in the middle or towards the end of the term. As a result, many public schools opened new terms without buying essential scholastic materials to facilitate teaching and learning. Some proactive head teachers coped with the crisis by acquiring scholastic materials from private business enterprises on credit. However, such transactions sometimes made them vulnerable to penalties or arrests for delayed payment and defaulting, respectively. Another case was cited in the Lira District of Northern Uganda where a District Inspector of Schools (DIS) solicited for and received a motorcycle as a form of institutional support to facilitate school inspections from an

NGO. Shamefully, on his retirement, he deceptively claimed that it was his own and took it. However, on getting wind of the fraud, the furious NGO petitioned the district authorities, and the motorcycle was recovered (*Interview with Plan International NGO official, Lira district, 19 May 2017*).

Accountability flaws also manifested in influence peddling by the political leadership of local authorities. These mostly tampered with school facilitation grants (SFGs) from the central government to build classrooms, latrines, teachers' houses, and for buying furniture for UPE schools. Rather than using the grants to provide such facilities to areas that lacked them, influential local politicians selfishly diverted them to their own constituencies even if they were not needy. In other cases, local leaders peddled the influence of having their companies win lucrative tenders to provide these facilities which tantamount to conflicts of interest, while some reportedly fronted private contractors to get kickbacks. These accountability flaws were responsible for the shoddy work common in UPE schools, as well as the sharp disparities in the distribution of school infrastructure in rural areas.

The above evidence illustrates the existence of various forms of accountability flaws in UPE schools that range from cheating instruction time, absenteeism, and late-coming by teachers, to embezzlement and diversion of school grants, and influence peddling in the allocation

and utilisation of SFGs by school managers and local government leaders. Scholarly evidence corroborates the accountability flaws in UPE schools. For instance, findings by Bold et al. (2017: 189) show that 57% of teachers in Uganda's basic schools were absent from class and learners were taught half of the scheduled time, averaging two hours 46 minutes per day. Teacher absenteeism in Uganda's classrooms was worse when compared to 15% for Kenya and Tanzania, and the SSA average of 33% (Bold et al. 2017: 187-88). Further evidence of fraud and poor accountability in Uganda's UPE programme was cited by Oketch and Rolleston (2007), who noted that only 33% of allocated UPE funds actually reached the intended beneficiary schools. Weak accountability was responsible for the decline of education standards, as exemplified by the persistent underperformance of UPE schools in the Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) at the end of the seven-year cycle and the flight of children of affluent parents to privately owned primary schools. The flight to private schools supports the Deininger and Mpuga (2005: 188) claim that satisfaction with the quality of public services among Ugandans is low. The findings also confirm the assertion in the World Bank (2004a) that the underlying cause of failure in basic service delivery in developing countries was weak accountability relationships between the state service providers and the citizens and clients they serve. The next section

critically analyses the accountability mechanisms used by the government.

Mechanisms Used by Government to Oversee the Implementation of Basic Education

Contrary to the current practice, Chapter 11 of the Uganda Constitution mandates local authorities to plan and allocate resources and supervise and monitor the utilisation of funds, including the delivery of basic education (ROU 1995: 117). The Education Act (ROU 2008a) and Guidelines for the Implementation of UPE (ROU 2008b: 10-19) also stipulate that the educational roles of local authorities include ensuring national academic standards, regulating and registering education institutions, supervising teachers, and developing policies, among others. However, the reality on the ground shows that local authorities lack the autonomy to execute their mandates regarding UPE decision-making. Instead, the implementation and management of UPE is centralised, leaving local authorities to implement directives from the central government (Sasaoka and Nishimura 2010: 79).

