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Experiences of Acholi Women in Northern Uganda**

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List of Acronyms

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
ISS	Institute of Social Studies
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics

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Abstract

Land is very vital in enhancing women's livelihood and food security, thus the need for the protection of women's land rights. However, women often experience discrimination in relation to land access, ownership, use, and control despite efforts to protect their land rights. This has led to gender inequality in the ownership and access of land in the Acholi community. This study examines the experiences of discrimination faced by women in accessing their land rights under the customary tenure system in the Acholi community in Northern Uganda. The study is an analysis of secondary data using the concept of intersectionality and gender.

The findings indicate that the intersection of gender and other axis of marginalisation such as marital status and socio-economic situations of Acholi women play a great role in determining women's access, ownership, use, and control of customary land. In addition to that, the study also shows that gendered practices of institutions such as the state, family and customary institutions reinforce the discrimination face by women in the access and ownership of customary land. The study argues that women's discrimination and gender inequality not only exist in the access and ownership of land but also in land management. Women are deprived of their rights to poses land through gendered practices of inheritance and the misuse and misinterpretation of customary laws and traditions in a way that favours their male counterparts. Besides women also face challenges of discrimination due to their high illiteracy level, lack of knowledge about existing legislation, and their property right, socio-economic situations, polygamy, power relations in households, limited presentation and participation in land tribunals, conflict resolution and decision making and the existence of legal pluralism where customary laws operate alongside statutory laws. Furthermore, inadequate knowledge about women's property rights by men, negative perceptions and stereotypes towards women's, outdated customs, and conflicting interests have also been seen to disadvantage women and create the gender gap in access and ownership of customary land in the Acholi community.

Keywords

Women, land rights, customary tenure, discrimination, gender, intersectionality, ownership access, control, Acholi, northern Uganda.

Relevance to Development Studies

The right to access and ownership of land is crucial for improving women's livelihood, socio-economic status, and combating discrimination. Women who are denied such privileges are often disadvantaged and experience economic powerlessness. This research employs the concept of gender and intersectionality in examining the experiences of discrimination that women in the Acholi Community encounter in relation to access and ownership of customary land and how gendered activities of institutions and intersection of gender, marital status, and socio-economic situation shape their experiences. This will add to existing body of knowledge on areas of gendered land rights and intersectionality and provide information for the awareness of women's challenges in claiming their land rights that could act as a basis for further research and solving women's problems.

Chapter 1 : An Overview of the Research

1.1. Introduction

This study focuses on the experiences of discrimination faced by women regarding their rights to access and ownership of customary land under the customary tenure system in the Acholi community in northern Uganda. The study further examines how gender stereotypes, institutional gendered practices and laws, and the intersection of gender with marital status and socio-economic situations influence women's experiences of discrimination.

Land is not only a basis of food production, income, or employment but also a source of social prestige, power, and a way of improving the well-being and socio-economic situations of women and their positions in their societies. However, according to Heinrich (2013), the access and ownership of land still predominantly remains a male privilege and for most women in Africa, their land rights are still attached to their relationship with male relatives or family members and is often lost in case the relationship ends. United Nation Women (2013), argues that, although accessing, controlling land and the use of other productive resources are very crucial in safeguarding the rights of women to equality and acceptable living standards, inequality in gender concerning productive resources and land is still a big challenge in many countries of the world leading to women's poverty and exclusion.

Through a comprehensive review of available secondary data, this study thus applied the concept of gender and intersectionality in analysing and examining the experiences of discrimination faced by women in the Acholi community in northern Uganda in relation to their rights to access and ownership of customary land.

The study is made up of five chapters and this chapter comprises of the Research problem statement, justification and relevance of the study, contextual background, research objectives, research questions, secondary sources of information, research method and analysis, limitation of the study and research ethics , positionality and lastly the chapter outline.

1.2. Research Problem statement

Land rights in the Acholi community are very central to women's livelihoods. However, despite the importance of land and the vital role played by women in agriculture and food production, they still have less secure rights over land and own less land than men (Veit, 2011). Report from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2012), shows that, the Uganda agricultural sector employs 69% of the population and women make up over 50% of this number, yet a gender gap still prevails in land access, use, ownership, and control.

Tamer (2012) argues, in the Acholi community, women's customary land rights claims are made difficult by the systematic complexities of customary land tenure which operates mostly in a way that favours men. Gender, marital status, socio-economic situations and the different intersecting power relations in these women's lives coupled with institutional gendered practices and gender stereotypes have often shaped the experiences of these women in relation to their customary land rights claims thus creating gender inequality in the access, use, ownership, control, and inheritance of land.

The Uganda government has put in place legal frameworks for the protection of women's land rights and the promotion of gender equality such as the National Land Policy, the 1998 Land act, and the 1995 Uganda Constitution, which recognize land ownership, and equal rights to property for all citizens. Besides Uganda, is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979, which

advocates for the acknowledgment of women's rights and the abolition of discrimination faced by women. However, these laws often diminish in implementation since they are not harmonized and mediated in the process of implementation. Philippa (2012) argues, women are largely constrained in their ownership of land, and access due to misuse and misinterpretation of customary and inheritance laws.

The consequences of gender inequality in land access and ownership have thus left mostly women deprived of economic empowerment, wealth, social status, making them more dependant, marginalized, and vulnerable in the society. It is thus against these issues that this study was conducted to examine the experiences of discrimination women in the Acholi community face in the access and ownership of customary land.

1.3. Justification and relevance of the study

The deprivation of women the rights to own and access land affects their livelihoods, worsens their socio-economic situations, and exposes them to other forms of discrimination, abuses, and violence. Thus, understanding the different forms of discrimination that women experience regarding their land rights is crucial in identifying gaps in the protection of women's land rights and providing an insight on how to deal with issues of women's land rights challenges.

This study will thus help to uncover the different forms of discrimination faced by women in the access and ownership of land based on gender and the intersection of different axes of marginalisation such as marital status and socioeconomic situation. The study will also serve as future reference for researchers on the topic of women's land rights and build on the existing body of knowledge in development studies with regards to discrimination faced by women based on gender and intersectionality in relation to their rights to access and ownership of customary land.

