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BEHIND THE SCENES OF STREET BEGGING: Karamojong Women of North Eastern Uganda

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Cover photo: Karamojong woman with her baby begging at Katwe Queens' way round about Kampala.

Photo by Sarah Musubika during field work 2016

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ABSTRACT

When one walks through the various streets of Kampala, the capital city of Uganda, one encounters a diversity of beggars. Among them, are Karamojong women and children stationed at different places, and pleading with by-passers to offer them something. Scenes of Karamojong mothers breast feeding their babies while begging, and always set to run into hiding when they sight city authorities, are common on most busy streets of Kampala.

This study investigated why Karamojong women engage in street begging, the challenges they encounter, how they cope, and the role men play. The study based on data gathered through qualitative ethnographic fieldwork in Kampala Uganda using interviews, observation, narratives and archival records. The violence and oppression that Karamojong women face daily during street begging requires an intersectional approach to obtain a better grasp of the situation. Through the fusion of Indigenous Feminism and Intersectionality, this study presents an analysis that takes into account the dynamics of race, ethnicity, class, gender and other dimensions of social inequality and difference that force Karamojong women into street begging.

The findings show that the hassle of the city is tough, and only the fit survive. Karamojong women are determined and manoeuvre their way around the city even though they face many challenges as they go about begging. Their lives are entangled with historical effects of colonization, patriarchy, racism and sexism; which manifest through stigmatization, exploitation, prejudices and derogatory references both within and outside their society; all of which bolster subordination and vulnerability.

Faced with such challenges, Karamojong women are strong, resilient people who do not concede to their plight, neither do they easily join the band wagon of the township. They still embrace their cultural values, identity, the right to be different and strive against all odds to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

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ACROYNMS

ABEK	Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
ACWGIP	African Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations
CDI	Community Development Initiative
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CRCM	Conflict, Reconciliation and Community Management
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
EOCA	Equal Opportunities Commission Act
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KCCA	Kampala Capital City Authority
KNRC	Kampiringisa National Rehabilitation Center
NTV	Nation Television
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
UHRC	Uganda Human Rights Commission
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UOBDU	United Organisation for Batwa Development in Uganda
UWA	Uganda Wild Life Authority
VGS	Vulnerable Group Support
YOP	Youth Opportunity Projects

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

When one walks through the Capital city of Uganda; Kampala, one encounters several beggars along its various streets. Among them, are Karamojong women and children stationed at various places and pleading with by-passers to offer them some thing. ‘*Mpaayo ekikumi*’ a Luganda phrase meaning ‘*give me a hundred shillings*’ is often heard from the women and children. Scenes such as this, and the one captured in the photograph below are a common feature in the central business district of Kampala.



Photo 1: Karamojong women and children begging from a lorry driver
(Source: Field photo by researcher 2016)

The people in the above photograph are Karamojong women, children and young girls carrying babies who are often in poor health, dressed in dirty clothes and are bare footed. They spread hands desperately to by-passers and motorists in quest for something to eat. Some people respond to their pleas, others pay a deaf ear and just pass-by, while others answer them back with insults and demeaning words.

As a woman and mother, several unanswered questions strike my mind. I contemplate on what could possibly be the background reasons for their engagement in street begging, the challenges they face and how they manoeuvre. I also ponder over who and where the husbands of these women and fathers of these children are, and what their position in all this is. Other factors remaining constant, I largely wonder why only women and children, and not men? I have

always wished to hear the stories of Karamojong women and understand the realities of their everyday life as they go about begging. In that respect, therefore, four research questions formed the basis of my research project.

1.2 Research Questions

The main aim of this project was to find out why Karamojong women are involved in street begging and to find out their personal experiences about street life. To attain the above aim, I broke it down into four research questions namely: -

1. What are the causes of street begging among Karamojong women?
2. What are the consequences of street begging to Karamojong women?
3. How do Karamojong women cope with the challenges of street begging?
4. What role do Karamojong men play in street begging?

1.3 Background to the Study population

The Karamojong are one of the known indigenous groups in Uganda, living in the North-Eastern part of the country in seven districts (Nakapiripirit, Abim, Moroto, Kotido, Amudat, Napak and Kaabongo). They comprise of smaller ethnic groups and clans that include Matheniko, Bokora, Pian, Pokot, Jie, Dodoth, Ik, Ethur and Jabwor. Their local language is known as Karimojong (Otiso, 2006). 'Karamojong' literally means 'the tired old man', who migrated with others over 1,000 years ago from Ethiopia, and when they reached present day Uganda, the tired old men of the group said they could go no further, Bird (2007, p. 10).

The Karamojong are a semi-nomadic warrior community (Huisman, 2001) with a population of just under one million people by 2014 (UBOS, 2014). They live in North-Eastern Uganda, which is also the most marginalized and least developed area in the country, a situation that dates as far back as the colonial period¹. It is one of the regions worst hit by recent climatic changes especially drought to the extremes of claiming lives of people and animals (Ariong, 2016; NTVUganda, 21 September 2015). Famine and hunger continue to be common features in the region, with scarcity of food disrupting day to day activities of residents (NTVUganda, 13 February, 2017, 14 February, 2017)².

¹ The last three district of Karamoja, Kotido, Nakapiripirit and Moroto have the lowest Human Development Index of 0.231, 0.240 and 0.271 respectively, meaning that they are the poorest of Uganda's districts. See United Nations Development Programme Uganda Human Development Report. Linking Environment to Human Development: A deliberate choice, available at http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/nationalreports/africa/uganda_2005_en.pdf (UNDP, 2005). (accessed on 7 June 2016)

² See video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXydZHMkqIM>. (Accessed 14 February 2017)

Cattle are a key element of Karamojong culture (Huisman, 2001). People of Karamoja depend on cattle for their livelihood and survival. They also have a special cultural and spiritual attachment to cattle. They believe that *Akuju* the god of their religion gave them all the cattle in the world and thus regard themselves as cattle owners by divine power (Kabiza Wilderness Safaris, 2017; Stites, Akabwai, Mazurana, & Ateyo, 2007). They are constantly on the move within the region in search of pastures and water for their big herds. However, the Karamojong also engage in small scale crop farming. They live a communal life; land is communally owned and several tasks are carried out on a communal basis (Huisman, 2001).

The Karamojong society is patriarchal. The payment of cattle as bride-wealth to a girl's kin is an essential step in arranging a marriage. A man is only the janitor, not the father of children he engenders, unless he transfers cattle as bride-wealth for their mother (Kagaha, Mugisha, & Atugonza, 2009). The more cattle a man provides in bride-wealth the more kinsmen he creates who receive a share of cattle, and the larger his range of affinal ties (ibid). Extended families stay near each other sharing tasks in a group homestead called *Manyatta*. The Karamojong neighbourhood is made up of a small number of settlements, the members of which recognize social ties with each other, offer mutual hospitality, utilize common natural resources, take common ritual action, and meet together frequently for social interaction (Otiso, 2006).

Accepted customary roles are gender specific with clear division of labour amongst the Karamojong (ibid). Women are occupied throughout the day with health care of the family and management of daily life; while men handle security issues, herding, raiding and decision making (Ssenkaaba, 2015). The formal decision making is mainly by men, women only have informal influences on decision making through husbands and sons (ibid). Thus, women are not given the same power as men in matters of decision making, but they are not completely without power.

Over the past 30 years, Karamoja has been a scene of inter-tribal conflicts and revenge attacks over cattle, and successive Ugandan governments have turned a blind eye to the trouble (Bird, 2007). The region is characterized by armed insecurities and yearly drought where about 40% of the population lacks adequate food and survives on food handouts from humanitarian organisations like World Food Programme (Bird, 2007; NTVUganda, 14 February, 2017). With droughts increasing, life in the vast and full of uncertainties, Karamoja region is becoming

more difficult. However, Karamojong people still strive to maintain their way of life (Sundal, 2010). Meanwhile, the region continues to hemorrhage people to Uganda’s bustling capital Kampala to make ends meet.

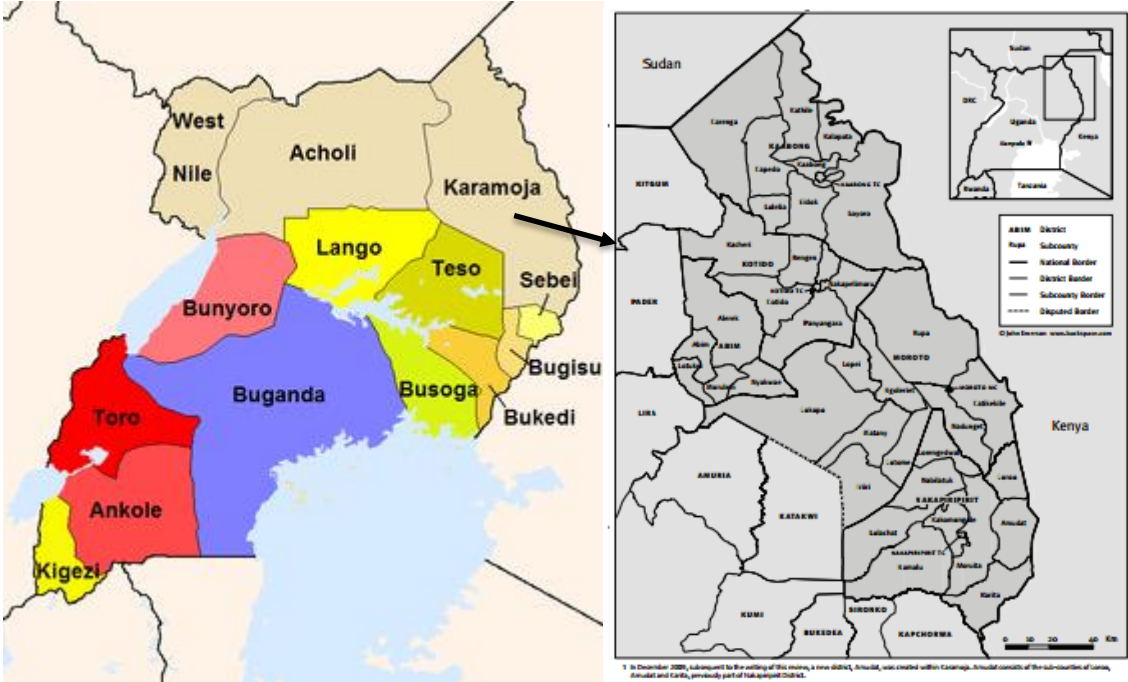


Figure 1: Map showing districts occupied by the Karamojong (Source: Google maps)

1.4 Indigenous Women in Context

Women constitute one of the vulnerable groups in the world that has received much attention in both the media and academia through publications and research (Matembe & Dorsey, 2002; Tamale, 1999). However, not much attention has been focused on indigenous women who are more susceptible to the challenges and vulnerabilities that face women world over (Chandra, 2005). In many instances, being female is taken for granted to be a single analytical category of gender, yet within this category, there are intertwined variations that demand due attention. Different women from different parts of the world are faced with differing situations in the different dimensions of life socially, economically, ethnically, culturally and politically. Thus, to understand their situation, one needs to look at the different levels and categories of challenges.

Holding multiple positions in society of mother, wife and care takers of homes, indigenous women are affected heavily by the challenges that affect indigenous communities in general (ibid). Such challenges include but are not limited to; denial of human rights, domestic and gender based violence, discrimination, oppression, land grabbing, illiteracy, poverty, famine and drought, all of which make their gender roles even harder to execute. Faced with these

challenges, indigenous women have been forced to develop skills and strategies of survival for themselves and their families in order to execute the gender roles assigned to them by society despite the difficulties involved.

As a woman with background knowledge of Gender Studies at Bachelors level, and now a student of Indigenous Studies, I feel quite concerned to draw the attention of government, civil society, the international community and all concerned stake holders to look at the double marginalisation indigenous women face; (a) as women, and (b) as indigenous people, and how they survive amidst the above-mentioned challenges.

Using the Karamojong of Uganda as a case study, I wish to shade light on the underlying factors that place indigenous women in their current positions in society, the various challenges they face, and the role men play in influencing women's positions and roles in society. My presupposed thought is that indigenous women have the potential and power to change their lives for the better, but they cannot do it in isolation without support from other stakeholders in the community, due to various issues like power relations and existing political structures. Therefore, creation of awareness of how they navigate through daily life, and what they wish their life to be in future, could be a stepping stone for a better life and accomplishment of desired goals. The awareness can also be used as a platform to challenge the status quo in the patriarchal setting, and, perhaps facilitate self-determination and recognition of indigenous women as equally important stakeholders in the indigenous movement.

1.5 Conceptual/ Theoretical Framework

This study was eclectic in its theoretical style. I used two approaches that complement each other, though with some variations. Since I was working with an indigenous community, I deemed it appropriate to employ **Indigenous Feminist** concepts to analyse my findings. Indigenous feminism is concerned with decolonization, displaying stories of indigenous women and reviewing patriarchy at different levels and forms (Torjer, 2016a). It seeks to identify ways in which men subordinate women, and how women can be emancipated from this subordination. It is a response to oppression and a prescription for change because it challenges the social, political, economic and cultural practices that validate, perpetuate and enforce male dominance (Frye, 2000).

On the other side, the study deals with vulnerable and marginalized women. Holding these two identities implies that Karamojong women experience marginalization in different dimensions; both from within and outside their community. Due to the foregoing scenario, I employed **Intersectionality** to help me analyze the diversity, connectedness and complexity of the different dimensions. Intersectionality is concerned with overlapping social identities and related systems of oppression, domination and discrimination (Crenshaw, 1989). By using this theoretical framework, I understood how systemic injustices and social inequality occur on a multidimensional basis and result into multiple facets of oppression. This helped me in engaging empirical data and theory in the discussion. In effect, I fused **Indigenous Feminism** with **Intersectionality** to help me analyse the multiple dimensions of being an **Indigenous Woman**.

1.6 Relevance of the Project

This project highlights how the life of Karamojong people has changed over time in various aspects, the factors behind these changes and how they cope amidst internal and external pressures around them. It points out the adaptive measures Karamojong women have resorted to, and how they navigate to make ends meet.

The study points out the social and economic challenges that indigenous communities face in this era of modernisation and globalisation. It examines some of the socio-political and economic forces that are forcing many indigenous peoples to abandon their former ways of life and means of survival, to adapt to the changing environment in order to survive. Such information can hopefully be used by nation states and other stake holders to devise structural means that can help indigenous peoples to live peacefully and happily.

This study also shades light on how the socio-economic status and activities of the Karamojong people have changed over time amidst changing climatic conditions and patterns of livelihood and how the above have affected the gender roles of men and women. This project specially brings out the contribution of women towards their families and larger communities which is often less recognised and appreciated amidst all the challenges they go through to fulfil this role.

It also brings to the forefront how power relations between indigenous men and women influence decision making right from the homestead to higher political offices. Even though this is a case study of the Karamojong peoples of Uganda, with due respect to differences in

culture and social setup, my findings can still be a pointer to what could be happening among other indigenous communities around the world.,

1.7 Outline of the thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter contains the introduction to the topic and gives a general overview of the study population and rationale for the study. The second chapter consists of a review of the term indigeneity in the African and Ugandan context, and how different scholars discuss this issue. I also review previous research about street begging both in the past and the present-day situation. Chapter two also consists of the theoretical framework upon which the study is built . The third chapter is a detailed account of the manner in which the study was conducted, what transpired in the field and the tools used to gather the field data. The fourth and fifth chapters are the empirical and analytical chapters; where I present and discuss the findings of my study in relation to the four research questions stated in chapter one. In chapter five I engage the findings of this study with the theories in an insightful and analytical conversation. Chapter six is the conclusive chapter, where I summarise the generated findings, state what this study adds onto the scholarly basket of knowledge, and general conclusive remarks.

CHAPTER TWO: PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter contains three sections. In the first section, I review previous research in relation to street begging both in the ancient and contemporary times. I also take a preview of what other researchers have established about street begging among the Karamojong. The second section is a discussion of indigeneity in the African and Ugandan context. It entails the description of the general state of indigenous peoples of Uganda, and the Karamojong in particular. In the third section, I layout the theoretical framework upon which the study is built.

SECTION ONE

2.1 Previous research on street begging

2.1.1 General overview of street begging

Begging is the practice of imploring others to grant a favor, often a gift of money with little or no expectation of reciprocation (Mnitp & Rtp, 2013). According to the Oxford Dictionary sixth edition (Hornby, 2001); to beg, simply means to ask for money, food, clothes, among others, as a gift or as charity. This implies that begging is not peculiar to individuals, but also organizations or countries. For the latter group, it can perhaps be termed as seeking for charity or grants by the civil society, government agencies or countries from those who have something to offer. However, this study is concerned with the former category of begging which is synonymous with street begging.

Ratnapala (1999), defines begging as a more or less deliberate solicitation of gifts from individuals or agencies. He argues that a beggar can be an active or inactive beggar. According to Ratnapala, an active beggar is one who asks people to give to him, while an inactive one does not ask to be given, but people know that he needs help and therefore offer things to him. In his ethnographic research 'The beggar in Sri Lanka' (1999, pp. 19-28), Ratnapala categorizes beggars as follows;

- (i) Ritual beggars: people who engage in begging for some ritualistic purpose either for a period of time or for their entire life. For example, begging is functional to the vocation of Buddhist monks. This category also includes people who make vows to gods and take to ritual begging as a way of fulfilling the aforesaid vows.
- (ii) Caste beggars: people who engage in begging on account of the caste into which they were born. They are expected to take to begging as a way of life. This is common in communities

where the *Caste system*³ is operational. For example, in Sri Lanka, people that belong to the Rodiya and Kinnaraya castes adopt to begging because of the belong to which they belong. The people around them traditionally offer them money and other items because of fear of the magical efficacy of charms that are believed to be effected by people who belong to those two castes (Ratnapala, 1999, p. 20).

(iii) The third category is of people who take to begging because of old age and infirmity. These often lack support from immediate family members and hence seek the help of other people through begging.

(iv) Those suffering from strange diseases and disabilities like leprosy, filariasis, blind and deep raw wounds with blood or pus oozing out of them. Others are without visible body parts like hands/legs. But often this kind of begging is for a limited time to get money for treatment of the illness. Under this category, there are also infants who are carried around by older people. Such infants are often deformed, malnourished, or underdeveloped with abnormal body parts. Society often looks at them with pity and sympathy as people who are incapable of working to sustain themselves because of the illnesses and disabilities, and hence offer them money and other items. I encountered many of beggars in this category along the streets of Kampala during field work, though I did not interact with them much because my interest was more focused to Karamojong beggars.

However, amongst the many categories that Ratnapala (1999) talks of; the category of family beggars drew my attention. These are young men and women who suddenly stop by-passers on the road, and ask for money or food items. He says this category of beggars does not steal or take part in unlawful acts, but keep stopping people to ask for money. Ratnapala (1999, p. 24), says this type of begging is of recent times, a more frequent sight in the town due to economic and social reasons. People who move from rural to urban areas searching for economic sustenance. Ratnapala further describes this category of beggars as often consisting of mother, father and children, but in most cases mother and children. The mother always has a child in her arms, laps or back, which often evokes sympathetic feelings in the would-be givers (ibid).

From what I observed during fieldwork along the streets of Kampala, Karamojong women and children fall into the above category of beggars. The only difference is that the fathers/husbands do not follow the children and wives to the streets. My study centers around this category of beggars.

³ A system of social stratification of people. It can also be a social category to which some one belongs involuntarily

2.1.2 Historical perspective of begging

In the past, at the mention of the word beggar, one expected the person to be characterized by old age, suffers from some disgusting disease, wears dirty clothes and rags, unshaved hair or beard, carries a dirty pouch or bag and their face and body is unwashed (Ratnapala, 1999). It is possible that in the past, beggars with characteristics as mentioned above were viewed as economically powerless and physically weak people due to old age and strange illness. Therefore, society held itself responsible for the wellbeing of such vulnerable members, without sneering at them. Ratnapala (1999) for example, argues that in Sri Lanka, begging was a socially accepted pattern of life for certain groups of people like the old and the sick, and hence the attitude to such beggars was one of respect and tolerance. However, if a man could use his limbs, and was not old or sick, shame would be upon his manhood to beg. It was even worse to see women begging in the Sri Lanka community according to Ratnapala (1999), which would not only accrue to shame upon the woman begging, but also the community she belonged to.