The government uses formal bureaucratic mechanisms to enforce accountability for financial and service delivery. Both the national and local authority levels have a shared responsibility to provide oversight to the UPE programme. At the national level, the Directorates of Basic

Education (DBE) and Education Standards (DES) are supposed to provide overall oversight to UPE in the country and conduct random supervision exercises periodically. The routine supervisory role is delegated to the DEO and the DIS, who are the technical officers responsible for overseeing the delivery of education services at the local authority level. They are supposed to undertake the supervision of basic schools at least twice every quarter and submit quarterly reports to MoE&S. The other key technical department at the local authority level is the Internal Audit Department which is mandated to ensure that the financial grants remitted by the centre to run UPE schools are properly utilised. Its role is to ensure that head teachers follow stipulated financial guidelines when utilising grants, ensure value for money, and produce timely accountability reports. SMCs are the lowest organs with the statutory oversight role representing the central government. Their roles include ensuring that schools have development plans, approving annual school budgets, supervising and monitoring the use of UPE grants by head teachers, among others. The hierarchical arrangement described above illustrates the vertical nature of implementation and accountability in the UPE. It was also evident that the government used multiple oversight agencies to undertake inspection exercises in basic schools, including officials from the Ministry of Public Service, external auditors from the Auditor General's Office, the

Inspector General of Government (IGG), the District Public Accounts Committee (DPAC), the police, and the sub-county chief. These offices mostly perform random checks. The reporting mechanisms of various actors portrayed upward accountability to the central government, which was a major weakness. The local authorities functioned as conveyor belts in the process because funding, control, and accountability were centralised. Whereas the social accountability mechanism, as manifested in parents, community, mass media, and CSOs, which have a legitimate interest in the success of UPE schools, would have enforced accountability better, it was downplayed.

Evidence from the interviews showed that the approach used by the government emphasised financial accountability rather than the state of service delivery. The focus was on ensuring that UPE grants were properly utilised and effectively accounted for on paper. This mechanism pursued a top-down approach whereby the government was preoccupied with facilitating technical officers to undertake quarterly supervision exercises and submit reports to the DBE and DES at the centre. Despite much emphasis placed on the role of the government's internal and external auditors to oversee financial accountability in UPE schools, there were many flaws associated with the formal-bureaucratic mechanism of accountability. This is discussed in detail in the subsequent section.

The Flaws of the Bureaucratic Model of Accountability in UPE Schools

The UPE Guidelines provide financial transparency and accountability to UPE schools. In this light, head teachers are required to display financial information on school noticeboards for easy public access to information, especially the parents and the community at large. Despite this provision, none of the rural and urban schools visited adhered to this regulation and instead displayed financial information in the head teacher's office. Similarly, the spending of CG by Head teachers was subject to the stipulated guidelines from MoE&S, which were very stringent. The items and percentages of expenditure were predetermined according to the guidelines. These further provided that before spending the CG, the School Finance Committee (SFC), comprising teachers' representatives and chaired by the deputy head teacher, must first budget for money according to the guidelines and submit the budget to the SMC for approval. The SMC chairperson is also a signatory to the school account and is responsible for monitoring CG expenditure and reporting to the DEO in case of fraud.

However, most SMCs lacked competence and were often manipulated by head teachers owing to a lack of capacity building (*Interview with TIU, Lira district, 22*

October 2018). This corroborates the findings of Suzuki (2002: 250) that head teachers tended to dominate school governance and manipulate SMCs' work, particularly in rural areas where members of SMCs were often semi-literate and incompetent to oversee the financial accountability and management of UPE schools. However, the education policy did not provide the minimum requirements for membership in SMCs, which was erroneous. In other circumstances, the SMC chairpersons were found to have individualised the role of the committee and were sometimes connived with or compromised by the head teachers they were supposed to monitor and supervise. There were also complaints about SMCs not being facilitated, unlike DEOs and DIS. Most perceived their appointments as government jobs for which they were supposed to receive financial rewards, but later discovered that it was voluntary, which demotivated them. More importantly, they were the ones based at the grassroots and supposed to do continuous monitoring and supervision. The internal auditors, parents, and sub-county chiefs, who were also supposed to ensure that the utilisation of CG followed the UPE financial guidelines, were not effective.