1.4. Contextual background

Uganda is made up of four regions, eastern, western, northern, and central regions. It has about 134 districts, four ethnic groups, and 56 different tribes. According to the World Population Review (2020), about 85% of Uganda's total population of 45,553,567 people, dwell in rural areas while others reside in the urban areas. Females constitute about 21.69 million of the total population while 21.03 million are males (Plecher, 2020). Uganda's population largely depend on agriculture which makes land a very vital asset in the lives of people. Women make up 70-80% of the agricultural sector (Philippa, 2012), therefore, land access, ownership, and use are very vital for their economic livelihood and for their families'.

1.4.1. Uganda customary land tenure system

According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2019), Uganda's total land area stands at 241,555 square kilometres (km²) of which water and swamps occupy 44, 650.6 square kilometres, and about 196,904.3 square kilometres is land. The Constitution of Uganda (1995) and the Land Act (1998) identify four kinds of land holdings system in the country. The customary land in which land rights are regulated in accordance to customs regulations or laws, the freehold, where one is a registered owner and has full rights to the land, the mailo land tenure, mostly land held under political authorities like traditional leaders and the lease land where one leases out land under certain terms and conditions and for a certain period. It's on these four bases of the land tenure system that land ownership, acquisition, utilization, and disposal rest.

Hannay (2014) states that customary land constitutes the most dominant system of land holdings in Uganda covering about 80% of the country's total land and mostly found in the northern region. Customary land tenure in Uganda according to Land Act (1998) is managed by customary regulations and rules which operate in a society in which one belongs. Viet (2011) states that more than 80% of Uganda's customary land systems are undocumented and arrangements on land access use and transfer differ across different ethnic groups and clans belonging to one ethnic group and they change in case of new opportunities or challenges.

Mugabo (2016) mentions that, land is a vital resource and a source of sustainability, income, and individual identity for most people in Uganda, however women, as compared to men, do not have equal access to and ownership of land. In most cases, men dominate the control, use, access, and ownership of land which affects women's livelihood and worsen their socio-economic situations making them vulnerable. Veit (2011), mentions that customary land tenure is biased against women in Uganda, but in some regions of the country especially Acholi, Iteso, and Langi regions women have significant rights, however very few of them fully benefit from it, in most cases gender inequality prevails on land matters which put women in a disadvantaged position as compared to men. This statement however shows a larger trend of women's land rights but the research findings as in chapters 3 and 4 of this study reveals that land issues are complex and processual.

1.4.2. Uganda's Legal Framework on land and women's rights.

Land administration and legislation in Uganda is made up of both statutory laws and customary laws. The Constitution of Uganda (1995) protects women's land rights under Article 237 and recognizes all citizens of Uganda as potential owners of the land. In Article 26 the Constitution allows for everyone equal rights to property ownership either alone or collectively, the law also forbids gender discrimination associated to land issues. In addition to that, Article 31 section 1, gives women inheritance rights upon marriage, in or after marriage besides it protects the right of widowed women to inherit possessions of their dead spouses, while it also recognizes equality in the treatment of men and women and prohibits custom, law, tradition, cultures that are against women's interest, dignity, welfare, and status.

Furthermore, according to Hannay (2014), the Land Act (1998) which is the principal land law of Uganda, grants holders of customary land a formal certificate of ownership. The land Act (1998) Section 22, recognizes the head of a family as the legal personal representative and holder of the customary land certificate which in Uganda society the head of families are mostly men. The act also stipulates that decisions on customary land held alone or collectively under will be according to the concerned community's customs, their traditions, and their practices (customary law) and considers invalid any decision undertaken under the customary system that prevents females from using, accessing and owning land and violates constitutional principles.

According to Hannay (2014), The succession Act 1906 guides inheritance decision in Uganda and it recognizes women have rights to inherit from partners and applies strictly the customary law in cases of inheritance The act defines "legal heir" to immovable property which includes land as the closest male living relative in the patrilineal lineage to the deceased under customary practices, it also defines customary heir of an individual as one that's recognized by a tribe or community customs or rites.

Although these laws are in existence to protect women's land rights in Uganda, they have setbacks in their functioning which pose insecurity to women's land rights as explained in chapter 4 of the study.

1.4.3. Acholi customary land tenure system and women's rights.

The Acholi community consists of Luo speaking people found in northern Uganda. They occupy eight districts located in northern Uganda which include Gulu, Agago, Amuru, Nwoya, Pader, Lamwo, Kitgum and Omoro. Shelly (2017) states that over 90% of the customary land management in the Acholi sub-region in northern Uganda is under mostly undocumented customary tenure and communal ownership. Traditionally customary land in Acholi is divided into homesteads which include the family compound and a small plot for cultivation, agricultural lands, hunting and grazing grounds, and forested areas used as sources of firewood, medicinal herbs, honey, and other necessities as mentioned by Ochan(2017).

According to the practices and principals of customary tenure system in Acholi as endorsed by the widely recognised traditional cultural institution in Acholi land, Ker Kwaro (2016), customary land is vested in and owned by the clan and members of the clan are not allowed to dispose land without the consent of other clan members. Land is acquired by being born or married into a clan and land allocated to a family or an individual belongs to them if the family or individual do not relocate to another place with no intention of coming back. In addition to that family land is managed by the family head and all members of the clan have rights to access or use communally owned land subject to the practices and customs governing their access and use.

Tamar (2012), however argues that in general practice, under the Acholi customary land tenure system, women depend on men to own or inherit land, property, or housing. Land distribution has often been done based on gender with men holding the biggest share of ownership and other rights such as inheritance and trade. The state and traditional institutions have regulated these rights over time and in rural areas, traditional institutions continue to be the primary means of determining access and ownership of land even with the existence of statutory laws to ensure equality between men and women. Several external and internal forces such as marriage, socio-economic situations of women, institutional gendered practices, laws and policies, gender stereotypes are introducing changes regarding customary land tenure system and gender dimensions of land issues in the area which have eroded women's already precarious land rights.

Kindi (2010) states that women's challenges with regards to customary land rights have increasingly become more common in the Acholi community in northern Uganda due to the impact of the two decades of armed conflicts from the year 1980s, to the year 2006, between the Lord Resistant and the government of Uganda. In addition to the above, According to Owor and Dieterle (2020), the large scale investments in the northern part of Uganda coupled with the economic growth, development, and commercial agriculture, infrastructure projects have also sparked competition and wrangles over land which has become a major concern in the Acholi community and a source of conflict with women's customary land rights being put in a risky position as discussed in chapter 4 of this study.