Reading between the lines of the above situation, it appears ancient societies did not approve of young able bodied people to adopt begging as a permanent means of survival, but maybe in rare occasions where one became a beggar for a short time. Although there are no direct references to that effect, but given the fact that social sanctions and stigmatization applied to such an individual (Ratnapala, 1999), young able bodied people seemingly refrained from begging.

Notably, in the ancient society, there are more references to beggar men than beggar women. The women beggars were always in the company of their husbands, they are not referred to as walking alone (ibid). This points out that men had a role to play in the ancient society amongst beggars, though their role was manifested in a different way than it is today.

Unlike in ancient times, the situation presently seems to have changed atleast from my fieldwork observation amongst beggars in Kampala city. For instance, Karamojong beggars do not possess some of the characteristic mentioned above by Ratnapala. They instead consist of children and young adults, but not the old and the sick. Majority are young able bodied women, though their clothes look dirty and unwashed.

2.1.3 Street begging in the contemporary world

Begging in the streets of urban centres is one of the age-long activities and perhaps occupations of the highly vulnerable individuals in society, especially in the developing world (Mnitp &

Rtp, 2013). As revealed in the studies of different scholars, begging is not peculiar to developing countries; it is a universal phenomenon and a global urban problem evident in the United States, Mexico, Shanghai in China and Johannesburg; South Africa (Namwata, 2012). In cities of Britain and similar industrialized countries in the recent years, begging has become highly visible (ibid). In India, begging is seen as pride as beggars are seen posing as someone famous (Mnitp & Rtp, 2013). However, street-begging today is not so acceptable in many societies and as a result, beggars are usually looked down upon as belonging to a class of the most wretched persons in the society (ibid).

Today, there seems to be an increase in the number of child beggars which was not the case in ancient times. Ratnapala (1999, p. 51), writes that child beggars is a phenomenon of the last two decades. He says that in the fifties and early sixties, even beggar families did not allow their children to beg because it was considered shameful. But today, the shame seems to have faded. During my fieldwork, I encountered many children along the streets in Kampala begging, some in the care of young adult girls, while others seemed to be on their own. (Ratnapala, 1999, p. 52), says child beggars emulate their parents and are encouraged by their approval. Likewise, Sundal (2010, p. 78), while writing about income generating activities amongst Karamojong women in Kampala argues that; ‘mothers claimed that their children were more suited to beg than adults because the children were likely to earn more money, and could flee arrests quicker than adults’. Ratnapala (1999) however, warns against the repercussions of children engaging in begging; citing sexual abuses as one of the consequences that can befall child beggars.

Today's' beggar phenomenon is a more sociological phenomenon, well organised and systematic sub-culture, unlike the ancient beggars who were not organised neither in small groups or large groups (Ratnapala, 1999, pp. 52-53). Today's' begging is more organised, controlled and directed by either the beggars themselves or non-beggars that have personal interests (ibid).

2.1.4 Reasons for Street Begging

There are various reasons why people engage in street begging and each individual has his/her own reasons to support their stand. Some people justify begging in a religious sense. Many religions exalt the virtue of giving alms (sharing with others) as a way of attaining enlightenment (Ratnapala, 1999). In Buddhism, such alms were previously directed to priests (monks), but later extended to all people in need (ibid). These included food, clothing and other items. The support accorded to the old and the sick is considered an act of charity through which

the giver gathers merit that reciprocates into benefits both in the present world and in the world to come (ibid). There is also a belief in Buddhism that one is born poor or rich not because of one's fault but through one's own volitional actions (ibid). This implies that if one treats a beggar unkindly or sends him away without food, one commits evil and shall definitely reap evil results. It is for such reasons perhaps that Buddhist believers treat beggars with respect and tolerance.

To-date, such religious beliefs seem to influence the attitude of believers towards beggars. In mosques for example, all over the world, Friday prayers and the holy month of Ramadhan are filled with acts of giving to beggars and the poor by the believers. However, the status of a beggar according to Islam, is some sort of relief, and therefore transitional, rather than permanent or a professional one (Namwata, 2012). Even amongst Christians, the virtue of giving to the poor and the needy is upheld. In general however, no religion has made begging a permanent solution to undesirable conditions or an occupation to be engaged in.

Some people also justify begging along cultural lines, for example the cultural belief in the deity- nature of twins (or triplets) in some societies like the Baganda of Uganda. Begging by the twins' mother is justified as a means of providing for the children (Nannyonga-Tamusuza, 2009). And the belief that if you give alms to the twins or their mother, you will be blessed in return (ibid).

To some beggars, the problem of socio-economic hardships and poverty are often the claim as to why they engage in begging (Ratnapala, 1999). What to eat or wear and where to live, among other necessities must be sought so long as one is alive. World Bank (1999) in its 2000/1 World Development Report: Attacking poverty, noted that: 'extreme poverty deprives people of almost all means of managing risks by themselves and such situations lead to child labour and malnourishment, with lasting damage to children and the breakdown of families, and the resultant begging option'. Many people think begging is the easiest way out for the helpless poor. However, not all beggars are poor or motivated into begging by poverty, and yet, not all the poor are beggars (ibid). This leaves many questions unanswered and points to the possibility that some people may become beggars by choice, not by coercion or circumstance.

It is worth noting that a significant proportion of street beggars are physically handicapped or have some kind of illness. However, the extent to which disability or illness warrants one to beg is a point of contention to many. World Bank (1999), in its World development report on poverty 2000/1, states that “when a person has a visible or perceivable disability, it is assumed by others that the person cannot survive and has to depend on the care of his/her parents or the welfare of the community. Sometimes, deprived of opportunity and steeped in ignorance, some disabled persons themselves seem to believe so”. Therefore, this necessitates re-examining the concept of begging and related issues placed in different contexts. There could possibly be some hidden underlying factors behind begging by different categories of people, than what apparently meets the eye.

2.1.5 Scholarship on the Karamojong and street begging in Uganda

Many researchers have written about the Karamojong and street begging, and each has found out varying factors that lead the Karamojong to the streets. Sundal (2010, pp. 71-74) notes that women and children move from Karamoja in an attempt to escape misery and violence caused by forced disarmament programmes, continuous droughts and famine that have led to decimated agricultural yields and severe food shortages, and collapse of household and social structures. She adds that in 2006, a few months after the commencement of the ‘cordon and search’ operations in Karamoja, Karamojong women and children appeared on the streets of cities in large numbers wandering and begging. Though, it is noted that they moved hoping that they would be displaced temporarily, and maybe go home later when peace returned.

Even though it is said that outright migration and seeking income from other sources apart from livestock by the Karamojong people existed in the past (Sundal, 2010), in recent times the trend of events has shifted from relocation within neighboring semi-rural communities, to travelling to cities by women and children (Stites et al., 2007). Stites and colleagues attribute this movement to historical factors and the disarmament policy.

Researchers have also found out some challenges that Karamojong people face while in the city. Arbeiter Samariter-Bund Deutschland (2007, p. 7), established dehumanizing stereotypes against the Karamojong both on the streets and their living conditions in city. The report noted that; ‘everyone discriminates against the Karamojong, and treats them with a violent attitude. They are perceived as unclean and not accepted as Ugandans’. Sundal (2010, pp. 77-78), while writing about the living conditions of the Karamojong people that reside in Kisenyi near Owino market, notes that; ‘the Karamojong rented units that ranged from run-down shacks and decrepit

buildings, to meagre shelters that also served as drinking bars during the day'. She adds that residents in such settlements had to pay a daily fee for the sleeping area and a fee per visit to the toilet. Likewise, other research reports also established that the Karamojong people residing in Kampala lived in places that are unsuitable for both adults and children, lacked water and adequate sanitation facilities and exposed residents to high risk of diseases (Arbeiter Samariter-Bund Deutschland, 2007; Gackle, Lolem, & Kabanda, 2007).

In order to cope with the hassle in the city, Karamojong people engage in various other activities. Sundal (2010), in her research with the Karamojong people established that besides begging, Karamojong women in the city also worked as house maids, sorting beans, cleaning stores for shopkeepers and alcohol brewing. Juxtaposed with non-Karamojong people working in the same capacities, Karamojong women and girls are underpaid or not paid at all (ibid). She also notes that Karamojong women collect discarded produce at markets such as outer leaves of cabbages and fallen grains of beans (ibid:78).

There have been various efforts aimed at removing the Karamojong from the streets. For example, in 2007, the government of Uganda launched a programme aimed at removing the Karamojong from the streets and resettling them back into Karamoja area. Sundal (2010, pp. 72-80), critiques the programme of merely collecting street beggars regardless of their reasons for being in Kampala. She argues that resettlement without addressing the needs of an impoverished community, is an inappropriate policy for migrant Karamojong people. Sundal adds that this programme constructed Karamojong street beggars as economic migrants rather than internally displaced persons who had left their homes because of armed conflict, hunger and violence. She continues to say that, the government executed the programme through involuntary and forceful resettlement of Karamojong people who were caught begging in urban areas, but did not address the causes of Karamojong flow to Kampala, neither the violence back home in their homeland, nor the unbalanced pattern of the disarmament process. Sundal also points out the failure of the programme to involve the Karamojong in the design and implementation of voluntary resettlement, but rather women and children were arrested on the streets, detained in Kampiringisa National Rehabilitation Center (KNRC), where they lacked proper housing, food, water and medical attention, and later forced to return home. Sundal further says that there was no adequate information about the programme that was availed to the intended beneficiaries even though they were willing to consider it. But due to unclear information about the nature of resettlement, comprehension of the whole programme was tinted with fear, because information mostly reached the intended beneficiaries through rumors

and direct experience (Sundal, 2010, p. 80). Sundal views the resettlement programme as one that aimed at ridding Ugandan streets of the unwanted Karamojong.

Scholarship on the Karamojong people and street begging also shows that most attempts to deal with this social phenomenon are temporary measures that have set aims to paint out a ‘good image’ of Uganda to outsiders or visitors. Bird (2007), notes that shortly before the visit of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) of 2007 to Uganda, the government removed street beggars and other people from the streets who were regarded as ‘undesirable’. Ninety percent of the aforementioned people were Karamojong. Furthermore, government policies seem to be made and imposed upon the Karamojong people without consulting and involving them in the decision making processes. Bird (2007, p. 6) writes that in his interview with a city council public relations officer in charge of removing the Karamojong from the streets, he was told that; “It is our policy to remove those Karamojong from the street, and to put them into school, and relocate them in Karamoja land. We do not want to encourage more to come to the city. It is there we want to develop them, and deal with the problems from the source.” Gackle et al. (2007, pp. 17-25), in their argument about the response of the Ugandan government to Karamojong street beggars, note that; ‘many Ugandans know little about Karamojong culture and dismiss it as one that is barbaric, and the Karamojong people are mistaken to be a vicious group of people that cannot be trusted’. Sundal (2010) says that Karamojong people suffer trauma and overt discrimination at the hands of fellow Ugandans. Gackle et al. (2007, p. 33), note that many Ugandans see Karamojong street beggars as a societal nuisance and hence removing them off the streets seems to be of utmost importance. Hence, their rights to be different and to make informed decisions on their own is trampled upon.

SECTION TWO

2.2 Indigeneity in the African context

When dealing with indigenous people world over, there is always a challenge in trying to define who qualifies to be indigenous and who does not. Likewise, the use of the term *Indigenous People* is a subject of contention in Africa. Saugestad (2008) illustrates that the term has historically been used to refer to; descendants of those who occupied a given territory that was invaded, conquered or colonized by white colonial powers. Saugestad also notes that all native Africans were; - first comers, non-dominant and different in culture from the white intruders. In the same vein, Minde (2008) refers to such kind of colonisation as a situation where white settlers settled on the indigenous people’s land. This implies that, the dominant position of the

white colonial masters left all colonised Africans in a subordinate position, with the exception of countries like Ethiopia which were not colonised at all, though attempts were made.

However, it is clear that colonialists withdrew from all African countries apart from South Africa, although colonial tendencies and mentalities are still existent to date (Wa Thiong'o, 1994). At their time of departure, they had constructed borders of the nation-states that they controlled after along scramble and partition of the African lands. This creation of boundaries led to the merging of different tribal and territorial communities under one nation-state (Saugestad, 2008). Some tribal groups to-date are still struggling to go back to where they initially belonged (ibid). For example, the Banyarwanda exist both in Uganda and Rwanda and there is a big debate to where exactly they belong.

Coates (2004) in his discussion of indigeneity states that; Indigenous peoples are composed of present descendants of territories formerly colonised partially or wholly by outsiders, but presently live in conformity to former colonial structures that are administered by nation states in which they live. However, in the African context, this definition isolates many people who might not necessarily have suffered conquest or colonisation, but are isolated or marginalised for some reason. For example, Ethiopia was never colonised by outsiders, though there are traces of internal colonisation and there exists people who perceive themselves as indigenous (ACHPR, 2006). Such people in some sense could have been placed under a structure and culture different from theirs, and they could be descendants of people who occupied their present territories at the time when other ethnic groups arrived in that territory. They might also have preserved their ancestral customs and traditions distinct from other groups, and that could be used to characterise them as indigenous.

Due to the many controversies surrounding indigeneity in the African context, the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights came up with a new criteria that seeks to make the term less foreign to the African continent. For example; that the cultures and ways of life of the people in question differs considerably from the dominant society and that their cultures are under threat, in some cases to the point of extinction. That the survival of their ways of life depends on access and rights to their traditional lands and natural resources on those lands. The commission further argues that such people suffer from discrimination as they are regarded as less developed and less advanced than other dominant sectors of society, they often live in geographically isolated regions and suffer from various forms of marginalisation both politically and socially, they are subjected to domination and exploitation within national

political and economic structures that are commonly designed to reflect the interests and activities of the nation, and that the discrimination, domination and marginalisation they face violates and threatens continuation of their cultures and ways of life and prevents them from being able to genuinely participate in decisions regarding their own future and forms of development (ACHPR, 2006).

The above criteria of defining indigenous peoples has some similarity with that of Martinez Cobo⁴ (United Nations Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and protection of minorities & Martinez Cobo Jose R, 1987). He puts across four criteria for defining indigenous peoples namely; - cultural distinctiveness, priority in time, self-identification and the fact that they are dispossessed. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is also in the same line with that of Cobo, although it is more inclined on the importance of Self-Identification in article 33(1&2) (UNDRIP, 2007). However, Cobo argues that Africans are indigenous to Africa and that separating Africans into indigenous and non-indigenous groups instead creates separate classes of citizens created with different rights (United Nations Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and protection of minorities & Martinez Cobo Jose R, 1987).

2.2.1 The Situation of Indigenous Peoples of Uganda

The term 'indigenous' is used to describe the different ethnic groups that historically have resided within Uganda's borders. It has Aboriginal connotations and is used to mean all persons that have African origins and have lived in Uganda since it was declared a British protectorate and its boundaries demarcated, Equal Opportunities Commission Act of Uganda (2007 section i). The Third Schedule of the Constitution of The Republic of Uganda (2006) names 65 ethnic groups of Uganda, and is titled 'Uganda's Indigenous Communities as of 1st February 1926. This understanding differs markedly from the manner in which the term has been used by international and regional organisations, and by experts in the area of indigenous peoples and indigenous issues. Uganda uses aboriginality, to the exclusion of other factors, as the only method of identifying indigenous people (ACHPR, 2011).

⁴ Former United Nations rapporteur on the Committee on the Rights of Indigenous peoples

According to the African Commission, the term ‘indigenous peoples’ is a term and global movement fighting for rights and justice for those particular groups who have been left on the margins of development, and who are perceived negatively by dominating mainstream development paradigms, ‘whose culture and ways of life are subject to discrimination and contempt, and whose very existence is under threat’(ACHPR Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities, 2005, p. 91). The Karamojong, Benet and Batwa people in Uganda fit so well in the above definition as well as the international criteria for the identification of indigenous peoples. However, there exists other marginalised ethnic groups that we could call minorities though little is documented about them.

Although the Ugandan law does not expressly recognise indigenous peoples, it makes provision for addressing some of the negative effects arising from ethnic imbalances. The Constitution of Uganda, in the section on National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, provides that; ‘...every effort shall be made to integrate all peoples while at the same time recognising the existence of, amongst others, their ethnic, religious and cultural diversity’ (Constitution of The Republic of Uganda, 2006 section iii subsection ii).

However, Uganda lacks a clear distinction between indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities. Unfortunately, Uganda has not ratified ILO Convention 169; the most authoritative international instrument protecting the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, and yet its position on UNDRIP is also not clearly known since it was not represented during the voting of the declaration (ILO/ACHPR, 2009). As such, the non-compliance of such international instruments bolsters non-recognition and identification of indigenous peoples, resulting into their neglect and violation of a variety of their rights, and fosters marginalisation from mainstream society in economic, social and political terms (ibid).

However, as a member of the UN, and as a party to a number of human rights instruments, Uganda is bound by the UN instruments that promote and protect rights of indigenous peoples. There is evidence that Uganda has taken some steps to effect these provisions. The question, however, is the extent to which the provisions have been implemented. Nevertheless, there is commendable effort that cannot go unmentioned.

2.2.2 The Karamojong Indigenous People of Uganda

All the challenges faced by the Karamojong people withstanding, the government of Uganda and other stake holders have taken some steps to bolster self-determination and empowerment

of the people of Karamoja. For instance, the government adopted the World Bank-funded Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), a programme that is intended to address the poverty of disadvantaged people in the North and North-eastern parts of the country (The World Bank, 2015). The structure of this programme and the strategies for its implementation are, amongst others, designed to maximise community participation in development initiatives. According to the World Bank, the programme is aimed at empowering marginalised communities by enhancing their capacity to identify, prioritise and plan for their needs and implement sustainable development initiatives that improve socio-economic services and opportunities (The World Bank, 2015). Under NUSAF, there are also new socio-economic rehabilitation programme in Karamoja. For example, Community Development Initiative (CDI), Conflict, Reconciliation and Community Management (CRCM), Vulnerable Group Support (VGS), and the Youth Opportunity Projects (YOP). These projects have resulted in the construction of schools and teachers' houses, health centres, bridges and safe water points (The World Bank, 2015). It has also been reported that the programme has through its CRCM project helped to mitigate conflict and engage in conflict resolution for the benefit of the different warring Karamojong factions (ibid).

Working together with civil society organisations such as Save the Children – Norway, the government of Uganda has also introduced Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK), something that shows that the Ugandan government recognises that; the education of indigenous peoples should at least be based on histories and cultural values which are different from those of other systems. ABEK is designed to offer a curriculum and methods that are conducive for a nomadic lifestyle (ibid). The ABEK programme also ensures the participation of the community in the education of their children. The facilitators are drawn from members of the community, mainly from the elders. It has been submitted that ABEK, if well implemented, can reduce the “deficiencies” the Karamojong traditionally associate with formal, Western-style education, and avoid the educational segregation of the Karamojong (Arbeiter Samariter-Bund Deutschland, 2007). The curriculum focuses on areas of study that are directly relevant to the Karamojong way of life like crop production, livestock, health and peace and security (ibid). However, it should be noted that inspite of ABEK, formal education is still poor in Karamoja region with low enrolment, high school drop-out, poor facilities and infrastructure and poor performance of pupils especially in primary level in comparison to other regions (Ministry of Education and Sports Uganda, 2011).

SECTION THREE

2.3 Theoretical Framework

It is one thing to be indigenous, and another to be a woman; yet both carry along many underlying obligations, expectations as well as challenges. Some may be conflicting, yet others may be complementary. Critiques of feminism have alleged that feminism seems to speak universally for all women, regarding gender as a single analytical category (McCall, 2005), yet this is not necessarily the case. Women in different parts of the world are faced with differing situations in the different dimensions of life socially, economically, culturally, politically, name it, and hence generalising them is tantamount to paying a deaf ear to these differences. To cater for such differences in category, I fused *Indigenous Feminism* with *Intersectionality* to help me analyse the multiple dimensions of being an indigenous woman. Withstanding the differences each of the theories may have, they seem to have some similarities in their general agenda, and hence complement each other in a way.