Notwithstanding these elaborate procedures and monitoring roles apportioned between the various stakeholders, there were numerous reports of poor record-keeping in UPE schools, which had financial implications (Interview with Resident

District Commissioner (RDC), Lira District, 19 May 2017). It was also revealed that 'some schools inflated enrolments to get more funding' (Interview with a district administration official, Iganga District, 15 May 2017). In other cases, 'head teachers connived with SMC chairpersons to defraud UPE grants' (Interview with a district education official Kabarole, 22 May 2017) while in other schools, the CG expenditures were disguised and spent on unauthorised items; 'Some capitation grant money is also budgeted for teachers' welfare. It is hidden in some items for the teachers' welfare, such as break tea and lunch to make them teach effectively although this is not allowed by the guidelines.' (Interview with a teacher, Kabarole District, 23 May 2017).

The connivance between some head teachers and SMCs to misappropriate school funds has been reported to be the major cause of conflicts between SMCs and PTAs. Further evidence showed that the SFG, which was channelled through local authorities to cater for school infrastructure and furniture purchases, also faced financial indiscretions. The procurement process in local authorities was reportedly characterised by corruption, especially in the tendering process where responsible public officials connived with contractors to defraud the government. The school structures and supplies of furniture tended to be sub-standard and showed no value for money. As

one DIS conceded, ‘the tendering and bureaucratic processes involved, especially for the construction of school infrastructure and supplies of furniture, lead to leakages of public funds and hence, shoddy work. It would be better to send money to schools and seek value for money and accountability.’ (Interview with a district school inspector, Iganga District, 15 May 2017).

While such financial abuse could have been prevented by internal auditors who had the mandate to undertake that task, they rarely paid surprise audit visits to UPE schools, owing to inadequate staffing and facilitation. These schools visited once in a while, except when there was an urgency. In the Lira District, only two internal auditors were reportedly deployed once a year to go and audit school accounts. Otherwise, the common practice was to ensure that the head teachers first accounted for the previous CG before they got another CG. External auditors, who were supposed to conduct regular and surprise audits, rarely did so. Officials from the Auditor General’s Office came to audit when there was a crisis. Interview reports further revealed that in circumstances where there were serious audit issues in the district, external auditors rather than pay impromptu visits, they put announcements on the radio inviting head teachers to assemble at a designated place with their books of accounts where they would meet them. This approach has created opportunities for creative

accounting and bribery. Besides, the external audit was not proactive but functioned as an ‘ex-post’ exercise. This laxity adversely affected the state of accountability, as evidenced by the repeated occurrence of ‘ghost’ schools, teachers and learners despite frequent verification exercises by the various government departments.

Apart from poor financial accountability, the UPE programme was also characterised by poor service delivery, as exemplified by acute absenteeism and poor time management in basic schools. As noted earlier, these vices were perceived as disguised forms of corruption that negatively affected learners’ performance. Although the law stipulated that DEOs and DIS undertake routine supervision and monitoring exercises in schools at least once a term, they were not effective in executing these tasks owing to inadequate staffing and facilitation vis-à-vis the large number of UPE schools. The policy that introduced UPE and later USE has led to a surge in the number of public schools. According to the policy, each parish and sub-county must have a primary school and secondary school, respectively. Even innovative measures, such as the *Pro rata* system, which were later introduced by the MOE&S to stamp out rampant absenteeism in UPE schools, did not help much. The *Pro rata* system entailed tagging employees’ salaries to the number of days worked. Accordingly, schools were required to maintain daily attendance registers,

where teachers signed as proof that they had worked. In addition, the threat of deleting chronic absentee teachers from the payroll did not help reverse the trend, especially where the absentee teacher compromised the head teacher. The persistence of these problems is largely attributed to inadequate staffing, poor facilitation, corruption, and patronage.