1.4.4. Control, access, rights, and ownership of Customary Land

The issues of land control, access, rights and ownership are very crucial for the understanding of women's land rights and have been defined below as used in the context of Acholi community in this study.

Land rights means one's ability to own, access, use, control, inherit, and derive economic benefits from land.

According to Shelly (2017), ownership of land is an act, right, or state of possession of the land. In Uganda and specifically the Acholi community, women are often deprived of land ownership and their ownership is subordinated to their male counterparts.

Burke and Kobusingye (2014) define “access” as having the right to use land for dwelling, farming, keeping of animals and for collecting forest products with consent. Women’s access to customary land within the Acholi community is recognized, however limited to use of land with very little or no decision on the land and women’s access rights are generally conditioned by social relationships.

Control over land as defined by Shelly (2017), is the right to decision-making on land use and financial benefits derived from selling resources like agricultural produce obtained from the land. Among the Acholi, men mostly have control and although decisions on land management are collectively made, it is mostly dominated by men.

This study, therefore, uses the concept of gender and intersectionality to analyse secondary data on the legal, socio-economic and operant perceptible factors which hinder more equal rights to access, ownership and control of land in a patriarchal Acholi community in Northern Uganda.

1.5. Research Objective

This research seeks to contribute to academic knowledge production on the experiences of discrimination faced by women regarding their rights to access and ownership of customary land under the customary tenure system in the Acholi community, Northern Uganda. It examines how gender stereotypes, institutional gendered practices and laws and the intersection of gender with marital status and socio-economic situations reinforce women’s experiences of discrimination.

1.6. Research Question

How do intersectional and gendered power relations bring about the discrimination faced by women regarding access and ownership of customary land in the Acholi community of Northern Uganda?

1.6.1. Research Sub-questions

1. How does the intersection of gender with marital status and socio-economic situations lead to different experiences of discrimination faced by women in the access and ownership of customary land in the Acholi community?
2. How do gender stereotypes lead to discrimination against women in the Acholi community in the access and ownership of customary land?
3. In what ways do the family, customary, and state gendered practices and laws lead to the discrimination against women in the Acholi community in access and ownership of customary land?

1.7. Research Method and Data analysis

This study employed the use of secondary data to come up with the research findings and analysis. Data and information were generated from organization reports on women's land rights, manuals, journals, books, articles, newsletters, research reports, newspapers, blogs and publications on land and women's rights. The information generated and used from the secondary data sources included only those published between the year 2000 and 2020.

The research questions acted as a guide in generating the secondary data. In addition to that the guiding questions found in the annex section of this study were set under each of the three research questions which were applied in interrogating the secondary data and coming up with the research findings in relation to the study objective and topic.

Under data analysis, the generated data from the secondary sources was then filtered and only information that were relevant to the research study kept. The core objective of this study was considered in the data analysis and research questions and sub questions were used to guide the answers and analysis of the findings. Information was then organised and categorized under each research question. The concepts of gender and intersectionality were applied in analysing the raw information from the different secondary data sources generated on the discrimination of women in accessing and owning customary land. A narrative form of reporting was done using Microsoft word document.

1.8. Secondary sources of information relating to research sub-questions

The following secondary sources of literature and information were identified and used in generating data for analysis under each research sub-question.

- (i) For research sub-question one that concerns how gender intersects with Marital status and socio-economic situation to influence the different experiences of women. The literature from Adoko Judy et al (2011), "Understanding and Strengthening Land Rights under Customary tenure in Uganda", Doss Cheryl et al (2012), "Women, Marriage and Asset Inheritance", Bikaako Winnie and Ssenkumba John "Gender Land and Rights: Contemporary Contestation in Laws, Policies, and Practices in Uganda", were used in answering this question.
- (ii) Research sub-question two investigates how gender stereotypes act as barriers to women's access and ownership of land and the sources of information used include; Jackline Kabahinda (2017). Aili Mari Tripp (2001), article on "Women's movements, Customary laws, and Land rights in Africa: The case of Uganda",
- (iii) Research sub-question three examines how institutional gendered practices and laws influence discrimination faced by women in land access and ownership. Literature from Viet (2011) on "women and customary land rights in Uganda", Hannay, (2014) "women's Land Rights in Uganda", "Gender difference in Asset rights in Central Uganda" by Aslihan Kees et al, "Gender and Land Rights" data, from Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations(FAO-UN), Ronald R, Ochan (2012) "Analysis of land tenure system and land disputes in Acholi land", were the main sources used.

The sources of information above under the three sections of research questions were not however the only literature that existed regarding the study. These mentioned literature and other various secondary data sources captured in the reference section of this research paper have all been used in coming up with the research findings. The literature sources also have

cross-cutting issues in each of the articles, written. all issues of the three research questions exist in each of the above one in them too.

1.9. Limitation of the study, research ethics

The Corona virus (COVID-19) global Pandemic, affected my ability to conduct field research as I was not able to collect primary data due to the lockdown and restrictions put in place. Secondly, the use of secondary data was challenging as it did not cover into details the different aspects of the study. Some of the secondary data was not current enough to depict the present situation of women in the study area and in addition to that secondary data also included a lot of biases from different scholars. Therefore, to come up with the findings I worked with available recent secondary data in relation to my research while keeping neutrality in my analysis to avoid biases from secondary data.

Under ethical consideration, I considered the ethics that pertain to the usage of secondary data like, acknowledgment of ownership of the source of information through citations, referencing, and paraphrasing. Careful screening for credibility and avoidance of biases was also done.

1.10. Positionality as a researcher.

Having lived among the Acholi community, I may have some knowledge of the discrimination of women in this community when regarding their rights to access and ownership of customary land and may have some biased looking at them as oppressed individuals. However, for this study I took a feminist positioning that aims at, bringing about social changes, overcoming research biases, considering diversity in humanity, and recognising the position of the actors and researcher. In doing this, the research considered the generation of knowledge that can be beneficial for these women in bringing social change by bringing out the realities of life that these women experience.

The study has not presented these women as only victims of oppression, since they do not experience discrimination just because of being women, and subordinated by men such as their brothers, husbands and elder relatives. Many other structural factors reinforce the discrimination these women face, including local institutions, customary practices, and government policies, as well as international influences. These too are important to show how different positions of actors reinforce discrimination for these women. In addition to that how people speak or perceive these women also causes experiences of discrimination for these women, thus the use of gender in this aspect is important, and since gender does not operate in a vacuum, feminist also stressed the intersection of gender and other power relations and structural features of the society to bring about layers of discrimination which has also been taken into great consideration.