2.3.1 Indigenous Feminism

Feminism can be defined as a theory that seeks to describe and explain women's situations and experiences, support recommendations for the better, attaching respect to perspectives and authority of women (Green, 2007a, p. 21) In a book titled *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism* (Green, 2007a), different scholars discuss the idea of indigenous feminism and its applications amongst indigenous women. Feminists may be categorized differently in relation to the aspects they deal with, but the unifying factor is the analytical approach they use in the social concept of power relations between men and women (Frye, 2000, p. 196). However, feminism is a contested term even amongst indigenous writers with claims that it is a western ideology not applicable for use amongst indigenous communities (Torjer, 2016a, p. 6). Some writers claim that indigenous feminism is untraditional, inauthentic, non-liberatory, illegitimate and not suitable to use amongst indigenous communities (Green, 2007b, p. 20). Green, however claims that; 'indigenous feminism is theoretically valid and a powerful political critique of the social, economic and political conditions of indigenous women' (ibid : 21), such as those lived by the Karamojong women of Uganda. Henceforth, for purposes of this study, I shall dwell largely on *Indigenous Feminism*.

It is a type of feminism concerned with decolonization, show casing stories of indigenous women and reviewing patriarchy at different levels and form (Torjer, 2016a, p. 5). Indigenous feminists raise three major human rights violations namely: - colonialism, racism and sexism, and the unpleasant interaction between the three (Green, 2007a). Indigenous feminism seeks to

identify ways in which men subordinate women, and how women can be emancipated from this subordination. It should however be noted that feminist analysis only arises in conditions of patriarchal societies where male status is privileged, whether culturally or due to incorporation and institutionalization by colonizers (ibid). As such, it can be viewed as a response to oppression and a prescription for change because it challenges the social, political, economic and cultural practices that validate, perpetuate and enforce male dominance (Frye, 2000).

Green (2007a) argues that indigenous women historically enjoyed more power, respect and autonomy than indigenous women in the contemporary world where many are subjected to patriarchal and colonial oppression. It is paradoxical however, that while the struggle by indigenous communities towards self-determination, dignity and defiance of colonialism, meets some level of support, feminist struggles by indigenous women to challenge male supremacy meets so much resistance both within indigenous communities and outside. Green argues that the indigenous liberation movement has not paid due attention to the gendered way in which dominant societies function towards indigenous men and women. Indigenous feminism thus challenges both colonialism as well as patriarchy and sexism.

Unfortunately, indigenous feminism instead attracts hostility and minimization towards those that advocate for it, not only from the outsiders but even within indigenous communities (Green, 2007b). There is a tendency of regarding proponents of indigenous feminism as traitors to their own communities, because to the perpetrators, feminism seems to be a colonial ideology which has no space amongst indigenous peoples (ibid). Hence, indigenous men aim to strengthen internal allegiance and continuation of traditional social practices that uphold male dominance, and tend to feel threatened by those who question the status quo.

However, this is not to mean that indigenous feminism is a fight of women against men, it is simply a pointer to the social injustices that protrude in the unequal power relations between men and women, and suggest possible solutions to these injustices. Green (2007b, p. 26), elaborates on this;

.....indigenous feminism is not a man-hating ideology, nor a unilateral rejection of cultures, traditions or personal and political relationships with men. It is not a subordinate form of other feminisms, nor is it a political stalking horse by colonial ideologies.

All that withstanding, indigenous feminists continue with the struggle to liberate indigenous women whom colonial legislation and social historical forces among other factors, placed in a certain subordinate stratum within and outside their communities.

In this study therefore, I employed tenets of indigenous feminism because it theoretically engages with history, politics, social, economic and cultural issues in indigenous societies. It interrogates the power structures between indigenous and dominant institutions, and, within indigenous institutions and families. It makes analysis of indigenous women's experiences of oppression, yet offering solutions for the future.

2.3.2 Intersectionality

While doing research among indigenous communities, often issues of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality and ability suffice, yet it is upon such issues that changes in policy and epistemology are based (Seale, 2012, p. 60). Social researchers have always recognized this inequality and the need for new models of research that are sensitive to the diverse social experiences (ibid:61). Proponents of intersectionality agree with Seale that society is full of classes and that people in different classes meet different challenges of life. So, to understand them, one should not take these differences for granted.

Intersectionality is a term which was coined by an American civil rights advocate and leading scholar of critical race theory Kimberle William Crenshaw (Crenshaw, 1989). It refers to the view that different people experience oppression in varying formations and degrees of intensity which are influenced by the intersectional systems of society (Vidal, 2014). It is the study of overlapping social identities and related systems of oppression, domination or discrimination (ibid). The theory suggests various biological, social, and cultural categories such as race, gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, nationality and other sectarian axes of identity interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels which are interrelated, creating a system of oppression that reflects the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination (Crenshaw, 1989). The approach describes and analyses how different social identities coincide with, as well as challenge one another (Torjer, 2016a, p. 9). This framework can be used to understand how systemic injustice and social inequality occur on a multidimensional basis and result into multiple facets of oppression. Intersectionality is also seen by other writers as another term for an indigenous practice and a holistic line of thinking (Institute for Intersectionality Research and Practice, 2012, pp. 2-3).

The concept of intersectionality came to the forefront in the late 1960s and early 1970s in conjunction with the multi-racial feminist movement. It came as part of a critique of radical feminism that had developed in the late 1960s. This exploration sprang from a historical exclusion of black women from the feminist movement (Crenshaw, 1989). The movement led

by women of colour disputed the idea that women were a homogeneous category essentially sharing the same life experiences world over. This argument cropped from the realization that white middle-class women did not serve as an accurate representation of the feminist movement. Recognizing that the forms of oppression experienced by white middle-class women were different from those experienced by black, poor, or disabled women (ibid). So, proponents of intersectionality sought to understand the ways in which gender, race, and class combined to determine the experiences of such women (Vidal, 2014).

In her work, Crenshaw (1989) argues that the experience of being a black woman cannot be understood in terms of being black and of being a woman considered independently, but must include the interactions, which frequently reinforce each other. She mentions that the intersectionality experience of black women is more powerful than the sum of their race and sex, and that any observations that do not take intersectionality into consideration cannot accurately address the way black women are subordinated (ibid).

Other feminists who came after Crenshaw also walked into her footsteps. Patricia Collins (2002) a black feminist advocate also argued that cultural patterns of oppression are not only interrelated, but are bound together and influenced by the intersectional systems of society, such as race, gender, class, and ethnicity. Collins referred to this as ‘interlocking oppression’ (ibid). She argues that the application of intersectionality is a vital element to gaining political and social equality for victims of multiple oppression. I find Collins’ argument quite relevant and applicable to my research population because Karamojong women engaged in street begging face multiple oppression from different directions; socially, politically, economically and culturally, both within their own society and outside as shall be discussed in chapter four and five.

However, while using intersectionality, difficulties arise due to the many complexities involved in making conceptualizations at a multi-dimensional level that explain the way in which socially constructed categories of differentiation interact to create a social hierarchy. This at times makes intersectionality appear ambiguous and open ended without clear-cut definition and area of jurisdiction. May (2015, p. 18) while writing about intersectionality argues that, It is simpler to present what intersectionality does than to define it.

2.3.3 Relationship between Indigenous Feminism and Intersectionality

Indigenous feminism points out that indigenous women suffer subordination, racism and sexism in society under the patriarchal hand of men. But then intersectionality points out and

breaks down this subordination, racism, sexism in accordance to different categories and strata of women in society. In other words, the levels and dimensions in which women experience these challenges are different, yet they exist in an interlocked relationship. Hence, both theories recognise that women are faced with some difficulties and inequalities in society, and thus something ought to be done to make the situation better.

However, indigenous feminists tend to argue that the betterment of women's lives, is largely dependent upon the relationship between men and women, and between indigenous and dominant institutions; while Intersectionality has its roots in recognising the difference between different categories of women and the injustices they go through in society, but not necessarily attached to men. To me, intersectionality is more less a detailed breakdown of the relatedness of complexities of women's subordination and oppression. It should be noted also that; unlike indigenous feminism, intersectionality allows for recognition of differences between women and between men, not only between women and men (Torjer, 2016a, p. 9).

In general, though the two theories are different in one way, they complement each other. Intersectionality aims to fill up the gaps of feminism. Intersectionality, Indigenous Feminism and Indigenous Methodology, share an active approach. They are critical to power and power relations in society and hence advocate for change to make society better and enjoyable for both men and women.

Given the fact that much has been written about street begging world over, but also amongst the Karamojong; the collection of established findings by other researchers in this chapter laid a background foundation for my field engagements with Karamojong people, and aided me identify gaps in the already existing literature. What then did this study find out? The preceding chapter explores the journey of data collection and field engagements bearing in mind that the Karamojong are an indigenous people. Its upon such data that the theoretical lenses described in this chapter are engaged later on in this thesis.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the detailed tools and mannerisms through which data were collected and handled during and after field work, to come up with meaningful results. The reasons why I chose these tools and methods are also explained herein, as well as the challenges encountered while engaging them. However, some findings of this study are also found in this chapter. I also explain my position in this research project, how I related with my study population, the ethical issues and dilemmas, and how I handled them.

3.2 Area of Study

The study was conducted in Kampala the capital city of Uganda. I traversed various streets within the Central Business District where Karamajong women and children beg from, that is to say; Kisenyi Business Center, Owino Shopping Area, Namirembe road, Entebbe road and Katwe Karamajong Camp. I also visited City Hall the Headquarter of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA).

3.3 Sampling

I used purposive sampling to select my informants; purposive sampling is a deliberate way, with a purpose or focus of obtaining information rich cases for in-depth study (Punch, 2013; Tagoe, 2009). I particularly employed convenient, intensity and snowball techniques of sampling. Convenient sampling is based on the accessibility, availability, and willingness of participants to give information (Tagoe, 2009, p. 56). Intensity sampling draws on information rich cases that manifest the phenomenon intensely, while snowball sampling identifies cases of interest from persons who know other people that are more knowledgeable about the topic in question (Mertens, Cram, & Chillisa, 2013; Punch, 2013). I used these three because my desire was to collect in-depth and quality data from the field, and I deemed them appropriate for the accomplishment of the set task.

My study was largely qualitative with a sample size of 22 informants; 12 Karamojong women, 6 Karamojong men, 3 officials from Kampala Capital City Authority and 1 politician at the level of Local Council iv councillor. However, I also had field conversations with other Karamojong people both men and women about the topic of study. For security and confidentiality reasons, I do not disclose some of the names of my informants. Some informants requested to remain anonymous for protection of their identities. So, instead of their names, I

use labels. For the 12 Karamojong women, I labelled them respondent A to L, the five Karamojong men, I labelled them male respondent 1 to 5, the sixth is Mr. Mutyaba the chairman of Katwe Karamojong camp. He consented to the use of his name in this research. The 3 KCCA officials, I labelled them official 1 to 3, and the politician councillor Anna Kalenzi, she too consented to the use of her name.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

This study was largely qualitative, because the qualitative strategy gives room and possibility to study in-depth issues which are related to questions of “how and why” (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015). I employed both primary and secondary data sources in this project. The primary data in this context was derived from first hand and unprocessed information directly from respondents through:- Interviews, Observation, and Life stories/narratives. Field notes, pictures and recordings were additional methods of data collection. The secondary sources included journal articles, reports, books and online library materials.

3.4.1 Observation

I chose to observe certain occurrences during my fieldwork because of its advantages. Knowles (2000, p. 17) says that “observation reveals the gap between practice and talk; between living and telling stories about life”. It is one way through which I understood the taken for granted background assumptions of street life beyond the narrative, and unearthed the multiple realities of street begging. For example; prior to taking this study, I used to see Karamojong children stationed at different points along Kampala streets begging, and I wondered how children of such young age made their way from home to the streets without the care of an adult. But through long and thorough observation, I saw and understood that there was always an adult Karamojong woman around the vicinity in whose care these children were. I realised this in a way that whenever someone placed money or anything in the hands of the children, they ran and took it to the adult who sat at a distance in a vantage position where she could observe all the moves of the children, and the people that gave something to them. In case the child did not surrender the money or gift immediately, the adult came and took it from the child forcefully and ordered the child to sit back and continue begging.



Photo 2: Karamojong children stationed to beg along different streets in Kampala (Source: Field photo by researcher 2016)

The advantage of observation is that, at times it happened like a reflex action. Sometimes I could be in town running some errands and for some reason, I started to observe what was going on along the streets. For example, there was a time when I was caught up in a traffic jam along Jinja road, and as we helplessly sat in the taxi stationed in one position, three Karamojong children surfaced suddenly. These were two boys and one girl roughly aged between eight to twelve years of age. They held small towels in their hands and quickly wiped off the dust on the car. In a moment, they came to the driver and politely asked for some money. The driver willingly gave them some coins and they quickly ran away and went to do the same thing to another car. Thereafter, there was a debate in the taxi, some people reprimanded the driver for giving the children money, accusing him of encouraging street beggars. While others applauded him for being kind to such small children who had cleaned his car. All this drew my attention and I kept wondering; can this be classified as begging or rather as a survival strategy by the children. Are they trained by their caretakers to do this, or they just do it on their own? But later when I talked to the chairman of Katwe camp where the Karamojong people resided, he told that the children are usually under the care of an adult and the cleaning of cars is a technique to attract the attention of drivers to give them something.

However, observation many times does not allow for informed consent of the one being observed. I only sought consent while at the camp, but much of the observation I did along the streets happened simultaneously and abruptly even without me preparing for it. I noted however, that observation at certain times was two way. As I observed them, they also did the same to me. Along the streets, whenever, the women and children realised that I or any other

people were purposely observing them, some would abandon the begging for some time, study what was happening, and then resume. They were very conscious of the people around them for fear of being arrested by the authorities. Within the camp, Karamojong people observed everything that I did. They looked at my note book as I took notes and also looked at the camera to see the pictures I took. However, they never gave me any feedback about what they read in my note book and saw in the pictures on the camera.

3.4.2 Interviews

This was done hand in hand with observation because the two methods complement each other. The purpose of qualitative interview is to understand themes of the lived daily world from the subject's point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, and uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015). I conducted both formal and informal interviews with specific individuals that I considered knowledgeable as far as the research themes were concerned. These included Karamojong women who were active actors in street begging, Karamojong men, local and administrative leaders. I conducted some interviews with guiding questions noted down on an interview guide, while in other cases, no interview guide was used. The interviews were punctuated with probing to enhance clarity and further explanations. I also engaged informants in field conversations that rotated around street begging and fending for oneself and family while in the city. Through interviews and informal talks of everyday life with my respondents, I established close acquaintances necessary for the understanding and representation of social realities in the context of street life. Interviews were recorded and notes taken.

3.4.3 Life Stories or Narratives

These were used in this study to reflect on the past and present events in the lives of the Karamojong through narration of one's own story. Here, I asked respondents to narrate simple stories about their lives, what life used to be in the past and how it is now, and some events in their lives that they could re-call. I also asked them to narrate their journeys from Karamoja to Kampala and the events that came after. This largely depended on the willingness of the respondents to share with me their life stories. My role here was to listen carefully and probe where necessary for clarifications. I allowed the respondents time to tell as much as they could or willed to tell. I wish to note here that not all that respondents told was directly answering my research questions, but, I found some of this information useful in one way or the other.

This was the most interesting part of my fieldwork, though it was entangled with both agony and ecstasy. At some point, respondents got so emotional while narrating grief and sorrowful events in their lives and started to shed tears. At some other point, they became very bitter because narrating their life stories dug out some nasty experiences that they would not have loved to recall. Yet at some point, they got happy and excited when they remembered and told some memorable experiences of their lives. As a researcher, it was at times challenging for me to handle the mixture of all these emotions.

One story that cannot go unmentioned was that of informant A; an 18-year-old girl who was arrested by KCCA officials for engaging in street begging, and taken to Kampiringisa Remand Home⁵. She narrated her ordeal with both sadness and anger towards the way she was arrested and handled: She narrated her story in Luganda⁶, which required no interpreter since I could also speak the same language.

....I was arrested and thrown onto the KCCA van one time when I was begging. I was beaten so much on the ankles and legs, they arrested me and ordered me to lay down in the pick up under the seats. At Kampiringisa, I and other detainees went without food for 2 days, no bathing, no change of clothes, and sleeping on the floor without something to cover myself. My colleagues and I with whom we were arrested shared the same cell, but we also met there other girls who had been arrested before. We defecated, and urinated in a bucket that stayed within this room for days without it being emptied for 2 days. On the third day, they brought us outside and each of us gave details of where she came from, village and district. The following day, we were told to enter a van and they drove us back to Karamoja dropping each in our respective villages. I stayed there for three months but life was so difficult for me. I was used to town life where I would at least get some little money to take care of myself. When I heard that some friends were coming back to Kampala, I also joined them and we came back. I did not even have money for transport but I borrowed from my colleagues and promised to pay them when we reach Kampala. I now have a small job in the market of sorting beans and ground nuts and cleaning shop stores where my boss pays me per day according to the work I have done.

Such stories helped me understand experiences and changes Karamojong women's lives have gone through and how these changes have influenced their way of life in the present day. Post-structuralists define narrative and narrativity as concepts through which we understand and make sense of the social world (Clark, Kjørholt, & Moss, 2005). They are rich in indexical statements because they refer to personal experiences and they are detailed with focus on events and actions. Post structuralists further argue that narratives empower participants by enhancing their knowledge and understanding of the world and their place in it. Atkinson (2004) argues

⁵A gazetted home where children and young adults with different challenges in life are taken for rehabilitation and counselling before reuniting with families or guardians.

⁶ A local dialect of the majority population of Uganda that is widely spoken in central Uganda

that through narratives, people are able to recall, recruit and review their lives, valuing them as expert witnesses rather than mere sources of data.

3.4.4 Archival records

For supplementary purposes, and to expand on my knowledge about the study population, I reviewed newspapers, documentaries, news stories, journals, and other publications about the Karamojong, from both printed and online sources. This expanded on my knowledge about the Karamojong people. I made good use of Makerere University library, UiT library, google scholar, youtube among others.

3.5 Methodology

Prior to taking my Masters studies, I always took it for granted that all research is done in the widely dominant scientific research framework. But studying Indigenous Studies opened a new wave of doing and understanding research the indigenous way to me. That is, research based on the premises and interests of indigenous peoples, to support their rights of indigeneity and as much as possible, use indigenous language and concepts (Torjer, 2016a, p. 2). However, it was quite a challenge to limit myself within the boundaries of indigenous research because in all my prior research projects, I worked within the dominant scientific research paradigm. So, I always had to remind myself of my stand.

3.5.1 Indigenous Research Paradigm

For a long time, research amongst indigenous communities was carried out in the widely spread dominant research paradigm, but this left behind grave consequences in the lives of indigenous peoples. This paradigm tended to ignore the interests of the indigenous peoples and instead focused more on the interest of the researchers and their anticipated audiences. However, with the rise of various indigenous scholars, there came indigenous methodologies, aimed at decolonising indigenous peoples. The rise of Indigenous scholars like Linda-Tuhiwai Smith set the stage for the change in paradigm and encouraged indigenous academics and scholars to tackle research in a framework that upholds self determination and fosters social justice to indigenous peoples (Smith, 2012, p. 2).

Shawn Wilson another indigenous scholar presents indigenous research paradigm in another dimension. He puts it across using four elements that are interrelated and interdependent namely; ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology. It is the uniqueness of these four elements that makes indigenous paradigm stand out from other paradigms (Shawn, 2008, p.

71). Ontology and epistemology are based upon relationships that form a mutual reality while epistemology and methodology are geared towards maintaining accountability to these relationships. To Shawn, an Indigenous Research Paradigm is about building closer relationship with ideas and things that surround the people. He also emphasises that both researcher and the people he works with are in a relationship and fulfilling the obligations of this relationship is of utmost importance. A researcher studying indigenous peoples should research with them, but not on them; in a respectful and reciprocal manner such that the results of the research are useful to the indigenous community (Shawn, 2008, pp. 66-79).

Vine Deloria another proponent of indigenous methodologies also talks about the importance of relativity in an indigenous research paradigm. Vine writes that; 'Everything is relative ... there is no absolute truth or description of reality; it all depends on the action of the observer and the nature of the experiment or investigation' (Deloria & Foehner, 1999, p. 33). Both Shawn and Vine emphasise that an indigenous research paradigm fetches its foundations from the notion that knowledge is relational, meaning that knowledge is shared with all creation. Not just with the people one may be researching with, but rather with all the surroundings. These could be intrapersonal, interpersonal, environmental, spiritual and relationships with ideas.