Even SMCs which are the statutory organs closest to schools and charged with the critical role of overseeing the overall planning, operation, and accountability of funds in rural UPE schools, were not effective players. According to one DEO, 'the role of SMC is minimal, as it is a statutory body. However, there are no clear guidelines for implementing SMC decisions. The head teacher can ignore them and there is no enforcement of non-compliance, e.g. failure to invite them.' (Interview with a district education official, Kabarole District, 22 May 2017)

In cases of neglect of duty by a teacher or head teacher, or misappropriation of school funds, the powers of the SMC were limited to reporting only to the DEO to take action. In the event of bad blood between the SMC and the head teacher, the common practice was for the DEO to cause a transfer. However, in circumstances where the head teacher was a friend or relative of the DEO, as revealed in some interviews, the DEO simply ignored the accusations or sided with the accused to the frustration of SMCs

and the detriment of the affected schools. The effectiveness of SMCs also depends on the capability of members in terms of education, exposure and experience. Interviews revealed that many members of SMCs do not know exactly what to do. They think their role ends at approving the school budget and signing school cheques.' (Interview with the official of Kabarole NGO Forum, 23 October 2018). Hence, most of them did not take other leadership roles seriously, such as improving and developing school facilities, mobilising parents, ensuring that the school has a development plan, and monitoring and supervision of school activities. This weakness was attributed to the government's failure to build the capacities of SMCs on a continuous basis. In a few cases, NGOs such as Plan International Uganda (PIU) in Lira and Livelihoods Development Initiative Uganda (LIDI) in Iganga Districts intervened to facilitate the training of SMCs. In some cases, members of SMCs overstayed and subsequently abdicated their responsibilities because of volunteer fatigue. In addition, some SMC members lacked legitimate interest in the prosperity of UPE schools because they did not have children in those schools. It was mostly the chairpersons of SMCs who were active, as confirmed by CSOs; 'When Lira NGO Forum (LNF) visits schools, they find only the SMC chairperson signed in the visitors' book.' (Interview with an officer from LNF, Lira District, 19 May 2017).

The policy also provides for a mandatory General Meeting (AGM) at the end of the year, which is intended to engage all parents. The head teacher and SMC, are only required to present a report highlighting the financial accountability and academic achievements of the school, the development undertaken, the challenges faced, and future plans. However, this one-off annual meeting was found to be a superficial form of accountability given that parents had no power over the meeting. As a result, AGM meetings were poorly attended, because parents shunned them for lacking transparency. Even the few parents who attended such meetings were mostly mothers and yet women were not decision makers, especially in typical Ugandan rural households. The limited engagement of parents in school accountability meetings was also attributed to the government's repudiation of PTAs, the perception that the enforcement of accountability was a role of SMCs, the fact that they were not making any financial contribution to UPE schools, and withdrawal due to frustration caused by the government's failure to act on their demands.

Moreover, the poor state of UPE service delivery was partly attributed to corruption and patronage, in which wrongdoers were allegedly protected by powerful officials from local authorities. An example of patronage politics in UPE schools was cited, where head teachers reported by parents for dodging their duties were protected by the DEOs.

In Amach sub-county, there was a head teacher who had serious accountability issues at school, but was closely related to the former DEO. He converted UPE funds into a private money-lending scheme with impunity. The parents and SMC were all triggered in conflict with him. He could not explain his expenditure, but knew he had protection from the DEO... We had to engage the CAO and RDC for disciplinary action before he was transferred to another school. (Interview with Transparency International NGO Official, Lira district, 24 October 2018)

In addition, the case of teacher incompetence was partly attributed to patronage politics and corruption in the recruitment of teachers by District Service Commissions (DSCs), as revealed by interviewees.

The teachers are recruited on the basis of how much you pay and *ori mwana waani* (which powerful official knows you) because the local politicians, say 'This is my time. I should also bring in my people. (Interview with a teacher, Iganga, 16 May 2017).

As long as you have money in Uganda, you can obtain what you want. For example, here in Iganga, if you want to become a head teacher, you need to dish out Sh. 1,500,000 (US \$417) to District Service Commission (DSC) officials, and you get the post irrespective of your experience and competence... So, in such circumstances, do you expect good accountability and service

delivery? Most UPE schools in Iganga are headed by the wives of bosses in the district. In such cases, would you expect any remedy if things go wrong? (Interview with a teacher, Iganga district, 16 May 2017).

The preceding analysis provides evidence that the bureaucratic approach to accountability in UPE schools has underlying defects. Rather than creating integrity in the accountability of public schools, it instead perpetuated laxity, connivance, patronage, and corruption, which seriously undermined the UPE programme. The next section explains the need for social accountability as a complementary mechanism to fill existing gaps.