1.11. Chapter outline

Chapter one of this study includes the introduction to the research, a contextual background which comprises of the nature of customary land arrangements in Uganda and the Acholi sub-region, the prevailing national and local laws in connection to land, and women's rights, access, ownership and control of customary land matters. In addition to that, the chapter also includes the nature of the research problem which explains the problems that probed research into this area and the different challenges women face in realizing their rights to ownership and access to customary land. Furthermore, the chapter includes the research

objective, which is the purpose of the research, research questions and sub-questions that guided the results of the research, the Justification of this study which states the relevance of doing this research and the chapter outline. Lastly, the research method on how the research was done, sources of information, data analysis, research ethical considerations, and positionality are also included in this chapter.

Chapter two includes the discussions of the concepts of gender and intersectionality according to different scholars. The chapter also includes the analytical framework of the two concepts showing how they were applied in the analysis of the findings that is to say how intersectionality helped in showing different experiences of discrimination by different categories of women and how gender through ideologies and institutions reinforce discriminations of these women.

Chapter three includes the key findings and the analysis of data on issues of intersectionality and ideologies. It demonstrates how gender intersects with marital status and socio-economic situation of women to bring about different experiences of discrimination in the access and ownership of land. The chapter also discusses how gender stereotypes and perceptions constructed around woman such as beliefs, norms, words, assumptions, put women in a disadvantaged position and affect their customary land rights.

Chapter four covers discussions and analyses on how institutional gendered laws, and practices lead to the discrimination faced by women in the Acholi community in realizing their rights to ownership and access to customary land. The discussions focus on the family, the state, and the customary institutions. The family institution involves discussions of power relations. The customary institution involves examining customary laws and tenure arrangements, women's participation in management and conflict resolution. Lastly, the state institution involves examining state laws governing land rights, state bodies, land administration, management and dispute resolution. Chapters 3 and 4 however were analysed depending on the availability of information on the different aspects mentioned above

Chapter five covers the summary and conclusion and finally the annex includes a list of questions directed to the secondary data concerning each research question that helped in the generation of the research findings.

Chapter 2 : Theoretical Framework

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the theoretical approaches of gender and intersectionality shall be discussed. In addition to that, the analytical framework which shows how these two concepts will be applied in the analysis of my findings shall also be presented.

2.2 Theoretical framework

For this study, Gender and intersectionality are the theoretical approaches used in the analysis of the findings on the discrimination faced by women in Acholi community regarding their customary land rights. It is therefore important to understand how these two theoretical approaches operate and how they are conceptualized according to different scholars for the clear understanding of their applicability in the analysis.

2.2.1 Gender

Gender unlike sex is not biological but a social construct. According to West and Zimmerman (1987) “gender is the activity of Management of positioned behaviours in light of a normative conception of attitudes and activities proper for one’s sex category” they noted that gender is created through psychological means, cultural means, and social means.

Lorber, J. (1994) defines gender as constantly created and recreated out of human activities he also added that gender is one of the ways of choosing individuals for the diverse tasks of society and a procedure of creating different social positions for the allocation of rights and also responsibilities. It is forming social distinctions that define "woman" and "man."

Scott (1986) in her analysis of gender emphasizes that in finding out why things happen the way they do, there is a need to understand how they happen. The understanding of gender and how it works involves focusing on processes that are interlocked and not just a single origin. Scott (1986) emphasizes that dealing with individual subject together with social organization and their interrelations helps in understanding how gender occurs and works she defines gender: -

Scott (1986) argues that gender encompasses elements of social relations built on perceived differences in sexes”, and secondly gender is primarily a way of signifying power relation. Her first definition of gender involves four interrelated elements.

First is the Cultural symbol which brings about the various and contradictory portrayal of gender and hierarchies, secondly, the normative perception or ideology, which helps in the interpretation of symbols, mostly expressed in religious, political educational, scientific legal doctrines and represent a certain understanding of male and female, masculine or feminine basing on certain practices, thirdly is the level of subject identity Which deals with the origin of identity and how it is contested. Identities are considered gendered, constructed, and related to many activities, social organizations, and specific historical-cultural representations and practices, and lastly are the institutional and organization in which gender is constructed such as society and economy.

In her second definition, gender is used to enforce and create power relations. but she also emphasized that power is not only about gender, Gender is only one way of power manifestation other ways also exist such as race, class, ethnicity sexuality, religion among others, and emphasized the importance of the intersection of gender with other power

relations in understanding how gender works and how things happen the way they do (Scott 1986)

Scott stated that gender is a means of decoding of meaning and understanding the multifaceted connections among several kinds of human interaction. (Scott 1986). This study will apply Scott's approach to gender. Experiences of women shall be looked at under two aspects of ideology and institutions to understand the situation of these women.

2.2.2 Intersectionality

Intersectionality as a concept was introduced in the late 1980s and early 1990s with emphasis on studying race-gender relations. The concept was originally coined by Kimberley Crenshaw (1989) to explain the oppression faced by black women and to bring out how the intersection of gender with race and other systems of social relations of identity function in the experiences of these women.

Davis (2008) defines intersectionality as interactions of gender with race and different aspects of human lives, institutions, social practices, cultural beliefs, and the consequences of these relations in power terms. Bilge (2010) however states that intersectionality reflects the transdisciplinary theory that applies an integrated approach intended to explain the complex nature of social identities and inequalities. It applies categories of gender, ethnicity, sex, race, class, sexual orientation, and disability to contest the hierarchization and compartmentalization of different angles of social distinctions. The concept of intersectionality thus recognizes that gender does not operate in a vacuum and emphasizes the importance of considering different axes of oppression and the interconnection of different social categories regarding individual lives and production of social relations. In this study, intersectionality is used to examine how gender and other social categories such as marital status and socio-economic situation interact to shape women's experiences of discrimination regarding customary land rights.

2.3. Analytical frameworks

Intersectionality is an important theoretical framework for understanding how multiple identities intersect in an individual's life to bring about experiences of interlocking systems of oppression and privileges. For this study, the concept of intersectionality is used to show the different experiences of discrimination that exist among different categories of women in the Acholi community regarding their rights to use, access, own and control customary land.