In my case, I was trying to understand how Karamojong women relate with street begging and the challenges that come along with it, economic hardships of the city, how they manage through daily life, and their relationship with the people they encounter as they fend for themselves. This study also tackled the relationships between Karamojong men and women to see who played what role in the act of street begging.

However, doing fieldwork using indigenous methodologies was not an easy task as such. I encountered some challenges. For example; in his explanation, Shawn says that research is a ceremony, in that everyone who is participating needs to be ready to step beyond the everyday and accept a raised state of consciousness (Shawn, 2008). He uses the metaphor of a local ceremony where specific rituals that make up the ceremony are designed in a special way, to set the participants into a state of mind that will allow for extra ordinary things to happen (ibid). In my engagement with the Karamojong people at Katwe camp, I tried to set the stage by going through the protocol and fulfilling the requirements of carrying out research in this community. I explained who I was, what I was there for and how my research would be beneficial to them and to me. Despite doing the above, my participants and I did not view this project in the same line at that moment because people understand and view things in different perspectives. One

of the Karamojong women loudly spoke out in Karimojong language that she wanted sponsorship and food for her five children because she was a widow without any help. After an interpretation by John my interpreter, I explained that I was not there to offer any kind of charity or donate items, but a researcher. In disappointment, she quickly walked away. To me, this implied two things; as a researcher, perhaps my efforts to set the stage for the 'research ceremony' were not good enough. But it can also imply that, I did not get myself in the same state of thinking or viewing things the way some of my participants viewed them at that time.

The other challenge of using indigenous methodologies, is building relationships and gaining peoples' trust. Trust does not easily come by, it takes time, which the researcher may not necessarily have due to the limited time set for fieldwork. For example, during my first days in the camp, I noticed that people were a bit sceptical to narrate their experiences of street life. But days later, I noticed a change in their behaviour, narratives and attitude towards me. I observed that they later opened up and gave me much more details about their experiences than they did at the beginning. Smith (2012), argues that people equally have an opportunity to share, ask questions and feel included in the research process because it is a way of honouring and giving back respectfully. Smith adds that it is important for researchers to recognise the power dynamics embedded with the relationships they have with the study population such that one does not dominate the other.

However, in establishing and maintaining my relationship with the people I worked with, I realised that attaining total objectivity was next to impossible, though I tried my best to be as objective as I could.

3.6 Ethics and Reflexivity

3.6.1 Who am I in this research?

I am a Musoga by tribe from the Eastern part of Uganda. It is clear that am a non-Karamojong, and one may wonder why I had interest in this community. Yes, I am not a Karamojong, but I am a woman belonging to a tribal group of people who have lived and still live under subordination, marginalisation and prejudice from other tribal groups of Uganda.

My tribal group is highly patriarchal, with men holding much of the power to decide and do things. I have fallen victim of this male dominance on many occasions that even attaining education was a tag of war. This is because my community prefers male to female children and hence prioritise the boys in first position in many matters education inclusive. My people even claim that educating a girl child brings no profit to her family since she gets married in another

family and hence benefits her husband's family. Various sayings or metaphors in my tribe also portray males as being superior over females, for example "*omwami kyakoba, zeena kyenkoba*" implying "*what my husband says, is exactly what I also say*". This means that the woman's opinion does not count, but she simply follows her husband's opinion regardless of whether she agrees with him or not. Belonging to such a tribal group makes me share many similarities with my study population which is largely patriarchal, although we also defer in many ways.

As a woman with a platform of writing an academic text of this magnitude, I feel obliged to bring out the experiences of daily life of women and the social injustices happening in communities such as mine and that of the Karamojong. I am a woman from a marginalised tribal group who has decided to study fellow women from another marginalised tribal group. Smith (2012, p. 205), refers to this as "choosing margins"⁷. In other words am committed to social justice of people with whom we fall in the similar social category for the better.

3.6.2 Ethics

To conduct research with indigenous peoples often requires the approval of different ethical protocols, either from the universities, national governments, or indigenous people's communities or from all. Indigenous peoples are recognized as a vulnerable group. The reason is not their vulnerability per se, but because of the previous, unethical research done on them by researchers, leaving behind traces of traumatizing experiences and consequences. An example in this case is given by Evjen (1997) in her article 'Measuring Heads' where the people remained with hurting experiences because of the way the researchers dehumanised them while doing their research.

Before leaving for the field, I had to apply for approval from the Data Protection Official for Research (NSD) which was approved after fulfilling all necessary requirements. However, I noticed that in the requirements of NSD, students are asked which category of people they are going to work with because various categories, have special requirements and caution if one is to conduct research with them. Regrettably, there is no category of indigenous peoples, yet they too are a vulnerable category of people that need caution if one is to conduct research with them.

⁷ Scholars who themselves come from the margins of society and see their intellectual purpose as being scholars who will work for, with and alongside communities that occupy the margins of society.

After fulfilling the local requirements to do research in the Karamojong camp, I set out to speak to people who were willing to be interviewed or share their stories. Luckily, my first interviewee could speak a variety of languages english inclusive. This young man was so helpful throughout the period I spent in the camp. Each day, he mediated communication between me and the camp members through intepretation. He also helped me in identifying women who engaged in street begging and were willing to share their stories. This was necessary because not all Karamojong women in the city take part in street begging. He also identified persons within the camp who were more knowledgeable than others regarding my topic of study. The chairman of the camp as well identified such individuals and led me to their houses. Those who accepted to take part in this project were very hospitable and gave me a warm welcome into their houses. Others for some reason were not interested in taking part, which I respected.

Much as I had asked the leaders for permission to record and take pictures, I also sought permission at an individual level. This is because the experiences of daily lived life that individuals told, were personal and private issues. Failure to seek their permission would be invasion on their privacy. Seale (2012, p. 64) views invasion of privacy as a ‘harm and as a condition that subjects people to the possibility of harm by depriving them of the protection that privacy offers; although the harm may be both foreseeable and unforeseeable’. Seale argues that it is the researcher’s responsibility to protect the people from those forms of harm. Seeking their approval therefore before recording and taking pictures was equally important to allow room for informed consent and respect of individual opinions. Article 6 of ILO 169 Convention calls for consultation of indigenous and tribal peoples on issues that affect them. It requires that they can be able to engage in free and informed participation in policy and development processes that affect them (ILO, 1989). Article 16 (2) of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) also says that to establish bottom up-participation in matters concerning indigenous peoples, there is need for free informed consent of the people in question (UNDRIP, 2007). In addition, Article 32 of UNDRIP calls for prior consultation of indigenous peoples in processes that affect them. It was therefore paramount to seek individual consent of the people I worked with in respect of the above instruments.

In the same vein, I also sought their permission on what they wished to be published, and what they did not like. Here I received different answers, some said yes to some information and no to another, while others said it was ok to publicise all the information they had entrusted me with. As a researcher, I met many contradictions on whose word to take, because to the same piece of information, one informant said it was ok to publish, while another said no. The puzzle

here was who owns the information and what is their position in this community? Is it the individual or the community at large? What can be published and how much of it? What if one of my informants talks freely about issues relating to street begging, and has no problem publishing the findings, but then another informant is not in agreement of publishing this information? Maurstad (2002) argues that, if the researcher relates with the informants as individuals, then he/she authorises certain individuals to tell other people's secrets against their will. What if the one who wants the findings published does not take part in street begging, but knows and tells much about it? This implies that the secrets of street begging published can affect those that partake in it either negatively or positively.

Consequently, I found myself having two sets of findings. On one side, I had findings that informants said it was ok to be published, and on the other, I have information that people shared, but did not want it published for various reasons. Some were security reasons, for secrecy, and other personal reasons. I wish to note here that this sort of data is not depicted anywhere in this text. Maurstad (2002) says that researchers must know the social and cultural context that knowledge is embedded in, to know what to protect and what to reveal. I must say though that it is painful to let go some parts of the research findings because they are quite interesting and relevant to my research questions. But as earlier on said at the beginning of the chapter, I worked within an indigenous research paradigm where the interest of the people I worked with is at the centre of the project. This implies that my interest as a researcher and that of my wider audience, hold second priority. I had to respect the decisions of my informants to keep the relationship I started with them. They trusted me with this information, and hence I cannot betray their trust. Smith (2012), argues that any research project has to be thoroughly considered, not merely as a single contribution to the body of academic knowledge, but rather in respect of indigenous peoples' interests and needs. She further warns researchers to beware of the far-reaching consequences that can come up even long after the research is done, and am taking heed to her advice.

3.7 Challenges faced

The greatest challenge I faced, was that some of the people thought that I had some handouts to give in form of charity. This is because previous 'researchers' who came to this place before me promised to give them material and monetary handouts some of which they never fulfilled. So whenever, somebody claims to be a researcher, they expect some gains, which I never had. But at the same time, they have a preconceived attitude that 'researchers' promise many things but they never fulfil their promises. In my case, I just stated my intentions clearly, though this

disappointed some members. Nevertheless, I got those who willingly spoke to me without offering them any material or monetary items.

As for language barrier, I identified one of the informants who could speak Karimojong, English and Luganda. He always translated for me and the informants whenever need arose. But in many cases, informants could also speak some luganda which made it easier for communication between us since Luganda is my second language.

The data collected as discussed above in this chapter was filtered, coded and put together to come up with meaningful findings that are laid out in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR: STREET BEGGING AMONG THE KARAMOJONG

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explain how I came in contact with the Karamojong people and how I discovered their residence in Katwe. The chapter also contains a detailed account of what is entailed in street begging as observed and shared by my respondents. The findings in relation to the four research questions stated in chapter one are also layed out in this chapter. However, the real names of some informants are not disclosed because of ethical considerations as earlier noted in chapter three and instead they are represented by alphabetical letters and numbers. The Karamojong women respondents are represented by alphabetical letters A-L, while the male respondents are represented by numbers 1-5, and the respondents from KCCA are represented by official 1, 2 and 3. For informants whose real names are used, permission was granted.

4.2 Discovering the Karamojong residence (camp) in Kampala

For many years, I have mingled with the Karamojong people just like I do with any other communities around me. But this time, I had to interact with them as a researcher. As an outsider, it was not easy to get closer to them wearing the shoes of a researcher, and talking about issues of their lived life experiences. I tried for the first time to go to the streets, thinking I would easily gain audience from some of the women, but that was a dream, because none of them accepted to speak to me. They obviously recognised me as a non-Karamojong and probably thought I had ill intentions towards them in form of a spy, since I could not even speak their local language.

This reaction made me rethink my approach of contact and sampling, with the help of a research assistant. As already detailed in the methodology chapter, my assistant and I identified those who were accessible, available, and willing to speak to us about the research topic. This included identifying those who would speak other languages like Luganda, Swahili and English other than only Karimojong because at this moment, I had not yet got an interpreter. We managed to get two women who identified colleagues that had interest and were more knowledgeable about the topic in question (snowball sampling). The first two women introduced us to two of their colleagues, one of whom fluently spoke English. In their local dialect, the four women went aside and discussed a few things. Later, I learnt that the first two women sought the help of the English speaker, such that she could find out exactly why we were interested in talking to them. The English speaker asked me many questions including

who I was, why the interest in their community, and the purpose of the information I sought from them. To these questions, I guess I gave convincing answers, the result of which was to ask the first two women to lead my assistant and I to the chairman of their community where they resided. This was about two kilometers from where we met the English speaker. This made me realise that Karamojog women have an organised spy network only known to them, in that no one can just bump into them and collect information just like that. Naive and ignorant as I was, I never thought that this could be the case.

As we approached the residence (which the Karamojongs call camp), everybody here looked curiously at us, which made me feel a bit nervous. Truly, this residence was a surprise to me. I had never thought that there existed such a big Karamojong residence within the city that hosted over five thousand people. This place is a temporary residence with temporary structures made of Taplin, papyrus, soil, reeds and polythene materials. It is only the latrine that is built with cement, bricks and iron sheets. The Chairman of the resident told us that, this was a donation by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to facilitate sanitation and hygiene. From my observation, I saw that sanitation was poor and wanting, with no proper drainage systems installed. Human waste and dirty water flowed in small hand dug trenches across the camp.

The two women who led us to this camp took us straight to the defence secretary, who quickly called upon the camp chairman, to whom I introduced myself and my assistant and the reason for our visit. But before I could finish my introduction, I realised that Karamojong men and women were standing around us inquisitive to know what was happening. Among those that came, was the area chairman upon whose land this residence was established. He is non-Karamojong but well versed with the Karamojong community, and has worked and lived with them for over twenty years. He told me that the Karamojong camp was like a reception centre where Karamojong newcomers first settle, before they find elsewhere to stay within the township.

After a formal introduction of myself and my assistant, the camp chairman narrated that;

Many people come to this camp in the guise of researchers, yet they hold selfish intentions that do not benefit this community at all. We know that bad people disguise as researchers, but instead operate non-governmental organisations that are non-existent to exploit findings collected from us for their own benefit, to gain funding from charity organisations and those white people, with claims of helping this community.one time, there came strange men who claimed to be working with the government. They brought buses and convinced the Karamojong to board the buses such that they could be taken back to their home area. The terms of the voluntary return were that all returnees would be given starting capital and basic needs required for settlement and start of a new life back home. Many of my

people were so excited on hearing the news and they got ready to return home. Unfortunately, all these promises were not fulfilled, but instead returnees were just taken back home and left on their own. Since then, we have never seen those men again and we are not sure if they were truly sent by the government.

Out of such experiences, leaders of this camp set up informal rules that govern and apply only amongst them. These include: -

(a) No body amongst them is allowed to talk to any stranger in the name of a researcher without thorough introduction of that stranger to the camp leaders.

(b) No stranger is allowed to take pictures or film anything in this camp before approval of the camp leaders, lest, the stranger risks falling victim of these informal laws. These include confiscation and destruction of equipment like camera, recorder, computers and phones. In rare cases the stranger may be physically beaten by the camp residents, said the chairman.

In case the above happens, the stranger/victim bares all responsibility and blame and the members of the camp have no case to answer. According to the camp chairman, this is only a way of protecting themselves from unscrupulous individuals who take advantage of them and the situation in which they live. However, in the Ugandan law, acts of physical beating and vandalising of another persons' property are regarded unlawful and are punishable.

Prior to learning about these informal laws, my research assistant and I nearly fell victims. We got so excited when the Karamojong English speaker told the first two women to take us home. On reaching the camp, we were amazed, and my assistant without taking a second thought, quickly got out her phone and started taking pictures. I think it is her action that aroused the curiosity of people in the camp. That is why they quickly came and rounded us up when the women led us to the defence secretary. We were lucky not to taste the wrath of these informal laws, otherwise it would have turned out a horrible fieldwork experience. The leaders came just on time before matters went bad.

The following day, my assistant and I went back to this camp with copies of my university identity card, national identity card and a copy of the introductory letter from Centre of Sami studies UiT. These were handed over to the leaders in their office and filed. They then introduced us to the residents of the camp, and asked them to cooperate with us in the project.

There is also a rule that whoever comes to this camp in the name of a researcher, their photograph must be taken and filed for record purposes and future reference. The chairman of the camp has a camera which he uses to take photographs. This surely took me by surprise because I never expected it, but I accepted my photograph to be taken.



Photo 3: The chairman of the Karamojong people holding a camera which he uses to take pictures of all those who come to do research. (Field photo by researcher 2016)

After all these formalities, my assistant and I started to speak to the camp residents. We conducted interviews and listened to their stories. We also followed them to the streets some times to witness what transpires there.

4.3 What Street begging entails among Karamojong women

Street begging is one amongst the many activities that Karamojong women in the city engage in. However, not all Karamojong women engage in this activity. Some say they have never done it at all, though they acknowledge its existence. There are two categories of those that engage in street begging; the first category is those that entirely do and meet their daily bread through street begging, and the second is of those who beg occasionally whenever need arises. The latter have jobs elsewhere like sorting cereals in the markets, cleaning in markets and shops, making and selling brooms and mats, brewing and trading local brew locally known as ‘*kwete*’. Both categories beg only during day time and return home in the evening. None of my respondents said she begs at night. Nevertheless, the magnitude of the challenges to both groups is somehow similar despite their categorization.

While observing what transpired on the streets, I saw that Karamojong women make use of some techniques or strategies. Some strategically sit or stand along places where many people pass, probably to increase on the number of possible givers. Others station near entrances of big shopping malls, restaurants, bookshops, banks and other places that have many people going in and out. I noticed that as some people came out of restaurants and shopping centers,

they gave some items especially food and coins to Karamojong women and children. Within the days I spent observing what was happening on the streets, I did not see someone give paper notes to the women and children. I mostly saw people give coins and material items especially food and drinks. Respondent A, told me that on a fruitful day, she can collect five thousand (5000) shillings an equivalent of 11.61 Norwegian kroners and on the worst day, she collects five hundred (500) shillings equivalent to 1.16 Norwegian kroners.

I also noticed that Karamojong women and children do not just station themselves along any street in the city, but rather particular streets and particular spots. Many station near road traffic lights and make good use of them. Such places include Wandegeya, Jinja road, Entebbe road, Queens way and other strategic places. The essence is that when vehicles stop, they all rush and plead with passengers to give them something. And when the traffic lights go green, they stand on the pavements in between the road lanes for safety not to be knocked down by the speeding vehicles. Unfortunately, sometimes they get knocked down especially the children.

Karamojong children also employ techniques that entice the givers. For example, when traffic lights stop the vehicles, some children go with small hand towels and wipe off dust from the vehicles. These are usually three or four in number and they do this hurriedly, after which they go to the driver or co-driver (commonly known as conductor) and ask for some money. While one or two ask for money from the driver, the others walk around the vehicle peeping inside and asking for money from other passengers. Some people give, while others pay a deaf ear. Either way, the children do not get discouraged, they quickly rush to another vehicle and repeat the same. I did not see any mature girl or women do this. It is only done by the children. When I asked respondent A; who was eighteen years of age, if she also did the same as the children, her answer was; *'no, I do not do that because I feel ashamed. I used to do it before, but now am grown up'*.

Sometimes, the children also follow passersby for some distance asking for money. I noticed however, that both old and young do not get discouraged by those who do not give them, they quickly abandon that one and move on to the next passersby.

In addition to staging in strategic places, women and older girls often carry little babies either on their laps, sideways or backs. I saw that some of them took off some time and went aside to breastfeed their babies, while others fed them while standing along the streets. They tie wrappers across their chest and back and make the babies sit in the wrappers. It is to these babies that givers mostly direct the gift items especially food and drinks. This made me assume

that maybe the little children evoked more sympathy from givers than the mothers. This category of givers seemed to be more of women than men. Perhaps as women, they looked beyond the act of begging and thought of the challenges and responsibilities of motherhood and child bearing that fellow women (the Karamojong) could possibly be faced with. This shows that much as both categories are women, those begging seemed to have a different facet of reality they were living in which was different from those that give. Yet, the two groups also share certain things. Hence understanding the beggars and givers as a single analytical category (women) may not be a true representation of both groups. Ertürk (2009), while writing about violence against women, argues that; because women are not a homogenous category, gender equality strategies designed in a vacuum do not work for to solve issues relating to them. There is need to understand and treat each analytical category differently, and the different identities that they represent. In general however, I saw both women and men giving to the Karamojong.

There are also peak hours during the day. These are times of the day when each of the beggars puts in much effort to maximize proceeds. However, different respondents had different peak hours and each had her own reasons to give about this. Respondent A said; *‘people give more in the morning because they are just from home and have not spent their money on many things’*. While respondent C said that; *‘...in the evening when people are going home from work, it is the best time, because they have earned something from work. After buying things to take home, they have some money left which they can give’*.

In addition to begging, Karamojong women often go to markets and abattoirs to collect food stuffs. These are often items that are meant to be thrown away or those that owners have no use of. The food stuffs include beans, vegetables, cereals and internal organs of animals. They also go to restaurants down town and collect leftover food, sometimes free of charge, sometimes they have to do some cleaning work in the restaurant as a form of payment for the leftovers.