The Alternative Mechanism of Social Accountability

The alternative accountability mechanism that exists in Uganda but is not mandatory is social accountability. This is a community-based oversight consisting of various stakeholders and actors who have an interest in public issues such as the education of their children. In the case of UPE, stakeholders include the community, individual parents/guardians organised under PTAs, CSOs with a keen interest in basic education, the media, and *barazas*. A *baraza* refers to a 'public face-to-face meeting' called to discuss an important matter (Loimeier 2005). In 2009, President Museveni initiated *barazas* in response to a public outcry about rising levels of poor accountability and service delivery

in the public sector (*The New Vision* 2009). They were to serve as platforms for improving public accountability where citizens have face-to-face interaction with service providers, and put them to task to account to them directly regarding public funds received and how they were utilised. The dialogue was supposed to create awareness and transparency in the utilisation of public funds meant for service delivery. In other words, this approach was supposed to provide what the World Bank (2004b) dubbed the 'short route' to accountability.

These integrity promotion fora were set up at the sub-county level to plug the weaknesses associated with formal bureaucratic mechanisms of accountability. The expectation was that direct citizen engagement would compel service providers to be careful because they would realise that they would be required to answer at one point in time, and subsequently reduce waste, improve accountability, and the quality of service delivery. Sadly, the timing of the initiative was poor. It came up during the heat of the 2011 election contest and seems to have been conveniently used to calm people's frustration with poor public-sector accountability and service delivery. As the election storm subsided, the initiative also gradually withered away, since it was not entrenched in the law as a mechanism of accountability.

Additionally, the *baraza* initiative was dogged by a faulty implementation process. It also exhibited a centralised mechanism

for enforcing accountability that was to be funded and directed by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) in conjunction with the RDCs, who are appointed representatives of the president in local authorities. The reality is that the *barazas* have tended to be docile, and the idea is usually invoked towards election periods after which it goes into limbo. Moreover, on the few occasions where the *barazas* were organised, they reportedly exhibited glaring weaknesses and have been criticised. They tended to be ceremonial and centred on explaining financial accountability while ignoring the other essential aspects of accountability related to the quality of service delivery, as attested by one DIS; ‘The few *barazas* I have attended look at accountability from one dimension, and that is financial accountability. They leave out critical issues such as the absenteeism of teachers and children, limited UPE grants, inadequate textbooks, furniture, and latrines. Yet these challenges need to be addressed too.’ (Interview with a district school inspector, Iganga District, 15 May 2017)

Consequently, quality-related issues such as the availability of textbooks, pupil-textbook ratio, learner-teacher ratio, teacher refresher training, and adequacy of funding were not taken into consideration. They were also said to be general in scope, and their agenda tended to be crowded, with many issues cutting across all departments. The local authority heads of the department

were required to give general reports rather than focus on one sector at a time, so that specific issues, such as education, could be discussed exhaustively in a single *baraza*. Moreover, interviewees revealed that organisers of these dialogues did not give sufficient notice to communities to attend, did not conduct follow-ups after the dialogue, and the communities were not given feedback on the implementation of the resolutions. Hence, the government’s initiative to use *barazas* to plug the gaps created by bureaucratic accountability mechanisms failed.

Moreover, the organisation and funding of *barazas* lay outside the control of local authorities and were instead a responsibility of the OPM, which was rather busy and remote. Consequently, they tended to be ad hoc and irregularly organised. There was no clear calendar for meetings in the sub-counties because the schedules depended on the whims of the OPM. For example, Kabarole District had only three *barazas* in five years, while Iganga District had only two *barazas* since 2016 owing to the comatose state of the OPM. One senior district official observed that ‘*barazas* were not anchored in the districts because we neither budget nor control them. Their budget remains in the OPM and there is no clear calendar of when the OPM organises them’ (Interview with district administration official, Lira District, 18 May 2017). The *barazas* were not institutionalised as part of mandatory public accountability requirements. There was no enabling

law compelling all government departments to account for the public through *barazas* on a quarterly basis or before receiving funds for the next quarter. The implication of this lacuna is that government officials sometimes ignore them without suffering sanctions. This explains why the *barazas* were lame ducks. Evidently, they were initiated for political expediency. Therefore, in their current state, they lack the capacity to enhance accountability in service sectors such as the UPE.