The concept is used to show how the intersection of gender, marital status, and socio-economic situation often result in different experiences faced by different women. It is used to show how for example married women's experiences differ from single women's experiences and how urban widows face experiences of discrimination differently from rural widows. This study however focuses on those categories with available information.

Gender as to Joan Scott is an analytical category and can best be understood through four interrelated elements of ideologies, symbols, institutions, and identity. In this study, the elements of ideology and institutions are examined and used in explaining how gender reinforces the discrimination women in the Acholi community undergo as pertains to their customary land rights.

The element of ideology is important in this research for the understanding of how perceptions and gender stereotypes constructed around Acholi women and men limit women from enjoying their access and ownership rights of customary land. Gender stereotypes in form of words, sayings, assumptions, and perceptions coupled with the different norms and

beliefs that perceive women differently from men have has been discussed in Chapter 3 of this paper.

Secondly, examining the elements of the institution is also vital for the understanding of how gender operates. The family institution, customary institution, and the state institution are examined in this study and how their gendered laws and practices in relation to customary land affect women's rights to land.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter introduced and discussed the two concepts of intersectionality and gender as used in the analysis of the research findings. The analytical framework on how these two concepts were applied in the analysis were also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 3 : Women’s customary land ‘rights’

3.1 Introduction: a gender and intersectional analysis

This chapter involves two sections. In section 3.2 and 3.3 I used the concept of gender and intersectionality to examine and discuss findings from available secondary data sources. The section shows how gender intersects with marital status and the socio-economic situation of women to shape different experiences of discrimination regarding their customary land rights in the Acholi community. In the same section, issues of access, use, ownership, and control based on gender and marital status are discussed and how rural, urban, educated and non-educated women experience discrimination differently. The second section 3.4 involves an analysis of how gender stereotypes and ideologies formed around women and men reinforce discrimination faced by women in attaining their rights to customary land.

3.2 The intersection of gender and marital status

Legal and social norms about women’s land rights often, directly and indirectly, relate to their marital status. Marital status is a flexible social category that structures social and gender relations, duties and rights mostly for women. Marital status in the Acholi community plays a crucial role in determining women’s customary land rights. The Acholi people largely practice customary marriage which is guided by the traditional norms and practices with very few people engaging in statutory or church marriages. Because women are not a homogenous group, their land rights are thus affected differently. Each group of women encounters different barriers to their ability to inherit, own, access, and use land. Below is an analysis of women’s different experiences of discrimination brought about by the intersection of their gender and marital status.

3.2.1 Land Accessibility and utilization rights

Accessibility and utilization of land in the context of the Acholi community involves one’s ability or rights to use customary land for dwelling, farming, keeping of animals, and for collecting forest products with consent. The findings of this study show the access and use of customary land for women in the Acholi community is often determined by their relationship to men and in most cases subordinated to men as stated by Shelly (2017). Hannay (2014) argues that, in comparison to their male counterparts, women normally have limited rights to customary land, have access to less land and have less secured land rights. This can be attributed to the fact that men assume the position of household heads, responsible for the control, allocation and distribution of resources while women are positioned as secondary actors in land related issues with lesser rights. However, although women’s access and use of land depends on their relationship with their male counterparts, their experiences of discrimination differ based on their marital status as discussed below.

Compared to single, divorced, and widowed Acholi women, married Acholi women have more secured rights to the access and the use of customary land. This according to Shelly (2017) is attributed to the fact that, by marriage, Acholi women automatically access customary land rights from their husbands as they are expected to use the land for the cultivation of crops to feed their families and especially their children. In addition to that, they can decide on how they wish to use the land. However, Scalise (2012) makes it clear that women who live in consensual union with men without formalizing their marriages through bride prices are considered not married and these categories of women often face high

insecurity when it comes to land access and use, besides married women who fail to bear children also have insecure land rights.

On the other hand, Single/unmarried women mostly receive smaller portions of land for use through their fathers who in most cases are the household heads, brothers, or other male relatives. This is because of the assumption that they will get married in the future and leave their birth homes as argued by Hannay (2014). Whereas male family members are given land upon marriage, females lose their right to land from her birth family when she marries. This reasoning and practice have been supported by scholars like Ochan (2017) calling it genuine and states that men are more entitled to land since they will marry women and bring them to their birth homes. However, according to Anying (2012), this kind of rational poses vulnerability to single/unmarried women's land rights claims and has often resulted in landlessness among women who don't desire to marry. More so compared to married women who have a choice on how to use land allocated to them, Hannay (2014) states that single women are allowed to only use land for growing subsistence food crops, and their rights to use of land remain only if they are still unmarried. In most cases in the absence of their brothers or fathers, the land is taken away by uncles which leave them deprived of their sources of livelihood.

Divorced women and widows in the Acholi community however face more discrimination than single and married women in claiming their rights to access and use of customary land. This can be attributed to their loss of ties with male figures who use to secure their claims to land. Apecu (2018) states that widows are mainly vulnerable because land is normally registered in their husbands' names and upon death of their husbands, they are not considered heirs. Divorced women however experienced the worst form of discrimination. Anying (2012) urges that divorced women often lose their rights to access and use of husbands' land upon separation and are expected to return to their parents' homes. Hopwood (2015) mentions that while it is a general practice within the Acholi community to welcome women who are divorced back at their birth homes, their access to land is often challenged. Their brothers and male relatives often contest their land claims due to the scarcity of land and the fear that their children from other men who are not clan members might start to claim their family land.

However, I agree with Joireman (2018) argument that not all divorced women are excluded from claiming their family land. Some families accommodate these women as done in the past when land was not scarce, however this is becoming less likely to happen due to the rising value of land, which has made clan elders to become more reluctant to offer land to someone who lacks a strong claim.

Widows although have more secured access and use rights than divorced women, they are still highly disadvantaged compared to married and single women. A widow mainly accesses land through her sons and male in-laws if she does not re-marry. This is because the Acholi tradition protects the widow's land rights through widow inheritance where an uncle or brother of the deceased inherits the widow as noted by Hannay (2014). However, in cases where a widow's husband dies of HIV/AIDS, or the person to inherit her has HIV, the widow may not be inherited which then makes her vulnerable to being pushed off her husband's land (Hannay 2014). According to Shelly (2017), widows whose bride prices and marital rights have not been completed are especially more vulnerable to the loss of access and use rights to customary land. They will in most cases be forced back to their natal homes with their children. In addition to that widows' rights are also always challenged by the deceased relatives who in most cases grab their land and chase them away from the land due to scarcity and greed for the deceased property. Men's rights to access and use of customary land are often not affected by divorce or death of wives and few men report their marital status as divorced or widowed because most of them re-marry in such circumstances.