4.4 Causes of street begging among Karamojong women

There are a variety of factors that attract Karamojong women into street begging. They move from their respective districts of origin to the cities where they engage in begging along the city streets, though they also take part in other ventures besides begging. Everette Lee in his Theory of Migration, defines migration as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence (Lee, 1966). He divides the factors of migration into those that hold or attract people to move to a certain area, and those that repel or push them away from that area. Such factors exist both in the area of origin and area of desired destination. Likewise, this study found out that there are

factors that push the Karamojong from their respective areas of origin, while on the other hand, there are also factors in the urban areas that attract them to migrate over. Among those that migrate comes those that engage in street begging when they reach the city. I wish to make it clear that not all Karamojong women who move to urban areas engage in street begging.

Like other pastoral societies in Africa, the Karamojong are currently faced with more demands in their way of life than it was previously due to many factors. Population growth, loss of herding lands to large scale farmers, ranchers, game parks and urban growth, increased commoditization of the livestock economy and out migration by other pastoralists (Knighton, 2002) have exerted so much pressure on their traditional ways of life. These challenges are intensified as international development programs encourage privatisation and individualisation of formerly communally held resources (ibid). As a result, Karamojong people are forced to migrate to urban areas in search of greener pastures and survival. As I observed things around Katwe camp, there seemed to be more women and child immigrants compared to men. When I inquired about the difference in gender composition, the chairman of the camp said that;

women are engaged in taking care of the household and they are the worst hit if there are no necessities in the house. So, they come to the city to find alternatives during such times when things are difficult. Men used to be the overall home providers, but now things have changed so much. Our animals decreased a lot and the remaining ones are dying of too much sunshine. So, the men who previously went to look after animals, are now at home without jobs.

Household poverty⁸ is one of the leading factors pushing Karamojong women to the streets. This factor was raised by eight out of the twelve Karamojong female informants. Informant A said;

.....I had dropped out of school due to lack of school fees and scholastic materials, when a certain man friend to my father asked me to follow him to Soroti and help him in a retail shop. We agreed that I would be paid twenty thousand shillings per month. I worked for six months without any payment and got tired. I wanted to go back home, but when I remembered the poverty I had left at home, I decided to stay. One day, I saw men loading “waragi” (locally made liquor) on a truck and I requested them to bring me to Kampala such that I could get a better job. I had seen some girls in Soroti who had come to Kampala and came back home with money and nice dresses. So, I came to Kampala and found fellow Karamojong girls begging and I also joined them.

Even within the camp where Karamojong women stayed, they had to meet their daily needs and expenses. Informant A, B, C and E shared a room and each of them at the time of fieldwork paid five hundred (500) shillings per night (equivalent to 1.16 Norwegian kroner). Respondent C had three children, and the three adults plus the children shared one room with three other

⁸ Leaving below USD1.90 per day (World Bank poverty line)

girls. The temporary shelters in the camp are partitioned into small parts and each part accommodates seven to ten residents per night. One who defaults payment, does not get where to sleep the following day. So, everybody toils to find the rent first before thinking of any other need since their daily income is unpredictable.

The other factor driving the Karamojong out of Karamoja is hunger and starvation.⁹ There has always been shortage of water in this region during the dry season, but at the time of fieldwork in 2016 the situation was getting worse. People and animals were dying of hunger and starvation because all the food dried up and the animals had no water and pasture to feed on. The chairman of the camp Mr. Mutyaba told me that;

People walk miles to get the little water available. But it is dirty and unsafe for human health. Both animals and human beings share those few water sources available. People now live at the mercy of charity organisations like World Food Programme to get food. The food distributed is little, so the leaders ration it amongst the people, but it cannot sustain them for a long time. That is why you see many people here. The situation is terrible back home, but even here, jobs are scarce, so the women go to the streets to get what to eat with their children.

The forced disarmament operations in the remote northern Karamoja region and its consequences of death and loss of livelihoods for the local populations also contributed to the influx of Karamojong people into cities (Gackle et al., 2007; Mburu, 2002; Sundal, 2010). With the persistence of the conflicts and cattle raids, many men were killed leaving behind widows and children to fend for themselves. The widows and children have adopted activities like brewing and selling local beer. Then some supplement the income out of these jobs with street begging. Respondent C who had three children was a local brew (*kwete*) maker in Katwe camp. In her story, she narrated that;

I am a widow with 3 children. My husband was killed while he went to graze the animals and our animals were taken by his killers. We heard they were rufes from Kenya but we actually do not know the truth. His body was full of bullet wounds yet he had surrendered his gun to the government officials, so he had no protection. He left me with a two months pregnancy and this is the baby (pointing at her nine month baby). Life in the village became very difficult for me and the children without my husband. When I saw a colleague from the city, I asked her how things were going for her here. She told me that at least things are better in the city. I asked her to bring me along and I came with my children. I make *kwete* and sell to people in the camp, but in the evening, we go to the street and beg.

⁹ See video of local news by (NTV Uganda, 13 February, 2017, 21 September 2015) hunger and drought in Karamoja
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJKFWcwgFEY&index=13&list=UUwga1dPCqBddbq5KYRii2g>
See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXydZHMqIM&list=UUwga1dPCqBddbq5KYRii2g&index=2>

Furthermore, conflicts and raids have facilitated breakage of families and households, leaving the children to scatter without guardians. This has led to breakdown of traditional support structures of extended families which formerly offered warmth and protection for children. In line with the foregoing, respondent B; a nineteen-year-old said that;

.....I had gone to stay with my uncle in Kotido for a while, but when I returned home, I was told that my father had been killed in one of the raids, and my mother had gotten married to another man. Also, our house had been destroyed and none of my siblings was at home. I had nowhere to stay, yet things were also not going well at my uncle's place where I had been. I decided to come to Kampala with my colleagues to look for jobs.

Other women are only victims of circumstances. They never planned or intended to end up in Kampala on the streets begging, but circumstances beyond them, led them there. For example, respondent E narrated how she ended up in Kampala;

My father died when I was fourteen years old, my step brother who was three years older than me found it difficult to take care of me. He sent me out of the house and said I should go find my mother. Along the way to the town where I had heard that my mother stays, I got lost and approached the nearby police station for help. The policemen asked for my mothers' address, but I did not have it. I only knew the name of the town and the name of my mother. The police said that they could not help me since I did not know the exact address. I continued to search but everybody I asked said they did not know her. One of the girls I asked advised me to give up, and instead find work and start a new life. I bumped into her several times asking if she knew anything about the person I was looking for. She gave me accommodation for two weeks, but later said that she was going back to Kampala because she worked there. I asked her to take me along such that she could also find for me a job. When we reached the city, she had many friends in her house. They used to wear very short dresses, drink alcohol and other things that I did not know, they also smeared many colors on their eyes and lips. Men used to come and take them in the evening and they would come back in the morning the following day. They had lots of money and many good things. My friend and the other girls asked me to join them, but I was afraid, their way of doing things was different from what I knew from home. One day, when I went to the market, I met Karamojong girls working there. I befriended them and asked them where they stayed. That is how I ended up in this camp. I now stay here and I beg to get food and other needs.

By the time of the above interview, she was eighteen years old. From her story, the girl she met along the way and the colleagues in city were probably engaged in some kind of prostitution business, alcoholism and drug abuse. These were seemingly strange to her since she was from a background where things were done differently. She joined her Karamojong colleagues in the camp perhaps in search of belongingness and identity.

Other Karamojong women are on the streets of the city begging for reasons like; seeking financial independence, adventure, anticipated freedom, escape from traditional ties, glamour in the city and peer influence of those who came to the city earlier. The stories that they told me showed that many girls came to the streets because they were told by someone else, either

a friend or relative who had been there before. Majority of respondents said that they had prior information about street begging before coming to the city.

However, some of the adolescent girls and children are just lured out of Karamoja by their peers or self-seeking individuals promising them better opportunities and jobs in the city. In effect these individuals use this as a trap to bring the girls into cities and make money out of them. This can be equated to child or human trafficking. In a formal interview with Anna Kalenzi; a Local Council IV councilor of Kagugube Parish in Kampala Central Division, Kalenzi said that;

As city authorities, we have tried to follow and solve the issue of Karamojong children on the streets, but we have realized that there is more to it than meets the eye. Some faith based institutions lure these children from Karamoja and bring them to Kampala. They find common housing facilities to put them and parade them before local and international funders as helpless children that need help. These institutions in turn get funding from funding agencies and other items from people of good will in the guise of helping the children. It is absurd, that the funds and the received items never benefit the intended beneficiaries. The children stay in lack, and as a result, they find their way to the streets in order to help themselves out.

Kalenzi further noted that;

.... Apart from faith based institutions, there are also self-seeking individuals that carry children from Karamoja into the city promising them jobs, but in the actual sense, they recruit them into street begging. Each morning the children are brought to the city and positioned in different places, each with an ultimatum of how much they must collect. In the evening, their employer picks them at a particular point from town and each presents what they have collected. Each child is paid a percentage according to how much they were able to collect. Their employers also provide common accommodation facilities.

In analysis, such people take street begging as a business and hence take advantage of Karamojong people in the guise of giving them employment or charity. Kalenzi also told me that; *'these individuals also coerce Karamojong girls into prostitution. They offer them to men for sex and the men pay the money to the individuals. The individual then decides on how much they give the girl'*. This implies that such individuals use the Karamojong girls as 'tools' of earning, at the expense of the girls. The victims are exposed to a multiplicity of challenges one leading into the other. Councilor Kalenzi mentioned some of these challenges namely; - physical and psychological torture, sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies among others.

The irony however, is that amongst the Karamojong themselves, there are those who collect children from Karamoja and use them to collect money from the streets. Mr. Mutyaba, chairman of Katwe camp in an interview told me that;

Some of the young girls you see with children are not the biological mothers of those children. Girls go to Karamoja and make agreements with the parents/guardians of those children, that they shall take care of them and that a certain monthly income shall be paid to them (parents of the children). The girls then bring the children to Kampala and brief them on how to beg on the streets. One girl can have about five children in her care and every morning she goes with them to the streets to beg. She collects the proceeds from them and keeps part which she takes/sends to the parents of the children back in the village. Her obligation to the children is to provide food and housing while they are here in the city.

This revelation solved the puzzle that I had earlier on observed along the streets; where an older girl sat at a distance and watched what the children were doing. She would quickly collect whatever the children received and told them to sit back and continue begging. It was not clear to me however, if the parents of such children back in Karamoja know what their children are being used to do in the city.

4.5 Consequences of street begging to Karamojong women

The consequences of street begging to Karamojong women are dire. Just by being perceived as street beggars, Karamojong women are stigmatised by other members of society and there is a tendency of treating them with contempt. Due to the physical features that the Karamojong possess, other members of the society can easily identify them which makes them liable to insults. Both men and women wear colourful beads and bangles around the neck, wrist, and ankle. The women also wear beads around their waist. Their hair style is unique to them and they also have ‘scars of beauty’ decorated in their faces in various shapes as illustrated below.



Photo 4: Illustration of Karamojong waist and neck beads, hair style and ear bangles. *Photos by Kabiza Wilderness Safaris (2017)*

Respondent B who came to the city after her family had scattered, said that; *'People throw all sorts of insults at us everywhere we go, even when you are not begging. Sometimes I feel so angry and I want to get back at them, but I fear that they might beat me'*. This study found out that this kind of stigma is unanimous and indiscriminative because it affects those who take part in street begging and those who do not. But as long as one is identified as Karamojong, there is a tendency by the general public to throw insults at them in reference to begging and their life style.

The stigma and contempt is worsened by men who catcall and throw sexual insults at the Karamojong women. Respondent E told me that;

Some men when you say to them that uncle, give me a hundred shillings, they say that, 'if you want money, come let me marry you, I want to have sex with you first, are you sweet in bed?' Some of them touch our breasts, buttocks and waist and they say obscene words to us. One man pressed my breast and said that it was standing upright on my chest, that it seems I have not slept with many men. I felt very angry with him and pushed his hand away with force. He went away laughing and mocking me. They also show us obscene signs using their fingers.

According to her explanation, the men flash certain signs using their fingers that insinuate obscenity and sexual acts. She demonstrated one of such signs by folding the other four fingers and leaving the long middle finger standing. In general context in Uganda, this sign literally means "fuck you". Unfortunately, many of such violations go unreported which gives the perpetrators freedom to continue.

There is a tendency for some men to lure, coerce and force Karamojong girls into sexual acts with promises of giving them money and other gifts. Through the stories I was told, I realised that this does not only happen to the women and girls who engage in street begging, but also those who do not. Respondent G who had a child out of such acts of men, narrated her story;

...I only beg once in a while when I do not go to the market to sort beans and ground nuts. Sometimes I go there in the evening after the market. One evening when I was by the road side, one man came to me and gave me 500 shillings. He talked to me nicely and asked me if I would work for him if he offered me a job. I accepted and he gave me directions to his house where we would meet and talk more about the job. The following day after the market, I went to his house as he had directed me, and he welcomed me inside. He talked nicely at first telling me about the house keeping job, but when it became dark, he closed the door and forced himself on me. I tried to resist him but he was so strong for me. I attempted to shout but he covered my mouth and threatened to strangle me if I continued shouting. After one month, I did not see my periods and I suspected I was pregnant. When I went back to that place to tell him that he had made me pregnant, his house was locked and nobody answered when I knocked. I frequented his house several times but did not find him. His neighbours later told me that he moved out of the house. I have never seen that man again. I suffered with the pregnancy but God helped me and I gave birth to a baby girl. My baby was two years when KCCA arrested us and took her away from me.

I asked her if she ever reported the rape case to police, and with a tone of hopelessness in her voice, she replied;

I do not think the police can even listen and help me. If you tell them, they can ask, are you not old enough to have sex? If they raped you, so what? But I even fear to approach them because one woman here in the camp once reported that she was raped and her case was taken to court. They told her to find a lawyer to help her in the court case, but she did not have money to pay for the lawyer. Even the questions those police officers ask can make you feel ashamed before people.

It is however absurd that many of the rape and defilement cases against Karamojong girls and women are not only by non-Karamojong men, but also by Karamojong men. Respondent F's case was by a Karamojong man. By the time of the interview, this respondent was seventeen years old.

.....there was one Karamojong man who met me on the street every day. We became friends thinking that he would not have bad intentions against me. He always spoke to me in our language and gave me some money every time he met me on the street. I took him for a good friend and even started to visit him at his house. But one time, he turned against me when I visited him. I think there was something he mixed with the drink he gave me because after drinking it, I started to feel dizzy and sleepy. When I woke up later, I realised that I had spent the night in his house and I was naked. We were together on the bed and he was deep asleep. I was so frightened, I quickly wore my clothes and ran out of his house. I saw him some days after and he said that he loves me and that we should continue our relationship, but me I do not like what he did to me.

It is likely that there was an up-coming affair between these two people, but the girl (respondent) did not consent to sex. There is a likelihood that the man coerced her into the act against her will because she says she was unconscious by the time of the act.

In relation to issues of sexual violence, respondent A shared her story saying that; *'.....some men in this camp sometimes also attempt to rape us especially when they are drunk. But the good thing is that people are many here so it is not easy for them to succeed'*.

Karamojong women also suffer physical injuries and abuses. Some of the by-passers instead of giving money or gifts, just slap, kick and push them. Some speeding drivers knock them down as they hurry to move from one vehicle to another begging. I witnessed one occasion where a speeding commuter taxi knocked a Karamojong girl approximately fourteen to sixteen years at Jinja road junction adjacent to Bank of Baroda. She fell down, but quickly got up and limped towards the pavement where she sat. From the look on her face, she appeared to be in pain and fellow Karamojong girls and women ran to her to offer their support. The taxi driver who knocked her did not stop, but peeped out of the window and shouted back at her saying; *"you Karamojong, you are lucky I did not break your legs, next time be more careful as you cross the road"*. Some people around were mesmerized by the act of the driver and also shouted back at him accusing him of deliberately wanting to kill the Karamojong girl, while others just

continued with business as usual as if nothing had happened. In my interview with Mr. Mutyaba; chairman of Katwe camp, he rated car and motor cycle accidents as the biggest challenge Karamojong women and children face while on the streets;

The accidents mostly claim newcomers from the village who do not know how to manoeuvre their way safely along the busy streets of the city as they go about their business. Secondly, some people mistake them for thieves especially those that collect scrap. Since they go from place to place looking for used bottles and electronics, people think they are looking for something to steal. I get many cases of children being beaten with accusations of theft. Many come back with severe injuries from beatings and motor cycle accidents.

The other challenge is arrests from city authorities. Kampala Capital City Authority does not entertain street beggars in the city. They are often rounded up, bundled onto KCCA vehicles and taken to police with charges of being idle and disorderly in the city. During such arrests, parents and children are often separated because children are not put in police cells, but rather remand homes and child care centres. Respondent G who was arrested with her child narrated that;

.....I was arrested with my two-year-old baby, but we were taken to different places. I spent two weeks in Kampiringisa and I did not know where my child had been taken. When I was released, I asked my colleagues whether they knew the exact place where my child had been taken, but none of them knew. My friend said that she tried to remove my child from them but she was over powered and they took her. Since then, I have not seen my child again.

I asked her if she ever tried to go to KCCA to inquire about her child's whereabouts. She replied;

I thought of it, but I fear KCCA men, they are very harsh to us. I fear that they will arrest me and take me back to Kampiringisa. (She sobs) but I love my child, she brings so much happiness to me.

Unfortunately, the confiscation of children also affects parents who do not engage in street begging, because some of their children follow others as they go to the streets. Respondent H's child was taken by KCCA. She narrated that;

.....for me I do not beg, but my six-year-old child used to follow his friends to the street. I did not realise it at first, until I started to see him with money and other items which I had not bought for him. Later on, his friends told me that he usually follows them to the street. Then one day, he did not come back home but some of his friends did. I searched around the camp but I did not find him. The following day, I heard that there had been a roundup in the city by KCCA, and that they had taken many children. So, I went to KCCA office to ask about my child, but things were very difficult for me. The building is so tall with many offices and many people. No body minds you, everybody just passes you going their own way. They all speak English, but for me I do not understand English. They kept sending me from one office to another, and later they gave me forms to fill. But since I do not know English, I was confused and I just came back home with the forms. I showed them to chairman and asked him to help me. It is now 6 months without my child.

From these two stories, it is evident that Karamojong women face difficult times in trying to rescue their children from city authorities. The process is seemingly tedious and long with a lot of bureaucracies and technicalities, yet the mothers seem ignorant of what to do if they want to gain access to their children and claim them back.

There is a tendency by police and the larger community to believe that street beggars are criminals. People in urban areas often link street begging to crime. When a crime like theft occurs, there is a tendency for people to suspect and often converge on street beggars in the vicinity, occasionally carrying out mob justice without first hearing them out. Many of the respondents expressed fear of the authorities and lack of protection while on the streets. Respondent A narrated that;

...one day, I was begging along Kampala road with my colleagues and four men wearing KCCA uniform jumped off a pickup vehicle and started beating us. They beat us hard with batons on the ankles, knees and elbows. They kicked and slapped us, accusing us of disorganizing the city and stealing peoples' things. They also grabbed and took our money. But for me I do not steal things from people, I only ask them, what they give me is what I take. But many times, people beat us thinking we are thieves.

Respondent D who was together with respondent A and C (these three were friends) on this fateful day added that;

we handed over the money and other items we had collected to them thinking that they would stop beating us and let us go. But they continued beating and kicking us until our bodies were bruised.

Unfortunately, from the stories and field conversations I had with Karamojong women, and their leaders, such offences remain largely unreported and unfollowed because the victims fear retaliations from the police, and the perpetrators are sometimes the police itself.

There is also a tendency of people taking advantage of the Karamojong girls. They call them from the street to help them in small restaurants, cleaning shops and other pet jobs with promises of giving them money or food, but sometimes, they do not fulfil these promises.

Respondent F narrated that;

.... We are paid very little yet we do so much work. I was once taken to wash dishes and clean in a restaurant and the woman promised to give me food after work. When I finished, she gave me leftover food that she had been collecting from the plates of customers who had finished eating. I felt very bad, she treated me as if I were not human.

There is a tendency therefore by the wider public to take advantage of the Karamojong girls in form of cheap labour.

4.6 Coping mechanisms of Karamojong women while on the street

There are a variety of coping strategies used by Karamojong women and children. Some are personal, while others operate on group basis. The ones that operate on group basis largely depend on the willingness and cooperation of members both old and young.