Further evidence to show that the government de-emphasised the role of the social accountability mechanism was the banishing of PTAs and their replacement with SMCs (*The Monitor*, 1996). The supervisory role of parents was watered down according to Suzuki (2002: 248), PTAs were not given a statutory role in monitoring the incomes and expenditures of schools. Instead, this role was assigned to SMCs. The disempowerment of PTAs was confirmed by an education officer.

There is no legal framework to accommodate PTAs, which has caused hostility between SMCs, who are the legal owners of the school, and PTAs which are legitimate owners of the school. The constitution of PTA requires that you should be a parent, yet membership in SMC does not require you to be a parent. In addition, PTA committee members are popularly elected by all parents, but the SMCs are appointed. (Interview with Municipal Education Official, Kabarole District, 23 May 2017)

While it is in the parents' interest that UPE schools succeed, the Education Act and UPE Guidelines do not apportion them to a mandatory oversight role. Only one parent is represented in the SMC of 12 appointed members, which diluted their power and role. Disregarding PTAs created a big gap in parents' participation to hold Head teachers accountable, as highlighted by another DEO; 'Sometimes parents through PTAs organise against SMCs over management of school funds and transfer of Head teachers. When we go on the ground to investigate such conflicts, we find PTAs are right.' (Interview with a district education official, Iganga district, 15 May 2017) Even the AGM provided by the policy does not give parents the clout to continuously play the oversight role in UPE schools.

While PTAs should have been the main stakeholders in UPE schools and deserved more power and roles than SMCs, the government disempowered them and became mere spectators in their own schools. This partly explains the reported cases of conflict between PTAs and SMCs. Available historical evidence indicates that PTAs were powerful during the economic and political crises of the 1970s and the 1980s (Passi, 1995). They effectively took over the financing and supervision of local schools on a self-help basis because of government failure. This practice continued until the 1990s because of the implementation of cost-sharing policies associated with

the unpopular SAPs, which forced the state to withdraw subsidies extended to social programmes. During this period, PTAs became instrumental not only in supplementing meagre government funding, but also played the oversight role in the management of schools. The positive self-help initiative that managed to sustain the basic education sector in Uganda during the crisis period was sacrificed at the altar of election-driven populist policies such as UPE, which perpetuated a culture of dependence on unreliable government handouts.

Undermining autonomous community initiatives such as PTAs led parents to abandon their supervisory and monitoring roles in the SMCs, which adversely affected the accountability and quality of UPE service delivery. Consequently, elite parents responded by transferring their children from public basic schools to privately-run basic schools. Poor performance was the main reason why the local elite shunned educating their children in UPE schools and opted for private schools. The general view and main concern of most UPE parents is that the political leaders and civil servants who are vested with the authority to oversee the success of UPE care less about improving standards in these schools because their children are not enrolled in them' (FGDs reports, Iganga District, 16 May 2017). Hence, the critical aspect of demand-driven social accountability in UPE schools has suffered owing to the marginalisation of self-help

community initiatives and lack of interest by elites vested with the power of implementation and supervision.

Other important stakeholders are CSOs that engage in education-related advocacy and provide tangible support aimed at improving education in UPE schools. Such support includes, inter alia, policy advocacy, financial support, training of SMCs, tracking the utilisation of grants, monitoring, and organising interface meetings and radio talk shows. They also enhance the awareness among parents regarding their roles and responsibilities. The research findings revealed a positive correlation between the availability of active CSOs and improvement in accountability practices and service delivery in UPE schools. A case in point was the Lira and Kabarole Districts, which had vibrant CSOs that mobilised people to engage with service providers to improve responsiveness, accountability, and the quality of UPE service delivery. The vigilance of the CSOs in the two districts had a positive impact on UPE schools. Conversely, Iganga District, which had few NGOs focusing on the education sector, showed little evidence of vigilance in monitoring service providers. Consequently, it had a poor record of UPE service delivery, as evidenced by the very poor grades in PLE for many years.