3.2.2 Ownership and control

Ownership and control as defined by Shelly (2017), mean the state of possession of customary land, rights to decision making, and the ability to derive benefits from the land. Shelly (2017) states that due to the patrilineal nature of inheritance in the Acholi community, women whether married, single, divorced, and widowed are prohibited from inheriting customary land. Men, however, can inherit and have full ownership and control over land and are considered primary owners of customary land. Their ownership, and control rights are in most cases not conditioned by marital status because they get rights by birth and the virtue of being male with productive gender roles.

Despite that, my study findings show that in some cases, widows and married women, are more likely to have control or inherit customary land in some clans than single and divorced women. Married Acholi women often have co-ownership and control of land with their husbands. However, their actions are treated as secondary priorities or unimportant and their rights still depend on their relationship with their husbands which puts them in a precarious situation as stated by Apecu (2018).

On the other hand, Amone (2014) states that a widow in some instances assume the position of the household head when her husband dies. She controls, manages, and allocates her husband's customary land to her children when they grow up. Hannay (2014), however adds that widows do not always inherit their deceased husbands' land and those who inherit land are expected to remain unmarried in her deceased husband's clan or community. However, not all widows enjoy these rights, sometimes widows face eviction from their husbands' land even when they have ownership and control rights. Ochan (2017) urges that the eviction and denial of widows the rights to control and ownership of customary land in the Acholi community are done for several reasons which among others include, opportunistic greed due to the commodification of land and the genuine threat of land scarcity. In addition to that, widows who produce only female children in most cases lose their rights to control and ownership of customary land as mentioned by shelly (2017).

A divorced woman's rights to ownership and control of customary land are most insecure compared to widows, married women, and single women as she is not allowed ownership of land and no control over customary since divorce is considered a bad act and divorced women as non-clan members. Emorut (2011) on a publication in New vision Uganda newspaper, quoted Florence Akulu to have said that Acholi women are prohibited from land ownership after a divorce because of fear by men that they may remarry other men while residing on their land and transfer their family asset which is customary land to another clan. A single Acholi woman without children often has no control or ownership rights over land as she is considered as non-permanent in her father's home and having no responsibilities regarding caring for children. In exceptional cases where there is no right male inheritor or her father's dies suddenly without a will, they can inherit land as mentioned by Asimwe (2001)

3.3 Gender, marital status and socio-economic situation

Socio-economic situations such as demography, economic status of women, level of education have always been known to overlap with marital status and gender to disadvantage women's land rights claims in the Acholi community. This is further explained below.

From my study of secondary data, I discovered that compared to rural women, urban women; whether widowed, divorced, single, or married have stronger land claims as a result of them having more powers in the household attained from the better level of education, exposure, and proximity to legislations available, better awareness of their rights, and

financial ability. Aciro (2016) in her study found out that rural women especially widows as compared to urban women living in remote villages are more vulnerable to land grabbing due to less awareness of their customary land rights limited access to legal service which has led to many losing their land to men. However, urban women are better informed and have access to legal services which strengthens their land claims. McKibben & Bean (2010) mentions that in their study conducted in Acholi land, interviewees reported that women from rural areas view land as male property and not as a woman's entitlement while women in urban areas at times open up their voices about their rights to acquire land ownership and go as far to battle for their land rights in court. However, even despite that, some urban women are also still reluctant to get assistance about land tenure due to fear of consequences such as public beating and domestic abuse from male counterparts or spouses.

Amone (2014) states that rural women are however very vocal about the unfairness they see in the treatment of women, particularly of widows and the divorced pertaining their land rights.

In addition to that educated widows are also more likely to maintain their customary land rights than uneducated widows, singles, or married women. This is because of their ability to interpret land documentations and their capacity to fight in court for their rights due to their high level of literacy as argued by Shaheed (2017). Uneducated widows, divorced, married and single women however face difficulties in claiming their customary land rights due to the high illiteracy rate that limits them from a correct interpretation of laws available to protect their land claims. Shaheed (2017), also adds that socialization believes in mostly rural areas that women are home keepers, has also restricted most rural women from moving beyond their villages Hence limiting their exposure and access to knowledge that would help them in the protection of their rights.

Furthermore, Oloya (2016) notes that the power of wealth in connection with land and elitism has also affected most men and women in rural areas with rural women being more disfranchised due to lack of skills and economic power. Rural poor women's land rights are thus more insecure due to lack of money to buy land, meet the costs of legal justice over their land rights, register land while most urban women who are financially stable have resorted to purchasing land and have better access to justice because they are able to meet the costs

3.4. Gender stereotypes and women's customary land rights

Gender stereotypes can be described as a belief or generalization about the behaviours and characteristics attributed to women and men. It is used often in categorizing and simplifying observations and making predictions about others. However, it also presents serious obstacles to the achievement of gender equality and feeds into gender discrimination. Gender stereotypes about women often result from deeply rooted attitudes, values, prejudice, and norms against women and are often used to maintain sexist attitudes and historical relations of men over women which are holding back the advancement of women. In the Acholi community, gender stereotypes that affect women's land rights take forms of practices, words, beliefs, sayings, assumptions among as discussed below.

My findings show that women's discrimination regarding their land rights is a result of the gendering of space. Stereotypes about women as belonging to the domestic and family sphere and men as belonging to the public sphere have created obstacles for women's capacity to claim their rights to access or own customary land in the Acholi community especially for married and single women. Shelly (2017) states that a gendered division of labour ensures responsibility are historically assigned to women and men based on perceived characteristics, rather than individual ability or desire. Acholi women are mostly limited to

traditional gender roles of childbearing, domestic chores and food production while men are considered as breadwinners responsible for productive roles in the society. This has led to the prioritization of men in the ownership, access and use of land with the assumption that men need the land more to provide for their families while women will become economically dependent on men despite their roles in household food production.