The first strategy is that they have a strong spy network that they can easily identify who is against them. They are suspicious of everybody who comes close, and can therefore identify one who wants to hurt them. They also have their own channels of information flow and can communicate with each other in a way that outsiders do not understand. They did not reveal to me how this system operated, but they admitted that it existed. Respondent C (one of the caretakers of others while on the streets) said that sometimes they get to know that the authorities are planning to execute one of their regular roundups especially when there is an upcoming local or international event. She said that when they get such tips, they do not go to the streets until the event is done.

There are also leaders and positions of responsibility amongst them. These leaders are known to members and they are respected by the juniors. Respondent C (one of the leaders) explained that;

....one does not beg from anywhere they wish because there are areas of jurisdiction and each area has a leader responsible for it. So, to operate in that area, one must seek the permission of the leader because the leader oversees the safety and wellbeing of all members. If anyone wanted to talk to any of the people in my area, the person has to talk to me first before talking with others. If I refuse, then the others cannot talk to that person.

This explains why my first attempts (as explained earlier in this chapter) to talk to the women on the streets was futile because I did not follow protocol. Each one kept referring me to their leader but I was ignorant of how the whole system worked.

Karamojong women and children are also not friendly to people who want to harm them. For example, whenever, KCCA rounds them up, they engage the officials in running battles, wailing and shouting (NTVUganda, 18 January, 2014).¹⁰ They passionately fight for their children not to be taken away from them. I look at this spirited fight as a coping strategy in a world where survival is for the fittest.

¹⁰See video by NTVUganda. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syac7MMWNxQ>

In addition, Karamojong women and children are very alert and always ready to take off whenever the enemy attacks. Even when a KCCA vehicle passes by going its way, they quickly grab their little ones and run into hiding. In case a colleague is caught by the authorities, other members try their best to come to the rescue of their colleague. They try to get back their colleagues in an effort to escape being taken into police cells or remand homes.

While on the street, I observed Karamojong women and children collecting used and disposed metals and electronics (commonly known as scrap) from garbage bins, and empty plastic bottles which they sell to available buyers in the city for re-use and recycling. When asked how much they are paid for these items, respondent A said that; *'I sell a kilogram of scrap at four hundred (400) shillings, and the price of plastic bottles is negotiable depending on the size and cleannessness'*. By engaging in this kind of trade, they earn some money in addition to what they get from begging. I also saw a big heap of plastic bottles at the camp in Katwe. It is a business in itself that many people in the city engage in. This is done by both men and women.

4.7 The role men play in street begging amongst the Karamojong

When I walked around the city along different streets, I easily saw Karamojong women and children begging. But I did not see any Karamojong man begging, at least for the days I spent observing what was happening on the street. The Karamojong men I saw were involved in small scale trade of hawking items like locally made stools, sandals made out of animal skin, handmade charcoal stoves and traps that people use to kill household rodents like rats/mouse.

However, female respondents told me that men have a role they play in street begging, though they are never seen on the streets in person. Respondent H in her story told me that; *'...the women you see on the streets are wives to men and they submit to them. Whether the man stays in the city or back home in Karamoja, the woman is culturally under him and the man has direct control over her, her children and all they possess'*. Being a patriarchal society, Karamojong men exercise more power and influence over women just like in many other patriarchal societies. The claim is that, once a Karamojong man pays dowry to the wife's family, the wife culturally becomes 'property' of the man.

Respondent I; a mother of seven children who stayed with her husband in the city, told me that;

...our men marry many wives and produce many children, because children and wives are regarded as 'capital' in this business. The more children and wives a man has, the more money he gets at the end of the day. Every morning, men send their children and wives to the street, and they collect the proceeds from them in the evening when they return. If a woman hesitates to hand over the proceeds to her husband, the man can even beat her and take the money by force, after all he married her.

Dowry in the Karamojong community is highly valued and respected and hence a man that manages to pay it, is held in high esteem because dowry is in form of cows, yet cows are an expensive treasure among the Karamojong.

Respondent J, a mother of five is the second wife to her husband who has three wives. By the time of my fieldwork, the third and newest wife to her husband was a twenty-year-old respondent D. In her story, respondent J said that;

....when I go to the street with my children in the morning, I leave my husband at home making charcoal stoves for sale and sorting plastic bottles. But by the time I come back, my husband is drunk and begins to ask for the money we collected. If I do not hand it over, he beats and abuses me. It is neighbours that come to my rescue when they hear what is happening.

It is evident that in such a situation as noted above, some Karamojong men use the power culturally vested upon them to take women's proceeds against their will, in addition to beating and harassing them in case the women resist. One could perhaps say that this kind of power relationship gives impetus to domestic violence. However, the situation is not as mentioned above for all couples. It varies from couple to couple. It should also be noted that not all the women involved in street begging are married or live under the influence of a husband. Some of them are independent of husbands' influence, though they may be under some male control in another dimension, since patriarchy is systematic and interwoven from the lowest level of society to bigger political systems. Respondents A, B, C, E, G and F lived on their own without husbands and had control over what they collected from the street.

Some women whose husbands remained in Karamoja, collect money for some time and often send to them and other members of the extended family that they left back home. Five out of the twelve Karamojong women I spoke to, affirmed that they sent money home every month to relatives that they left there. Thirty-eight-year old respondent K, in a long narration of her story, told me that;

My family lived a happy life many years ago, but things have changed so much. I married when I was sixteen and my husband was twenty five. We had many cows and goats, but things changed when our animals started dying of a strange disease that they say came from Kenya.My husband also caught a strange disease that made both his legs swell and he could not walk on his own but uses a walking stick. He could no longer take care of us and his parents who are very old.So, I decided to come to the city to find a job and get some money to help us. I came with five children and left the three older ones with him.I usually send money home every month for his medication and other needs.what I send depends on how much I collected throughout the month. But I divide it into two, we use the half and also send them half. But sometimes it is really difficult for me.

The challenge however, is that Karamojong women do not keep their money in banks or other safer places. They keep it in tins, wrappers or dig small pits and cover it there. Unfortunately, some cunning and unscrupulous individuals search for the money when the women are not around during day time, and steal it. By the time the women come back, their money is nowhere to be seen. In my field engagement with the chairman of the camp, he decried the many theft cases within the camp community. *‘.....Often times, the victims are women and some few men. Unfortunately, it is difficult to recover the money because the camp inhabits many people of all kinds, yet there is no established security system to monitor what happens’*. From the interview and several conversations I had with the camp chairman, the crime rate in the camp seems to be high. Not only theft, but also fighting and brutally hurting each other, drug abuse, alcoholism, child abuse, domestic violence among other things.

However, when I asked male respondents about men’s involvement in street begging, Male respondent 1 and male respondent 2 briefly had something to say. Respondent 1 said; *‘.....Karamojong men do not beg, that is women’s area, men are not involved’*.

Respondent 2 said;

I have never gone to the streets at all, but my children go there with their friends. Sometimes they come back with money and bread. For me, I make cooking stoves and sell in town. My children also collect bottles and scrap which we sell and get money. But my wife works in owino (local market), so she usually comes back with some food items. The money I and children get from scrap, we use it for other necessities in the house.

From this narration, there seemed to be cooperation in this family. It seemed that each member in the above respondent’s household had a part to play in the daily provision of basic needs and necessities. This couple had three children by the time of the interview. Meanwhile, from the analysis of the stories that I was told by the female respondents, ten out of the twelve female respondents showed that men were involved in street begging either in the capacity of fathers/guardians to children who went to the streets, or as husbands to wives who were involved in street begging.

Female respondent K, who lived in the city at the time of fieldwork, but had a husband back home in Kotido told me that;

.....My husband is in Kotido but he is sick and unable to work.He knows that I beg to earn a living but he does not care about it. He does not even know the pains of street begging because he has never been here’. I just send him money to take care of himself and the child of his brother who takes care of him.

In the same vein, there was a twenty one-year old respondent L; a mother of two who told me her story shortly and in hiding because she did not want her husband to know that she was speaking to a researcher. She thought I was a journalist and said that she wanted me to tell the world how Karamojong women were suffering. Even when I told her I was a researcher, she kept referring to me as journalist. She hurriedly told me that;

My husband brought me from the village and said there was good life in the city. When we reached here, he asked me to join other women who go to the street to beg. He said, that is what other women do here to get money. After our first child, some nurses came here and taught us about family planning and contraceptives. They said that those who wanted should register their names because the service was free of charge. I asked my friend who had been to the city earlier about those things and she advised me to go for it such that I do not get pregnant again very fast. The nurses gave me injection (injector plan). When my husband came back, I told him about what had happened. He was very angry and he slapped me. He said that those are things from white people and they are very dangerous and that they cause cancer. He warned me not to go back because for him he wanted to have many children like his father. He said that if am not ready to bear him children, he will get another wife who will.I never went back for injection and after three months, I got pregnant again. So now I go to the street with my two children every day.

From this story, this respondents' right to make decisions about her reproductive health seems to be at the mercy of her husband. Her subordinate position places her choices and decisions in the hands of her husband even against her will. However, she is aware of the dilemma she is faced with and it is evident that she was looking for a platform to express her discontentment.

Being a woman, I was advantaged with an insider position in a way that, female respondents at a certain point entrusted me with exclusive and sensitive information about their lives, that perhaps I would not have accessed if I were a male researcher. They told me a lot about men's involvement in street begging, but they were very selective on what to publish and what not to publish. So, much of the discussion about men's involvement in street begging is withheld on request. This was for reasons of security, privacy, protection of their marriages and loyalty to cultural norms and values that govern marriage amongst the Karamojong.

It was not until I asked respondents to tell me about men's involvement in street begging that I realised how sensitive and delicate research question four was. This is because it tackles the very sensitive issue of power relations between men and women in this community. And yet, power relations among the Karamojong people has cultural connectedness to it. I wish to say that the issue of culture, norms and values is highly treasured among many indigenous communities, with due respect to the differences among indigenous people world over. Hence, it is within a community's culture that relationships, roles and responsibilities between men and women are understood. There is a likelihood that outsiders to that community may find it

difficult to comprehend how the above issues are perceived and operated by insiders, due to the complexities within which such issues are embedded.

In the proceeding chapter, I navigate through the stated findings using theoretical lenses. I engage findings stated here with tenets of the theories stated earlier on in this thesis, and thereafter make logical conclusions.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

In this chapter, I discuss and make reflections on the findings of this study in relation to the theoretical framework. However, the chapter also includes general observations.

5.1 Relating Intersectionality and Indigenous Feminism to the study

The study population of this research project is placed in a society where many people regard street begging as a societal vice that should be done away with. For example, Gackle et al. (2007, p. 33) write saying that; many Ugandans see Karamojong street beggars as a societal nuisance and removing them off the streets is of utmost importance. Likewise, Bird (2007), notes that shortly before the visit of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), of 2007 to Uganda, the government removed street beggars and other people from the streets, who were regarded as ‘undesirable’. 90% of those people were Karamojong. In addition, Karamojong women are faced with double identities of femininity and indigeneity from a region perceived to be underdeveloped and lagging behind other regions in many areas. I therefore choose to handle this study with tenets of intersectionality and indigenous feminism at the back of my mind.

I dealt with the interactions between **womanhood** and **indigeneity** simultaneously. These are two different identities that complement each other to add up to a Karamojong woman. Being a woman and at the same time indigenous, carries along a heavy load of responsibilities and roles that lay fertile ground for subordination and oppression in different facets in society, both from within the in-group and out-group. Torjer (2016a, pp. 9-11), argues that gender and sexual identity can emphasise, de-emphasise or complicate indigenous identity, and yet indigenous identity can downplay, twist or strengthen gender and class identity. So, to understand the dynamics of these facets, one needs to understand the overlapping identities concurrently. Hence, using an intersectional approach enables one to comprehend that people belong to a diversity of contexts and identities at the same time (ibid).

One of the scholars of intersectionality Kimberle William Crenshaw (1989) argues that women experience oppression in varying formations and degrees of intensity which are influenced by the intersectional systems of society. Hence, intersectionality aims to understand the overlapping social identities and related systems of oppression, domination and discrimination. In my interactions with Karamojong women, I realised that issues of race, gender and class propel discrimination and vulnerability that Karamojong women face. They suffer social stigma

because of their easily recognised identity due to their physical features and traditionally identifiable costumes that they wear. At the same time, they are also victims of stigma that is associated with street begging.

In line with what Kimberle (1989) states, the oppression, discrimination and domination that Karamojong women go through is in varying intensities and at different levels right from the household, within their community and outside their community. As already noted in chapter four, Karamojong women face subordination and oppression in their families and marriages. Some husbands take from their wives what they collect from the streets, force/coerce them to engage in begging, beat and harass them. Then on the streets, they are further treated brutally by authorities, taken advantage of, raped and defiled, cheated by those who give them jobs, their children are separated from them among other violations. At the institutional level, Karamojong women are denied justice when access to their confiscated children is denied/blocked. They are ignorant of the protocol to follow if one wants to rescue her child, and are hindered by many underlying factors like language barrier and bureaucracy. All these intersectional systems of society with which Karamojong women interact, somewhat propel their oppression and further subordination. There is thus need to understand Karamojong women and the different facets of life they live, other than regarding all women as a single group irrespective of the differences of each sub group. There are different categories of women within the bigger group of women in the world and each group is placed differently, faces different challenges of life and has differing experiences of life.

Feminism is a theory that seeks to describe and explain women's situations and experiences, support recommendations for the better, attaching respect to perspectives and authority of women (Frye, 2000; Green, 2007b, p. 21). Indigenous feminism in particular concerns itself with decolonisation, telling stories of indigenous women and presenting a multi layered critique of different forms of patriarchy (Torjer, 2016a, p. 1). Hence, this study displays various stories of Karamojong women and how their lives are entangled with multiple layers of patriarchy expressed in various forms within and outside their community. Indigenous feminists raise three major human rights violations namely: - **colonialism**, **racism** and **sexism**, and the unpleasant interaction between the three. In this research, I explored the experiences of the Karamojong women using lens of the above three elements as discussed below.

5.1.1 Colonialism and Karamojong peoples

(a) Brief colonial history of Karamoja region

Uganda was a British protectorate from 1894 to 1962 when she gained independence. The colonization of Uganda was a priceless crown for Britain in their colonial economic and military master plan for the African continent (Otiso, 2006). To the colonialists, Uganda did not exist before the white man came; White explorers John Speke and Burton claimed to have discovered Uganda and the source of the Nile as if there were no indigenous inhabitants in Uganda.

While partitioning Uganda, the British took the area that is presently occupied by the Karamojong peoples and formed the states of Uganda and Kenya (ibid). Cattle rustling was a common practice amongst pastoral communities and the Karamojong used to raid their neighbors in Kenya. But from 1921, up to Uganda's independence in 1962, the British imposed strict rules that made it difficult for the Karamojong to raid their neighbors, hence closing the region to outsiders and fights between pastoralists declined (Otiso, 2006; Schroeder, Farr, & Schnabel, 2005; Stites & Akabwai, 2009). But when the British started to set aside large areas of prime grazing land for wildlife conservation and water development projects, competition for available grazing land intensified (Schroeder et al., 2005). By the 1960s, the pastoralists had resumed raiding across northern Uganda and Kenya. The main impact of the British military occupation on the pastoralists was territorial restriction and economic isolation (Huisman, 2001; Schroeder et al., 2005).

In 1962, the new independent Ugandan government took over power from the British colonial government which led to the formation of Uganda into a nation state. This endorsement led to isolating Uganda as an independent nation and people, separate from neighboring countries (Schroeder et al., 2005). Given their livelihood as nomadic pastoralists, the Karamojong peoples have always been migrating and exchanging territorial resources with neighboring pastoralist communities of Sudan and Kenya (Huisman, 2001). Thus, the creation of borders restricted free movement of the Karamojong and other tribal communities across borders hence interfering with the nomadic lifestyle of the Karamojong peoples.

After independence, ruling governments of Uganda aimed to see that Karamojong warriors do not raid their neighbors because such attacks have been misinterpreted as inter-tribal conflicts, and therefore a threat to national security (Otiso, 2006). In the 1970s during Idi Amin Dada's reign, the Karamojong people experienced more domination and subordination by many of the

presidential decrees that he issued. For example, one of the decrees stated that all Karamojong people should wear western imported clothing, instead of clothing made from livestock hides (Huisman, 2001; Ortner, 1996). Amin also directed the army to embark on constant arrests of Karamojong women who disobeyed that decree and continued to wear traditional clothing (Kagaha et al., 2009). This was a deliberate attack on the identity and culture of a people who attach much importance and pleasure to livestock and all its products. It was an attempt to deny them the right to be different from others and to be proud of their own way of dressing. Such events highlight the historical predicaments and marginalization that the Karamojong have undergone at the hands of different political regimes both colonial and post independence state regimes.

To date, the government has continued to operate programmes aiming to disarm the Karamojong with a justification of promoting peace in the region (Gackle et al., 2007; Sundal, 2010). The irony of this is that; disarming the Karamojong makes them vulnerable to attacks and raids from neighboring cattle keepers like the Turkana and Pokot, but also amongst themselves. The result of which is death of family providers, scattering of families, insurgencies and unrest which force many Karamojong women to flee to the city. Unfortunately, the city also has its own hassles which make survival there difficult. Karamojong women out of despair, end up on the streets of the city to beg.

(b) Effects of colonial activities on Karamojong people

Presently, North-eastern Uganda is the most marginalized and least developed area in the country, a situation that dates as far back as the colonial period.¹¹ There is even a saying in Uganda in relation to the remoteness of this region; '*We shall not wait for Karamoja to develop,*' insinuating that the region has lagged behind other regions in many developmental aspects for a long time and perhaps the hope to change is minimal. This study found out that the above situation is one of the reasons why Karamojong people migrate to urban areas to find better infrastructure and social amenities like piped water, tarmac roads, electricity, and other social services that make life easier. It is among those who migrate to the cities that come those who take part in street begging.

¹¹ The last three districts of Karamoja, Kotido, Nakapiripirit and Moroto have the lowest Human Development Index of 0.231, 0.240 and 0.271 respectively, meaning that they are the poorest of Uganda's districts. See United Nations Development Programme Uganda Human Development Report. available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/UGA> (UNDP, 2005). (accessed on 7 June 2016)

When colonialists came to Africa, they seem to have assumed that Africa was more backward than Europe, and that Africans would benefit from exposure to Western standards and practices, as well as Christianity (Huisman, 2001; Wa Thiong'o, 1994). For such reasons, they justified imposition of British influence upon Ugandans without considering the wishes of the Ugandan people. The underlying truth is that at some point, Uganda had to come in contact with the outside world, but it does not necessarily mean that what the outside world carried along, was the best way of doing things for Ugandans. To the colonialists, what they brought along was assumed to be better than what they found in the colonies they took over. For example; the Karamojong just like any other indigenous people elsewhere, had their own religion. They believed in a supreme deity named *Akuju*, who is believed to reside above the earth and is invisible, but known to elders who communicate with him (Kabiza Wilderness Safaris, 2017; Stites et al., 2007). It is believed that *Akuju* grants the prayers of his people because he has the ability to bless them in all aspects of their lives. His will is often presented in the intestines of sacrificed animals to the diviners who communicate the message to the community (Kabiza Wilderness Safaris, 2017). Therefore, imposing Christianity, the religion of colonialists was watering down the presence and relevancy of the native religion of the Karamojong and denying them the right to worship the way they wished.

The same applies to education; before the invasion of the colonial masters, education in Africa was generally seen as a way of preparing children for their responsibilities as adults in the community, and was inseparable from other segments of life because one did not only acquire education, but lived it on a daily basis (Boateng, 1983, p. 322). It was a way of sharpening one's common sense in life and one never ceases to learn until death, because life itself is believed to be a lesson. The tools used included fables, myths, folk tales, proverbs, parables, legends among others; which was done orally at home, around the fire place or even as people went by their day to day business. It was a continuous process throughout childhood, and largely dependent on one's memory because no notes were taken. So, one was a student of life throughout one's life time on earth, learning different aspects of worldly reality as life unfolded (Wa Thiong'o, 1994). One was expected to learn from prior life experiences that become guidelines used to avoid future mistakes. People in my own culture believe that the last lesson one learns in life are the 'pains of death'.