Notwithstanding the fact that CSOs in Iganga District were few and less vigilant compared to those in Kabarole and Lira Districts, there were some pockets of success in this

seemingly hopeless situation. Some CSOs, such as the Anti-Corruption Coalition of Busoga (ACCOB), Iganga NGO Forum (INF), Integrated Disabled Women Activities (IDIWA), and LIDI, conducted mobilisation and conscientisation and organised communities to engage with service providers to demand better service delivery. They also created alternative spaces for communities to monitor service delivery to hold service providers accountable. In the few instances where CSOs actively intervened to support UPE schools, there was evidence of improvement. For example, INF intervention to mobilise and organise awareness raising campaigns in Busesa parish, Bulanku sub-county, reportedly awakened people to the need to vigorously demand better services, which positively turned around the performance of Busesa UPE School in PLE. Nonetheless, CSOs were constrained by a lack of enforcement power and faced intimidation by state functionaries, who perceived exposing UPE weaknesses as undermining the government's political image and legitimacy. It was also evident that the relationship between CSOs and the government was not institutionalised in policy, law, and practice, which partly undermined their effectiveness. Generally, there is a loose collaborative relationship in which CSOs may be invited to attend meetings at the national level and/or enter ad-hoc memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with local authorities. For example, MoE&S occasionally invited

the Forum for Education NGOs of Uganda (FENU), a consortium of NGOs with an interest in education, to attend meetings. Their invitation and adoption of their policy advice were not mandatory, but rather depended on the discretion of the concerned public officials.

Mass media are another critical player in promoting accountability. It can increase transparency and sensitise all UPE stakeholders regarding their different roles. All media houses (radio and television), regardless of whether they are private or government-owned, are legally required by the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) (2014) Directive No.5 of 13th March to provide one hour of airtime each week to government officials to interface with and explain government policies and programmes to the public. Evidence has shown that service providers do not use these channels adequately to engage with stakeholders on matters related to service delivery. However, Reinikka and Svensson (2005) observed that when the government used the media to publicise quarterly grant releases to districts in the 1990s, the approach was instrumental in promoting transparency and reducing financial leakages. This incident proves that media can be an effective driver of accountability if harnessed by the government.

The weaknesses perpetuated by the formal-bureaucratic oversight mechanisms emphasised by the government in the supervision of

UPE schools partly explain the variation in performance between UPE and private schools. Participants reported wide performance disparities between the two groups. Private schools generally performed better in terms of learners' retention, time management, reduced absenteeism of learners and teachers, learners' competency in literacy and numeracy, feeding learners at school, actual teaching, discipline, and final performance in PLE. No wonder, then, that privately-run basic schools outnumbered the UPE schools that provided free education. For example, Kabarole District had 185 private schools compared to 124 UPE schools, while Iganga District had 380 private schools compared to 153 UPE schools in 2018. In the case of Lira District, which had more UPE schools than private ones, the difference was attributed to the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) conflict that devastated the northern region from 1986 to 2006. While the increase in the number of private schools can be partly credited to the privatisation policies of the 1990s, it is imperative to note that parents' disenchantment with the poor performance of UPE schools was a major contributing factor. Privately-run basic schools performed much better because of reliable financing, strict supervision by proprietors, a business orientation in their relationship with parents, discipline among both teachers and learners, and active participation by parents. According to Sasaoka and Nishimura (2010: 86), the strength

of private basic schools lies in their commitment to public demand and the practice of downward accountability. This was in contrast with UPE schools, which portrayed laxity in supervision, erosion of participation, upward accountability, and a longer disciplinary procedure for errant teachers and head teachers. According to one head teacher; 'Unlike a head teacher in a private school who has a lot of power over teachers and can make them obedient and disciplined, my power stops at reporting them to my immediate supervisors, who are the sub-county chief and DEO. The DEO also submits to the CAO.' (Interview with a Head teacher, Iganga District, 16 2017)

Hence, the disparity in the quality of service delivery between UPE and private basic schools was largely explained by stakeholder engagement and support and the degree of commitment to achieve better results by the respective managers. While parents, CSOs, the community, media, and *barazas* would have been instrumental in turning around service delivery in UPE schools through effective supervision, monitoring, and demanding accountability, as is the case with private schools, they were denied legal status and subsequently starved of enforcement powers.