In addition to that, confining women to the domestic sphere has also limited their movements and exposure which has in turn limited their access to knowledge and awareness of their customary land rights. However, what is forgotten is that there are also female breadwinners and that women are the major players in the production of food crops and provision for her family. Women in Acholi have thus been denied rights to own, control, or make decisions on customary land-based on ascribed gender roles which subordinates them to men.

Secondly, the assumption among the Acholi that all women born in a family will have to marry in the future has also continued to pose a lot of discrimination of women in the access and ownership of land, especially for single and divorced women. Hannay (2014) states that single women living in their father's homes are assumed as "temporary" thus they are mostly denied permanent access and ownership of customary land and her continued existence on the family land causes clashes between her and her brothers who have rights to the land. This was also mentioned by Shelley (2017) who stated that single and unmarried women are often perceived as 'flight risks' who after getting married may give the land to her husband, thus, fathers often deny single and unmarried women land to protect their economic interest and communal assets which in this case is the customary land.

An example, according to Apecu (2018), in a focused group discussion held with the Acholi community in Amuru district northern Uganda, most respondents established that land is never transferred to a girl because of the phrase that 'Anyira obedo pot Obiya'; comparing girls to flowers that can be plucked and taken away. She noted that one man in his view said fathers prefer boys to have ownership and control over land because they will often stay at their birth homes and considered more permanent than girls who in case of marriage might live home and live the land unprotected

Women's land rights have also been made insecure due to dependency on bride prices as a means of legitimizing customary marriage. This has reinforced the traditional belief that women are "valuable" to her family and is part of a man's acquire "property". This kind of misconception and practice has made women's rights to access and ownership of land vulnerable upon separation or passing of a husband. Hannay (2014) states that widows are often denied land inheritance because of the assumption that "property cannot own property". This treatment is different from women who are not officially married through the payment of bride prices. Shelley (2017) notes that women who are not officially married are less trusted with land access and ownership because they are considered as "outsiders" without rights who can leave anytime. They are always denied rights to decision making on land and land rights because they considered voiceless and often referred to as "Dakomamwaa" meaning a useless woman. This has also resulted in the deprivation of women's land rights in Acholi.

Hopwood (2015) mention that the wide misconception that only men can own land among the Acholi community often overlooks the fundamental customary notion of communal customary land ownership which denotes that ownership is neither applicable to women nor men. This has led to evolving principles and practices around customary land usage by different community members which grant different and, in most cases, lesser land rights to women than men. Apecu (2018) also mentions that this kind of words and beliefs about women has led men to often sell out land without the consent of clan members out of pure greed for the benefits derived from the land.

Furthermore, the social perception of women in the Acholi community as having lesser capabilities than men has also affected their customary land rights claims. Apecu (2018) mentioned that, in her study, most men noted that women are denied inheritance, control, and ownership of customary land because they are considered as very emotional, weak, and can easily be won over from making firm decisions about land. In addition to that, they added that girls are unable to defend the land in cases of a threat as compared to boys. However, this kind of generalization of women by men poses a lot of risk to women's land rights. Not all women are weak and poor at defence and decision-making concerning land, thus it's clear that men do this out of their selfish interest to make them appear stronger than women and secure their land claims and positions.

3.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have thus applied the concept of gender and intersectionality to analyse the different experiences of discrimination faced by Acholi women in claiming their customary land rights. The second section examined how gender stereotypes reinforce discrimination faced by women.

Drawing from the discussion and analysis of the findings above, it shows that gender plays a vital part in determining women's customary land rights in the Acholi community. However, the discrimination faced by women is not only due to gender but also mainly due to their marital status and women's subordination to men which put some women in a more disadvantaged position than men and other women. Findings show that married women have more secure land access and use rights due to marriage ties and stronger voices in decision making while divorced and widowed women have more insecure rights due to the loss of marriage ties and single women have restricted land use and access rights. Bride price and availability of children act as determinants of land access and use rights for married, divorced or widowed women. Men's rights to access and use of land is not conditioned by marital status.

In addition to that, the patrilineal nature of inheritance in the Acholi community limit women from inheritance while men get rights by birth, have full control over land and are not conditioned by marital status. Widows and married women, however, are most likely to own, inherit, and control land than singles and divorced. Divorced women have the most insecure rights to land ownership and control. Furthermore, urban women have stronger claims to customary land than rural women, educated widows have better land rights claims than non-educated ones and financial difficulties affect rural women more than urban women in claiming land rights.

Drawing from section 3.4 of the chapter, stereotypes about women as confined to the domestic and family sphere affects women's capacity to claim their customary land rights in the Acholi community with married women being the most affected. Secondly, the assumption that all women born in a family will have to marry in the future has also continued to pose a lot of discrimination for mostly single and divorced women while widows and divorced women face challenges due to the belief that women are "valuable" to their families and are part of a man's acquired "property."

Chapter 4 : Gendered practices, policies, laws

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I employ the concept of gender in explaining how institutional gendered policies, practices, and laws reinforce experiences of discrimination against women in claiming their customary land rights. The first section examines the state institution, the second section deals with the customary institution, and the last section deals with the family institution. Institutions are vital in shaping human behaviour and perceptions. Institutions that are gendered also work to reduce uncertainty and to shape socioeconomic outcomes and for this to happen institutions should be effective and functional. Scott (1986), emphasizes understanding of gender beyond men and women and states that gender as a power relation operates within the institution. Therefore, examining institutions and their gendered practices is important in understanding women's experiences of discrimination. This is because discriminatory institutions intersect across all stages of a women's life thereby affecting their rights, justice, empowerment reducing their agencies, and decision-making authority over their choices in life.

4.2. State institutions

In Uganda the state institution has the responsibility of ensuring that all citizens enjoy full rights and equal rights to land and vital resources. However, although the state has made progress in creating gender equality through protecting women's land rights by the enactment of national/statutory laws, several challenges still exist between the land reform legislation and actual reforms in practice concerning women's rights to inherit, own and access land. i.e. implementation and monitoring mechanisms for ensuring compliance and respect for women's customary land rights. These laws have often been unsupported, unadhered to, and considered legitimate, which poses risks for women as explained below:

4.2.1. Legal Pluralism

Gender equality and women's rights to land are established in Uganda's legal and policy framework guaranteeing access, ownership and use of land to women. However, Uganda's legal structure concerning land is characterized by a pluralistic legal system which is a combination of many unharmonized laws. Uganda is a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women which stresses the need for women's protection from discrimination. In addition to that, the Uganda Constitution (1995) recognizes women's land rights, prohibits any gender discrimination based while allowing men and women the same position and rights during and after dissolution of marriage. Under Article 32 clause one of the constitutions, the State is instructed to act in protecting marginalized groups facing discrimination based on gender or other reason shaped by customs, history or tradition, to deal with any existing imbalances. The Land Act 1998 also contains a clause that necessitates spousal permission before the sale of land that was attained during marriage.