Contrarily to the above form of education, came formal/colonial education where children are entrusted to a professional teacher who is seen as all knowing (Boateng, 1983), to teach the child a new language, new skills, how to read, write and new ways of relating to the world. The

lessons are divided into subjects each tackling a specific aspect. There are well developed school curriculums, systematic plans, tool kits, text books among others, which guide formal education throughout the different stages. Unlike native education, formal (colonial) education is completed at a certain standard and certificates are awarded on completion. People take different specialities and pursue specific careers in order to attain paid employment, for self-actualization and other personal reasons. From the way this type of education was enforced upon natives, there is a likelihood that colonialists took it for granted that this was the ideal type of education for all societies they colonised irrespective of the way of life of the colonised populations.

In Uganda, formal education was imposed onto the natives with punishments to those that resisted, inclusive of labelling them uncivilised, backward and sidelining such people and regions in social infrastructure (Otiso, 2006). This was the case with the Karamojong people of Uganda. They preferred their native education to colonial education, which did not augur well with the colonial masters, and so the colonialists and those who embraced the colonial kind of education tagged the Karamojong as being backward and concentrated on building the social infrastructure of other regions and ignored Karamoja region (Otiso, 2006).

But the question is, must all people undertake formal education to be civilised? Secondly, viewed from different perspectives and gazes, what is civilisation? Is it a crime for natives to cherish and embrace their own ways of doing things and reject the way others do them? What yardstick did colonialists use to judge who is civilised and who is not, and how realistic and relevant is this yardstick?. Kagolobya (2007), while writing about colonialism argued that colonisers did not only aim at political and economic domination of the colonised, but intentionally immersed the colonised into new systems of representation through colonial narratives in which the colonised were portrayed as politically, economically and culturally bankrupt. According to Kagolobya, this was a deliberate move to legitimise the colonial mission of 'civilising' the colonised.

Today, it is evident that many societies are currently free from colonialists and have gained independence. However, much as there is no physical presence of colonialists, colonial ideologies and mentalities are still existing in many societies, and their effects are openly felt and seen. Wa Thiong'o (1994) refers to this situation as colonising the mind. There is therefore need for decolonisation. Torjer (2016a, p. 3), argues that for decolonisation to take place, there is need to place people back into history and having their stories told and knowledge shared all

over again. According to Torjer, the decolonisation process is about empowering and enabling the people in question.

However, claims that Karamoja region lags behind other regions is from the gaze of outsiders (non Karamojongs) and not from the Karamojong peoples' gaze per say. By this I mean that; it is widely outsiders and non Karamojongs that regard this region as underdeveloped. It is very possible that the Karamojong think differently of their region and situation it is in. However, ascertaining their perception on this matter calls for a separate study to be done. But from my observation and what I make of the stories that I was told, and interviews I conducted with the Karamojong respondents, there is a tendency for the Karamojong people to resist the culture and way of life of outsiders. However, they do not remain completely unchanged. They tend to treasure their traditional way of life as opposed to how things are done in the city. For example, respondent E was brought to Kampala by a friend she met while trying to locate her mother. The new friend and her city colleagues seemed to have been engaged in some kind of prostitution business and tried to introduce this to the Karamojong girl. But in her narration, she told me that what these girls were doing was strange to her. *'...they used to paint many colours on their lips, eyes and nails. They also wore short dresses and went out with men. I was not used to that kind of life because girls in my village do not do those things'*. This girl identified fellow Karamojong girls while she went to the market, and joined them in the camp, other than staying with the city girls. This points to a sense of pride in who she was and a sense of belonging to the Karamojong cultural group and community.

As earlier on noted, I did not discuss colonisation and its effects with my respondents, because it was not one of the primary aims of this project. So, I did not seek the Karamojong people's opinion on the subject. However, as they narrated their stories, traces of stigmatisation and stereotyping by the wider public about their resentment of foreign things were expressed as already shown in chapter four, and the situation dates far back since colonial times.

5.1.2 Racism

Because the Karamojong possess physical features and wear ornaments that differentiate them from other ethnic groups (as discussed in chapter four), they are often victims of racism. This is accompanied by stigmatisation, familiarity and contempt which exacerbates their vulnerability as they engage in begging. From the stories I was told during fieldwork, there was a mentality amongst people to regard those who took part in street begging as people of low social status. This kind of stigma does not discriminate who begs and who does not, but as long as one is

identified as Karamojong, people tend to throw insults at them in relation to begging and the situation of Karamoja as a region.

It is widely acknowledged by international human rights bodies that indigenous women experience multiple forms of discrimination because of their gender and ethnicity (CEDAW, 2007; CERD, 2003)¹². The intersection between gender and race that indigenous women face was notably explained by Yakin Ertürk and Coomaraswamy; former special rapporteurs of violence against women in the 2009 Critical Review of the 15 years of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its causes and consequences. Ertürk (2009), argues that indigenous women stand at the intersection of gender and racial inequality; and failure to recognize the intersectional nature of systems of oppression, and to integrate a racial and gender perspective when analyzing indigenous women's status, will ultimately result in further reinforcement of their subordination to both patriarchy and racism. Ertürk hence suggests that; in addressing the status of indigenous women, it is essential to identify racial elements of gender discrimination as well as the gendered elements of racial discrimination. She further adds that, because women are not a homogenous category, gender equality strategies designed in a vacuum do not work to solve issues relating to them.

The social stigma and racism attached to the Karamojong people by the wider public is not only a phenomenon of recent times, but also traces of it were evident even during colonial times. The British treated the Karamojong natives with a racist attitude during their interactions with them. For example, before 1972, there was a sign erected at the entrance to Moroto town; one of the districts occupied by the Karamojong which alerted visitors coming to this area, to stare at the naked tribesmen of the heart of Africa (Huisman, 2001; Stites & Akabwai, 2009). Colonialists seemed to make fun of the way of dressing of the Karamojong people by then.

5.1.3 Patriarchy and sexism

Amongst the Karamojong, the male's status is privileged since they belong to a patriarchal society. This is strengthened in one way by culture, but also due to historical incorporation and

¹²See: Concluding Comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women: Nicaragua 37th session 15 January to 2 February 2007 Paragraph 31 "The Committee is concerned about the situation of indigenous and Afro-descendent women and the multiple forms of discrimination they face, which limit their de facto enjoyment of their human rights and full participation in all spheres of life". See also: Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Ecuador. 62nd session 3-21 March 2003., Paragraph 15. "The Committee notes that women belonging to ethnic minorities are subject to double discrimination, based on their ethnic origin as well as their gender".

institutionalization of male supremacy in government institutions right from the household to higher political offices (Huisman, 2001). The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, preamble paragraph 6 states that; “Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of full advancement of women, and violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into subordinate positions compared to men” (Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993).

This study found out that due to this long standing status, power of access and control over resources is majorly held by men. The powers vested upon men by patriarchy in the Karamojong community includes ‘owning’ women and all they stand for either as a father or husband to the woman in question. This is perhaps why there are cases of some men coercing their wives to take part in street begging and there after take away the proceeds from them.

Ironically, the subordination here is not only by indigenous and non-indigenous men, but also by indigenous women themselves. This study found out that some indigenous women facilitate the subordination of fellow women and children, through coercion and bringing them to urban areas with promises of good jobs, but later end up ‘employing’ them as street beggars. Indigenous feminists point out that indigenous communities have been subordinated by non-indigenous communities around them (Green, 2007a). But on the contrary, both extremes are witnessed in this study. Non-indigenous people use indigenous people (Karamojong) as ‘tools or vehicles’ to earn money from unsuspecting individuals (as discussed in chapter four). While on the other hand, amongst the Karamojong people themselves, some take advantage of others minors inclusive. Perhaps this partly explains why indigenous feminism attracts hostility and minimization towards those that advocate for it, not only from outsiders, but even within indigenous communities. There could be people benefiting in some kind of way in the existing status quo and hence trying to change power relations, threatens their economic muscle.

It is still under the frame of patriarchy and sexism that men take advantage of Karamojong women and sexually assault and molest them as discussed in chapter four. It is evident from the stories narrated, that some Karamojong and non-Karamojong men tend to regard women as tools for satisfying their sexual desires, even against the will of the women. It is even worse for Karamojong women who have already been placed in a vulnerable position by other factors.

Unfortunately, those they would have run to, to seek justice, are sometimes the perpetrators of such violations and brutal acts.

However, this does not mean that Karamojong women have not made any effort to protect themselves and fight for their rights. Indeed, from the stories they told me, it was evident that they were aware that their rights were being violated. This resilience is probably what KCCA official 2 referred to as aggressiveness. In my interview with KCCA officials, I asked why KCCA handles Karamojong street beggars in a brutal and harsh manner that the women had narrated to me. KCCA official 2 had this to say; *'.....those people are very aggressive, they really give us hard time. So, we also handle them with a firm grip. Even when we take them back to Karamoja, they find their way back'*. It could be that the resilience by the Karamojong women challenged the male ego of KCCA official 2, that is perhaps why he referred to it as aggressiveness. But from the stories the Karamojong women told me, their actions were seemingly acts of trying to protect themselves from those that wanted to harm them. Generally in patriarchal societies, aggressiveness is an attribute associated with men and hence women who exhibit such attributes, challenge men. Frye, (2000) one of the indigenous feminists argues that men aim to strengthen internal allegiance and continuation of traditional social practices that uphold, validate, perpetuate and enforce male dominance. Hence one who challenges the existing status quo is seen as a threat to their cherished status.

From the response of KCCA official 2 above, the brutality towards Karamojong street beggars by KCCA is seemingly an intended mechanism to force Karamojong women to abandon street begging and vacate the streets. In return, the Karamojong women and children also fight back as a way of resisting the way in which KCCA treats them. In the process, the women are labelled 'aggressive and unmanageable' a perception that makes them even more vulnerable to victimization and harassment by those seeking to remove them off the streets as well as the wider public. Police and KCCA threaten and beat them with batons and whips as a way of forcing them never to come back on the streets. The issue of concern however is that, removing the Karamojong from the streets without providing an alternative venture for them to engage in, does not sustainably solve the problem at hand. And without finding solutions to the factors behind their being on the streets, getting them off may be a hard task because they have their own reasons why they are there. Scholarship on Karamojong people and street begging by various researchers shows that most of the attempts to deal with this social phenomenon are temporary measures that serve short term set goals, say when Uganda is holding international conferences (Bird, 2007; Gackle et al., 2007; Sundal, 2010).

5.2 General observations

This study found out that Karamojong women often carry along their children to the streets. The implication of this is that the children seem to be used as ‘tools’ to evoke the givers’ sympathy which violates the rights of the children. They are also exposed to harsh conditions and brutality of city authorities and by-passers on the streets. When taken away from their mothers, children are denied their right to enjoy the love of their parents, and the parents are also denied the right to stay with their children. The children are also exposed to sexual violence, hard labor and exploitation by the wider public.

The Ugandan government has adopted various domestic child protection legislations including; the Children’s Act and laws prohibiting child labor. It is ironical however, that young Karamojong girls and children still face such experiences as narrated by the respondents in this study. The Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development has created various strategies intended to foster the rights of at-risk children like; the National Strategic Programme Plan of Interventions for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children and the National Action Plan on Elimination of all forms of Child Labor in Uganda 2012/13-2016/17 (Ministry of Gender, 2004, 2012) under which Karamojong girls and children fall. And yet, the government of Uganda has not met its obligations to protect Karamojong children and young girls from abuses of the police, KCCA and other individuals who take advantage of their vulnerability. Perhaps some efforts have been made, but from the findings of this study, much more effort is needed from all concerned parties especially in terms of law enforcement and ensuring that perpetrators do not go scot free.

While at the KCCA headquarters (City Hall), I interviewed three KCCA officials whose names are withheld on request, I shall only refer to them as official 1, 2 and 3. Official 1 and 2 were enforcement officers¹³ and official 3 held an administrative position. In the interview guide, one of the questions was to explain how city authorities have dealt with the issue of street beggars in Kampala. Official 1 told me that;

As KCCA, we are not concerned with adult street beggars, our concern is street children. That is why we periodically take the children off the streets. We take them to Kampiringisa and other remand homes where they are screened. Then some are taken back to Karamoja because many of them are Karamojong, and others are taken to foster homes.

¹³ Operatives that go out to the streets to enforce the law. These confiscate property of street vendors, arrest and send away un desired vendors and beggars from the streets.

Official 2 said that;

..... the laws against street begging are weak and unfunctional. So even when we take the Karamojong off the street, they come back after some time. When we take them to police, they charge them of being idle and disorderly, but after some time, they let them free and they come back.I think parliament should enact laws to criminalize giving money and support to street beggars. That way, the financial incentives and support that keeps beggars on the streets will have reduced, thereby reducing the number of beggars also. Otherwise those who give them money are the ones keeping them on the streets.

And Official 3 noted that;

As KCCA, we receive directives from Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, to roundup all idlers, mentally ill people and beggars from the streets. These directives usually come when we have international visitors, special events, and international conferences. The government tells us to clear the streets such that the visitors do not get a bad image of Uganda as they pass through the streets.

From these three responses, there seems to be a struggle between KCCA and other government institutions on who is directly concerned and how to deal with the issue of street beggars. So, at times KCCA acts on its own, while on other occasions it operates on the directives from other institutions. There also seems to be no direct charges in connection to street begging but rather related charges like 'idle and disorderly' and 'disturbing the peace of the city' are opened up upon those caught begging.

Interestingly, this study found out that Karamojong women are not proud of begging. They have various plans for their future that rotate around different ventures like business and trade. However, girls and younger women between 18-28, wished to abandon street begging for other ventures within the city, while the older women of 30 and above wished to find alternatives back home in Karamoja. The latter seemed not very pleased and comfortable with life in the township, while the younger people tend to like the glamour of the city and wish to stay. Ten out of the twelve Karamojong women that told me their stories dreamt of a begging free future. The other two were not sure of what their future holds but their concern was majorly finding every day needs using any available means. In general observation, the ten women did not see themselves on the streets all their lives, but rather, they looked at it as a temporary means to make ends meet in the meantime as they looked for something else to do. Respondent L who was eighteen years of age, in her story told me that;

.....it is my husband who encourages me to join fellow women to beg, he says to me that if I do not go, we will go hungry because he does not have a reliable job. Otherwise, I do not like it. There are so many problems on the street. I am worried that one time someone from the village who knows me will meet me begging on the street and I get ashamed. I fear for my parents back home to know that am begging here in the city. If my husband finds a job where he can earn to take care of us, I will not beg again. Only that jobs cannot easily be found. But I am also looking around to find myself one.

Respondent L and her other colleagues desired to have starting capital and perhaps engage in trade from which they could earn a living. Likewise, respondent D, a twenty-year old, third wife to a husband of three women, said that; *'...if I learnt to sew and got a sewing machine, I would quit street begging and concentrate on my sewing business'*. Perhaps this could be a starting point for the Ugandan government and other concerned stakeholders to change the situation. Building on the desires of Karamojong women, developing their skills and capacity to run small scale business and availing them with starting capital would perhaps make the situation better than what it was during the time of fieldwork. Such an initiative, would avail Karamojong women with the opportunity of participating in the socio-economic development of their respective communities and the nation at large.

5.3 Changing gender roles amongst the Karamojong

While both genders are experiencing some level of vulnerability and challenges ranging from dislocation to starvation, this study discovered that Karamojong women are experiencing an even greater crisis than men, and appear to have inherited a certain part of men's share of responsibility for provision of daily family needs on top of their own personal needs. This is one reason why there were/are more women moving to the urban areas than men. They move away from their homes in search of opportunities elsewhere to find ways of fending for their families.

Traditionally, men were charged with the responsibility of hunting, rustling animals, and grazing cattle, while women stayed at home and took care of household responsibilities like building huts, gardening, preparing meals and looking after children (Ssenkaaba, 2015). But from the findings of the study, I realised that Karamojong women have acquired new roles which were not formerly theirs on top of what they already had. Most of the familial roles ranging from child bearing and rearing, cooking, general household chores belong to women. On top of these, women leaving in urban areas are now engaged with finding food and other necessities for their families. However, the increase in women's familial responsibility does not seem to have translated into an increase in control over resources (Huisman, 2001), though

many changes have taken place both within and outside their society. Patriarchy still has strong holds in this community despite the shift in gender roles (Ssenkaaba, 2015).

In the past, men were the primary decision makers in this community and their status was a public affair outwardly expressed through possession of big herds of cattle (ibid). Women were largely left in the domestic sphere. They occupied the lowest level strata and were excluded from decision making though not completely. The main responsibility of women was cultivation and child bearing, while men did herding and guarding of the animals and provision of daily needs for the family (ibid). Men largely dominated the political sphere and took major decisions (ibid). It is noted that women have also been excluded from participating in the implementation of major government programmes that have been implemented in the region for quite some time now (Schroeder et al., 2005). For instance, it has been reported that women have played a marginal and insignificant role in the major disarmament programmes in this region (ibid). Yet, disarmament and its impacts are largely felt by the women and is one of the factors driving Karamojong women into street begging.

From the findings of this study, Karamojong women seem dissatisfied with several aspects of the way men treat them both within their society and outside, and are hopeful that the state or any other willing and able institutions will respond to their plight. It should be noted however, that patriarchy, not only in Karamoja, but even elsewhere, is a complex and resilient process that allows men to achieve, reinforce and demonstrate masculinity within generations that are infused with long standing traditions (Schroeder et al., 2005). Thus, women's dissatisfaction with the status quo may represent our (women) newly found awareness that we are oppressed, but may not necessarily position and help us demand and bring about change within a profoundly male dominated society. Perhaps we (women) need to do something more than just being dissatisfied in order to bring about change. Say, including ourselves in positions of responsibility and decision making right from the household to higher administrative positions such that we create a platform for our concerns to be heard. Also increasing awareness on women's rights and empowering women to at least be able to control the proceeds from the income generating ventures they engage in, can probably improve our position.

However, the above is a hard task that we (women) have to tackle carefully, yet profoundly, because it calls for a breakdown in the already existing structures that are established in a long standing patriarchal setting that has stood the test of time. There after, rebuilding structures that aim to balance the continuum of power relations between men and women can commence.

Green (2007a) one of the Indigenous feminists, calls for this kind of strategy if women's position in decision making is to improve. I guess this is no easy task, but at least efforts have to be made and we have to press on with patience. Cautiously however, as women aim higher, we need to beware and cautious of othering men such that we do not reproduce what we are fighting against in the future. Moreton-Robinson (2000, p. 182) explains othering as an overarching process where power is accumulated and reproduced, privileging one group of people against the other.

On the other hand, much as roles of Karamojong women who migrate to the city have changed, men's roles have not remained the same. This study found out that Karamojong men leaving in urban areas are equally challenged with how to make ends meet while in the city, though for them physically begging on the streets is no option. The fact that the men were used to herding and grazing animals, city life is quite a challenge. Male respondent 5; a 26-year-old, husband to 1 wife and two children, told me that;

.....I was used to taking care of animals, but our animals died of drought and life became difficult. Finding food was so hard, we only depended on relief food given by donors. So, I and my family decided to come to the city to see if things would get better. But finding a job here is so difficult without knowing the local language.I collect used plastic bottles and sell them but of course they do not give much. My wife sweeps in the shops in owino market. That's how we manage life here.

In my observation, this change has an emotional effect on Karamojong men. There is a tendency of losing self-esteem due to inability to easily execute their set roles and responsibilities as required of them by society.

In general, the increasing challenges faced by Karamojong people presently as they navigate through daily life (as discussed in chapter four and five) are intensifying and overwhelming survival and coping strategies formerly used by the Karamojong. Treasured assets, livelihood and social structures are being eroded and this is contributing to the increasing vulnerability of Karamojong men and women. Even once temporary survival mechanisms like street begging are becoming more permanent adaptations in order to make ends meet. This trend of events has greatly impacted on who this indigenous group of people was initially. Such changes have also had a great impact on gender roles because they have significant implication on how Karamojong men and women see themselves, the roles they play in society and how they relate with each other. The Karamojong people are currently negotiating what it means to be indigenous in an urban setting where each one has to fend for oneself and family, without animals and herds as it used to be. They are battling with stigma, racism and stereotypes in the

urban setting where urban inhabitants seem not to understand them, their way of life and daily lived experiences that are full of economic and social hardships. Karamojong people have thus fallen victims of misinterpretations and judgement on the basis of being different from other members of the metropolitan urban population.