Conclusion

It was evident that after 25 years of implementation, the UPE programme continued to register poor service delivery. This is manifested not only

in terms of higher failure rates but also in the incompetence of learners in basic literacy and numeracy. The dismal performance of the UPE programme has been largely attributed to the government's failure to embrace social accountability mechanisms that empower stakeholders at the school level, such as parents and CSOs, which play an instrumental oversight role. Instead, the government opted for the traditional mechanism of accountability, which involves the use of technical and political supervision and the monitoring of UPE schools. The government's emphasis on formal-bureaucratic mechanisms of accountability has led to dismal performance, as evidenced by laxity in supervision, financial abuse, inflated enrolments of pupils, the presence of 'ghost' teachers and schools, chronic absenteeism of teachers and pupils, and high dropout and failure rates of learners, among others. However, poor accountability for UPE grants and service delivery have implications for social justice. It deepens social inequalities, as children of the elite access quality education in private and international schools, while those of ordinary Ugandans are condemned to access poor quality UPE education. Consequently, the children of the poor will be less competent and unable to compete favourably for employment opportunities in the private and public sectors due to a poor education foundation.

Notwithstanding the serious limitations of bureaucratic accountability, the government

continues to pay little attention to social accountability oversight mechanisms, such as PTAs, CSOs, the mass media and *barazas*. These mechanisms are not prescribed in the law and this explains why their interventions to enforce accountability are often ignored. They can only monitor and recommend to public officials to take action on the recalcitrant government officials. Field reports indicated that little or no action was taken on the reported cases, to the disappointment of social accountability actors.

In essence, demand-driven social accountability mechanisms not only restore the power of citizens to hold public officials accountable but also oblige public officials to be answerable to citizens for their actions. Stated differently, the use of social accountability mechanisms anchored in the principal-agent framework has several benefits. These include the active participation of community stakeholders in the supervision and monitoring of service providers, making financial contributions to support public services, and inculcating the spirit of ownership, self-help, and sustainability of such services. Despite the benefits associated with social accountability mechanisms, the government's bias towards bureaucratic accountability mechanisms and the politicisation of UPE service delivery have had many negative implications. It has made the community stakeholders disengage from participating in UPE schools, which created an oversight gap that stifled financial accountability and

service delivery to the detriment of the programme. In general, parents and communities also declined to support learners and schools, respectively, owing to the perception that this was the government's responsibility. Some parents who were disappointed with the persistent poor standards of UPE had to withdraw their children from UPE to private schools, which have mushroomed. The success of private schools provides insights that can help inform UPE policy. Key among these is that parents' financial support was instrumental in the quest for active participation in school affairs. In addition, strict supervision by actors with legitimate interests in schools is critical to efficient and effective performance. In this case, proprietors and parents had a legitimate interest in the success of the schools. Rather emphasising surrogate and remote oversight supervisory agencies, it was essential for the government to legally empower community stakeholders to oversee the UPE service delivery. More particularly, the law that established SMCs ought to be revisited to replace them with PTAs or to make the membership of SMCs

dominated by parents with a higher stake in basic schools. For *barazas* to be effective accountability instruments, they need to be institutionalised so that they become part of the mandatory requirements for public accountability. More importantly, the resources for organising them should be made directly available to local authorities so that they can own the initiative. The oversight of the OPM ought to focus on central government ministries, departments, and authorities (MDAs). It is also time for the government to adopt the best accountability practices that have proved effective in private schools. Some of these practices include separating of administrative and financial tasks. The government should recruit qualified school bursars, as is the case with secondary schools, while head teachers should focus on school administration. Alternatively, head teachers can be trained in basic accounting and financial management practices.

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