A summary of the findings, deliberations and conclusions drawn herein are presented in chapter six below.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

6.1 Summary

The main objective of this study was to find out why Karamojong women engaged in street begging, the challenges they encountered, how they coped, and the role men played. I was interested in knowing why only Karamojong women and children were/are seen on the streets, and not the men. In any case, if the men had a role to play, I wanted to know what their role was. The underlying purpose was to find out how Karamojong women navigated through life in the urban areas, what they experienced and how they were able to cope with the situation. I based this study on the data I gathered through qualitative ethnographic fieldwork in Kampala Uganda, with a sample size of 22 respondents. I collected data through interviews, observation, narratives and archival records. Two theories guided this study namely; Indigenous Feminism and Intersectionality.

In chapter one, I introduced my topic, objectives and gave a brief background about the Karamojong peoples. I also contextualized indigenous women because the study related to them in broader terms. The intention of this, was to familiarize my readers with the study population and their way of life, and to place indigenous women at the center of the study respectively.

In chapter two, I reviewed existing literature about street begging both in a wider sense and within Uganda. I also gave insights about the debate of indigeneity in the African context, and what the situation is/was like in Uganda. Chapter two also contained a description of the theories of Intersectionality and Indigenous Feminism. The aim was to explore what other scholars had established about street begging, which gave me a background on the topic of study. The discussion about indigeneity was to locate the status of my study population in relation to Uganda and internationally as regards to defining indigenous peoples. The description of theories was to lay a background of the analytical lens through which I viewed this study.

Chapter three entailed a detailed account of the methods and methodology applied to obtain empirical data, how I analyzed it, and how these tools were practically applied.

In chapter four, I presented the empirical data collected from the field;- the reasons for street begging included; changing climatic conditions that have impacted traditional livelihood patterns of the Karamojong. These changes have resulted into death of herds and humans, hunger and starvation, declining numbers of animals and famine. Other factors included abject

poverty, breakdown of familial ties, and insecurity as a result of the disarmament process by government. As a result, Karamojong women migrated to urban areas not only to escape the above, but to also find alternative jobs and better opportunities, enjoy the glamour of the city and for financial independence.

While on the streets, it was observed that Karamojong women faced a range of challenges which included; harsh treatment by authorities, separation of children from mothers, exploitation in terms of cheap labor, physical and psychological torture, sexual assault among others. Amidst such challenges, it was noted that Karamojong women and children manoeuvre by establishing a strong spy network that identifies enemies before they strike, establish a leadership structure that provides security and care for each other, they master how to manage the heavy traffic along the streets, sit in strategic positions, use various techniques to evoke sympathy from would be givers, and leave the streets before night fall. The role of men in street begging was, as per the findings of this study; to acquire many wives and produce more children, since the women and children are the ones that go to the street; implying that the more wives and children one has, the more money they collect considering numbers as a dependent factor. Men also controlled the proceeds from the street, although this was not synonymous to all women that took part in street begging.

In chapter five, I discussed the findings of the study, using tenets of indigenous feminism and intersectionality. I analytically connected my findings with colonialism, racism, sexism and patriarchy. Looking at the findings through these lenses, it was noted that Karamojong women engaged in street begging due to various factors, some of which were far beyond their control. Marginalization of Karamoja as a region since colonial times gives ground to the marginalization of the Karamojong as a people even in present times. It was observed that discriminative colonial policies left the Karamojong people in a more marginalized position and at the expense of dominant communities that received privileges and favors from colonial governments. Insecurity existed in the region since colonial times when the region was sealed off from the rest of the country. And even though the situation has changed, it cannot be described as the most ideal.

Furthermore, the nomadic pastoralism tradition of the Karamojong tends to be the opposite of what the dominant society envisions as development, and the consequence of this has always been regarding the Karamojong as backward, and attracting stigma and stereotypes to them, an attitude that also manifested amongst the colonial masters. Being placed in such a background

position exacerbated the challenges that Karamojong women faced as they went about begging on the streets of the metropolitan city, that inhabits all sorts of people with different backgrounds. To-date, the wider public does not seem to comprehend the way of life of the Karamojong people, but rather tends to judge and compare them with the dominant communities. They are perceived as people who shunned ‘development and modernity’ and hence looked down upon by those who embraced the so-called ‘development’ that was introduced by the colonialists. Bird (2007, p. 25) while writing about the Karamojong people, shuns the above kind of attitude and argues that modernisation does not mean that traditional culture has to disappear completely.

The implication of the above attitude is that, Karamojong people have now migrated from their original areas of settlement and mingled with other people who know nothing or little about their way of life. They have thus found a difficult time integrating into a metropolitan population that tends to have abandoned many of its traditional and cultural ties long ago, and adopted new trends of life to match with other people elsewhere in the world. Within this background lays racism and sexism that give impetus to further vulnerability and marginalization of Karamojong women. They thus suffer the effects of the above, not only when begging, but even when walking through the city while running various errands. The pinch of this attitude was/is not only felt by women who beg, but also by Karamojong women that do not beg, as well as Karamojong men.

While such experiences were felt more while out there on the street, Karamojong women also faced subordination and male dominance within their own community. Though Karamoja region resisted colonial rule, colonialism later found its way there, and the colonial masters mostly engaged men in their dealings since they recruited many of them in the armed forces to facilitate a firm grip onto the area (Knighton, 2003; Mburu, 2002). Hence, patriarchy was institutionalized and male dominance gained ground even though patriarchy already existed in this community. To-date, Karamojong women still suffer male dominance to the extent of some men taking control of what the women collect from the streets. Occupancy of a lesser position in matters of decision making has not only made Karamojong women even more susceptible to the challenges they face on the streets, but also in deciding whether to engage in street begging or not. Findings of this study have shown that some of them do not freely and willingly consent to street begging, but there are traces of coercion by men; especially by women’s husbands.

This study also found out that men's ability to provide for their families seems to have reduced due to loss of herds to famine, diseases and raids. This seems to have led to an increase in the roles and responsibilities of women, because they have to devise possible coping strategies of survival for their families. Such strategies include street begging and unskilled labour in restaurants and shops around town. Findings of this study have shown that through these mechanisms, there are manifestations of not only exploitation, but also continued marginalization of Karamojong women. The wages in restaurants and shops are determined by their employers who are often unfaithful and do not fulfil their remuneration pledges.

Nevertheless, Karamojong women are not completely powerless, neither have they given up the fight for social justice. They are aware and dissatisfied by their position and are trying to seek avenues to raise their concerns and change the situation. Many are unhappy with street begging and said would opt out if some other avenues of income generation came up. Majority had dreams beyond the street and hoped to fulfil these dreams someday.

6.2 Contribution made by this study

This thesis serves as a platform where voices of Karamojong women have been aired out, experiences shared, and challenges pointed out. It highlights the unspoken mysteries that happen '*Behind the Scenes of Street Begging*', where the naked eye cannot easily see. There are many issues that remain unknown to on-lookers who only see Karamojong women walking street to street begging, but cannot imagine the unseen factors behind their being on the streets, and the untold stories of their day to day experiences. The study highlights the hassle that a Karamojong woman goes through to take care of not only herself and children, but also the extended family, yet she remains strong and hopeful for better things in the future.

Seen through bigger lenses, the study points out the challenges and dilemmas that indigenous women face in trying to cope with changing traditional livelihoods, maintaining their identity and way of life, coping with being part of the bigger urban community with which they do not share values, culture and tradition, and the changes in traditional gender roles and responsibilities.

On the other side, the study serves as a pointer to the strength and love for self-determination by indigenous women. There is a tendency to hold onto the right to be different even when odds around them dictate otherwise. They have acquired new identities to match today's social-economic status, yet they have not abandoned their traditional gender roles at the same time.

Unlike, other related studies on the topic of street begging amongst Karamojong people, my study tackled areas that other researchers do not talk of at least from the list of scholarly resources that informed this study. My study gives an insight on the role Karamojong men play in street begging and the effect of their role to the relationship between men and women. I describe how this relationship and the power relations between men and women affect both the decisions to partake in street begging, and the management/control of proceeds from the street. I tackled these issues in a gender perspective using tenets of indigenous feminism and intersectionality.

Furthermore, issues of patriarchy, racism, sexism and effects of colonialism amongst the Karamojong people are examined in relation to the involvement of Karamojong people into street begging. Other researchers do not employ similar lenses in their studies neither do they use indigenous methodologies. Scholarly resources I read showed that, the researchers mostly employed dominant scientific research methods, while my study made use of indigenous research methodologies that put the interests of the research population at the center of the study.

Meanwhile, much as the findings of this study differ in many aspects from previous research about street begging by the Karamojong people, there are some similarities. While (Arbeiter Samariter-Bund Deutschland, 2007; Gackle et al., 2007; Stites et al., 2007; Sundal, 2010), point to disarmament and related programmes as the main cause of displacement by the Karamojong, my findings indicate poverty, escape from hunger and search for income generating activities as the major factors attracting Karamojong women and children to the streets of Kampala, though disarmament was also mentioned as a cause of insecurity by my respondents.

However, the issue of self-seeking individuals who ferry Karamojong girls and children from villages to cities for selfish gains, that this study established, is not mentioned anywhere in the scholarly resources that informed this study. It is probably a new phenomenon that just started in the recent past, or perhaps other researchers did not get to hear about it during the time they carried out their studies.

6.3 Conclusion

This thesis has established that changes in the traditional livelihood of Karamojong people as nomadic pastoralists has great linkages to their taking part in street begging, yet it also has attachment to issues of marginalization and discrimination of Karamojong women by the

dominant Ugandan community. The livelihood of the Karamojong has undergone a number of changes including climatic conditions that have made nomadic pastoralism difficult, led to famine and hunger, death of herds and human beings, breakdown of families, among other things. All of the above factors coupled with various attractions in the city, have enticed Karamojong people to migrate to cities where women and children engage in street begging. But because of the background knowledge that the dominant society has about the Karamojong being nomads with a distinct life style, there is a tendency to stigmatize, stereotype and dominate them even in Kampala where they migrate to in search of alternatives to the challenged nomadic life style back home.

This study also established that Karamojong women suffer institutionalized gender biases that have stood the test of time, both within their community and outside. Chandra (2005, p. 7) while discussing challenges of indigenous women argues that; they are the most vulnerable among indigenous peoples and face double discrimination on the basis of their gender for being women and for ethnicity for being indigenous. Though there are some Karamojong women who see themselves as victims of circumstances, there are those that do not. Faced with all kinds of prejudices and discrimination within the city, Karamojong women have been able to develop strategies for survival for themselves, their children and even extended families. They have devised strategies to survive oppression, violence and marginalization without losing their cultural values and tradition, though not completely unchanged. For instance, Karamojong women still wear traditional ornaments, beads and maintain a peculiar hair style even in the city while on the streets. Bird (2007, p. 11), while writing about the ornaments of Karamojong people says that; ‘the multi-coloured waist beads that are worn by the women symbolize beauty; the more beads, the more desirable for marrying they become’.

Likewise, Chandra (2005, p. 7), describes indigenous women as; ‘custodians of tradition and culture that bear the most noticeable expressions of their peoples’ distinct culture that is passed on from generation to generation’. However, maintaining their tradition and culture attracts stigmatization and often elicits verbal and physical harassment. Chandra (2005, p. 10), argues that indigenous peoples are often stigmatized and described in derogatory terms especially women who are the most visible expressions of their cultures, with colorful costumes and attire.

My argument in this thesis is that; Karamojong women engaging in street begging have undergone a multiplicity of experiences as illustrated by the findings of this study. However, the illustration of these experiences is not to portray Karamojong women as weak, more

marginalized or more vulnerable as such; but rather, these illustrations serve to show that amidst all such challenges in the city, Karamojong women are still strong, determined and resilient people who do not easily join the band wagon of the township. They still embrace their cultural values, gender roles and responsibilities and strive against all odds to fulfil what society expects out of them. I illustrate here; that Karamojong women are resilient women who do not concede to their plight, but rather devise possible coping mechanisms in order to survive, even though the road is rough and rocky. My argument herein is that; though Karamojong women are resilient and determined, their paths are full of social injustices that cannot go unmentioned. There is thus need to address such injustices such that as an indigenous people, Karamojong women can enjoy the fruits of their labour and womanhood at large.

In regard to the above argument; both methodology and theory in this thesis prescribe an active approach in order to elevate the status and position of indigenous women both within their own society and the dominant society. This calls for researchers working with indigenous populations and/on indigenous issues to have an active take. Torjer (2016b, p. 40), while writing about advocacy in indigenous methodologies, argues that; ‘doing research on gender and indigenous issues also implies a potential or in fact inevitable advocacy’. Thus, in this thesis, I endeavor to create knowledge about Karamojong women, the social injustices within which their lives are entangled on a daily basis, but also the resilience and determination with which they handle matters. I desire that the knowledge created in this thesis becomes of purpose to actors and stakeholders working with Karamojong people of Uganda. I hence advocate for more attention towards gender related issues, sexuality and power relations between men and women in indigenous communities. Hopefully, findings of this study shall be of valuable importance towards this cause.

On issues related to indigeneity, (United Nations Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and protection of minorities & Martinez Cobo Jose R, 1987) in their categorization of indigenous peoples highlight that; they are “determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories and their ethnic identity as the basis of their continual existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system”. From the findings of this study, Karamojong people seem to be determined to preserve and transmit what they stand for to the future generations. However, they seem to be faced with some dilemmas namely;

(i) The trend of migration from their ancestral territories in northeastern Uganda to urban areas in search for greener pastures raises a challenge towards transmission of such lands to the young

generation who are born, raised in the city, have less attachment to such lands and pastoralism. This poses a threat to their continual existence as an indigenous people since it puts their grip on ancestral territories in balance.

(ii) Much as they still preserve their ethnic identity through clothing, ornaments, values and refusal to adopt what people in the city do, it is likely that they cannot remain completely unchanged. Some aspects of influence from the people around them are traceable. For example, male respondent 4, told me that the young generation of Karamojong children born in the city, do not take payment of dowry as important, yet it is an integral part of Karamojong culture. The children meet in the city and elope into marriages, a situation he says has eroded the values of marriage amongst the young people. This is a pointer that cultural patterns and strength of social institutions like marriage, among the Karamojong people living in urban areas are in dilemma.

(iii) This study has also illustrated that gender roles amongst the Karamojong men and women living in the city have undergone some changes. It should be noted that gender and gender roles are an important aspect of indigenous culture.

6.4 Way forward

A number of interventions to respond to the existence of Karamojong women and children on the streets of Uganda have been witnessed in the recent past by both state and non-state actors. Such interventions include forceful removal of Karamojong women and children from the streets and their involuntary resettlement by government, and provision of basic needs by various non-governmental organizations. However, the persistent stay of Karamojong women and children on the streets of cities is evidence that such interventions have not been as effective as anticipated by their proponents. Sundal (2010), attributes failure of such programmes to poor design and implementation strategies, failure to involve the intended beneficiaries and inadequate information flow between the implementers and the would-be beneficiaries. As such, there are still questions over the steps taken so far in responding to the situation, factors driving and sustaining Karamojong women on the streets, and the most viable options to respond to the status quo.

My thought is that resettling Karamojong women without addressing the factors that give impetus to their coming into cities and on the streets, does not solve the situation. It is rather an unsustainable measure that makes the process a repetitive cycle. There is need therefore to

address the causes rather than treating the outcomes. Solutions addressing the factors that drive them onto the streets would probably be cheaper and more viable than solutions that tackle the consequences of being on the street.

This calls for continuous research to inform both policy and interventions in responding to the situation of Karamojong peoples of Uganda. Projects involving Karamojong people should incorporate cultural modification such that their cherished traditional identity is maintained other than projects that aim to change them to be like the dominant societies. This necessitates consultations and negotiation of power between the implementers and the Karamojong people. Programmes that are culturally sensitive should be prioritized. In other words, such projects should be a result of collaborations between the Karamojong people and concerned stakeholders, other than merely imposing already made projects upon them. For example, some of the female respondents already have an idea of alternative income generating ventures they would wish to take on, in replacement of street begging. Concerned stakeholders can start with consultations of such women and prioritizing their ideas. Nadasdy (2005) in his discussion of co-management projects, argues that local people possess knowledge that governments operatives do not, and hence incorporating such knowledge in management processes and policy can possibly improve the situation. Jentoft (2003) also stresses power-sharing and partnerships as key aspects of co-management.

Much as a lot has been written about the Karamojong peoples of Uganda, many writers have taken an activist approach when it comes to issues of women, their position in decision making and social justice. In the same vein, the theories of Indigenous Feminism and Intersectionality; and the methodology used in this study all share an active approach towards finding solutions to subordination and marginalization of indigenous women. Ugandan based scholars like Miria Matembe and Sylvia Tamale have projected themselves as gender activists in their writings about gender related issues in Uganda. However, their work is not specific on issues of women in marginalized communities, but rather women inequalities in Uganda as a whole. Matembe and Dorsey (2002) say that women are defined in terms of bride price and production of children and are undervalued as opposed to men, because society assigns them domestic roles not allowing them to participate in decision making in matters at home and even beyond.

Tamale (1999), supports affirmative action policy¹⁴ as a way to counter the domination and supremacy of men in decision making processes. However, marginalized women like the Karamojong may not directly benefit from affirmative action per say. This is because the sort of domination they experience starts right from the household in the relationship between the women and their male counterparts, and the resources at hand. Yet affirmative action looks at the solution at a bigger political level of legislature. Secondly, affirmative action does not tackle changes in the existing power structures that have been built over time right from the household level, yet such structures still hold women captive. The unfortunate bit is that such structures are still cherished and upheld especially in societies that still hold tradition and culture highly, such as the Karamojong community. Mere inclusion of women in the legislature, does not necessarily imply improvement in power structures at the grassroot level. Even then, granting affirmative action to women as a whole, does not mean elevation of indigenous Karamojong women who earn a living out of street begging. Their challenges are quite different from other Ugandan women though there are similarities here and there. Tamale (1999), herself acknowledges that even reknown women politicians who have managed to get up to parliament are still challenged by male chauvinism, and they only negotiate their identities in a society that is male dominated in order to navigate through the political waves.

If it is so with women from the dominant society, it could probably be much harder for an indigenous woman who has been nurtured to occupy a lesser position in society and in matters of decision making as compared to the men. Karamojong society traditionally trains women to be in charge of the household, respond to what men say, produce and rear children (Huisman, 2001; Ssenkaaba, 2015). So, this background alone, places them at a disadvantage. They are not nurtured to take part in decision making arenas, while the men are nurtured and given the training. This may be one reason why some men coerce Karamojong women and young girls into street begging against their free will and consent. It may also be a reason why some Karamojong men take by force what women collect from the streets, taking it for granted that its by default for men to control women and the fruits of their labour.

A commendable work in the field of research and advocacy on the general issues of Karamojong people has been widely undertaken at least from the list of resources that informed this study. Agencies working with Karamojong people have expressed commitment to research

¹⁴ Policy by government of Uganda that advocates for the inclusion of women in decision making process by pioneering the election of minimum 39 women representatives to Parliament and awarding girl children with elevated status in order to compete favorably with boys especially in education related issues.

with major research projects so far undertaken including situational analysis, needs assessment, impact of environmental changes, social-economic changes, disarmament processes and their effects, land and territorial rights among others. This clearly portrays greater realization of the importance of advocacy, human rights protection and livelihood sustainability for indigenous people. Evidence on the efficacy of research and policy advocacy engaged in by various agencies previously, though still scanty, shows that there is a glimmer of hope that the results from studies like this one, will yield optimum results in the future.

However, my wish is to have a Karamojong researcher write about social, political and economic issues amongst the Karamojong people. My wish is inspired by the scholarly works of Nandasena Ratnapala a Professor at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology in University of Sri Jayawardenepura, Sri Lanka. Ratnapala (1999), carried out an ethnographic research; *The Beggar in Sri Lanka*, where he took the position of a participant observer in street begging amongst his own community and people of his religion. What is interesting about professor Ratnapala is that, he starts off his work by demystifying what he refers to as ‘falsehoods’ of what outsider researchers had written about his own community. Then later, he unveils his findings from a study that he carried out. Likewise, I look forward to having a Karamojong scholar write about street begging amongst the Karamojong. This is not to insinuate in anyway that non-Karamojong scholars have documented falsehoods about the Karamojong people, neither is it to water down the efforts made in their research projects (my own work inclusive). But rather, I desire to hear about these issues from the perspective of a Karamojong researcher. Am hopeful that my wish will come to pass sooner or later.

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