However, even with existing state laws protecting women's customary land rights, there is still significant gender inequality in both rural and urban areas among the Acholi community. Doss (2010) states that the 1995 Uganda Constitution and the Land Act 1998 have enshrined legal pluralism through the recognition of the customary system of land management, acquisition of land rights, and conflict resolution which conflict with state laws that protect women. Shelley (2017) mentions that the customary system in Acholi is

characteristically patriarchal and strongly influenced by practices that discriminate against women and promote gender-biased in matters of inheritance and ownership, however, the state laws fail to protect women from these practices of land inheritance that favour men and leave women's rights to inheritance at the mercy of men. Ochan (2018) states that the Uganda national laws on land also fails to address the ill practice in Acholi sub-region in which women's rights and relationship to land is tied to male figures. These gaps created in the laws have thus left women's land rights insecure and has given room for men to make use of the many available laws to justify and assume their positions in leadership, decisions making and behaviour over customary land in a way that discriminates against women. Hannay (2014), mentions that to ease the tension between the customary and state laws, the Uganda Constitution commands that state law take charge and is considered where customary laws are contradictory. However, this stipulation is often overlooked due to the power relations that put men in the position of control over women.

Furthermore, the land Act (1998) Section 22, recognizes the head of a family as the legal personal representative and holder of the customary land certificate. In Uganda society the head of families are mostly men. This has mostly caused problems for widows and divorced women who struggle to claim their husband's land after separation and death respectively.

According to Hannay (2014), other related laws like the Succession Act 1906 which guides inheritances fails to consider inheritance rights of all categories of women but accords more land rights to men. The act applies strictly the customary law in cases of inheritance. More so, the act recognizes only widows and accords a widow only 15% of the estate of her deceased spouse while 75% to the deceased children, 9% to the deceased dependents, and 1% to the customary heir. The act also only recognizes a male relative to a deceased as the customary heir which promotes patriarchal inheritance customs this coupled with the distribution of 15% to the deceased wife eventually discriminates against women. Moreover, in a polygynous marriage, all surviving widows must share 15% of the estate. Cohabiting wives whose bride prices have not been paid, single women, married women, and divorced women are not protected by this act in any way. This has continued to privilege men and discriminate against women both in the rural and urban areas of the Acholi region.

Furthermore, even though the succession act grants a widow a portion of the deceased property, in most cases in absence of a written will by the deceased, the widow faces challenges in claiming her customary land rights. In a situation where a widow might be mentioned in the will as a sole inheritor, she still faces challenges in taking possession and responsibility due to barriers created by the deceased male relatives. Besides, widows lose their rights in case they decide to remarry.

In addition to legal pluralism, the Kindi (2010) mentions that the voices of women activists fighting for gender equality regarding land ownership were raised by Uganda women members of parliament lobbying for a co-ownership clause during the amendment of the Uganda Land Act in 2000. However, the Government of Uganda drooped the clause in favour of men. This was done based on the argument by male politicians with support from common men that granting co-ownership in marriage would undermine clan cohesion and power and make women richer. Besides, men assumed that women would then marry older men so that they could inherit their land after their death, or women would marry and divorce men with the single reason of getting land. Others viewed this as a way of commercializing and destabilizing marriages.

These selfish allegations by men and government failure to guard women from losing their land rights have left mostly married women's land rights all over the country insecure putting men in a position of control over land and women as secondary owners even in a situation where land is acquired together. Married women in Acholi continue to suffer land

grabbing by their husbands in marriage and lack of control over their family and clan land due to the lack of a protective law.

4.2.2. Land dispute settlement

As far as settlement of land disputes is concerned, the state has made laws and courts more accessible and less formal for all citizens at grass root levels. Several Local Council II and III Courts, Chief Magistrate's Courts, Resident District Commissioners family and clans, and District Land Boards institutions and mechanisms have been established in all regions of the country as stated by Burke and Egaru (2011). However, Hannay (2014) argues that compared to men, women are underrepresented in these positions of leadership with limited participation. Besides, lands tribunals fail to follow the formal constitutional law which stresses fairness and gender sensitivity in dispute resolution. In addition to that costly nature of land tribunals also keep land dispute settlement far from most rural women who are less educated and less financially stable than men, this is as mentioned by Burke and Egaru (2011). Moreover, even when inheritance related issues, property grabbing could be handled using statutory law and available state courts, most women, often avoid these for financial, practical, and cultural reasons, in favour of local or traditional courts which could even be more biased and discriminative against women thereby putting women in a vulnerable state to claim for their land rights.

Ssemutooke (2014) also recognizes that in most cases women end up losing their rights to customary land to their male counterparts or men because of their economically less advantaged state. He quoted Irene Achieng of the Acholi Women Advocacy Network to have said that amidst land wrangles, there is a need for the transportation of local leaders and police to one's place, payment of surveyors and land authorities including bribing police and land authorities to successfully put up a defence on one's land and if possible get a certificate of title. Furthermore, in the Local Council II and III Courts, leaders have a low level of education and especially limited knowledge on gender aspects about land and most of them are men. In addition to that most women in the rural Acholi community are often poor, illiterate and unable to handle the bureaucratic processes that are required to gain access to land title deeds and fight for their customary land rights in court as mentioned by Apecu (2018).

The state failure to consider and deal with women's vulnerable situations in conflict resolution and protect them from the bureaucratic procedures which have been damaged with corruption and male's greed for money has thus left women's land rights unprotected and vulnerable to grabbing.

4.2.3. Investors and women's land rights

The state has failed to protect Acholi women's land rights from investors and land grabbing by their husbands and male relatives. According to Wasswa (2016), widows in Acholi Community are losing land to investors and rich men, however, not even petitions to the government have done much to solve this problem. In addition to that, Ochan (2017) mentions that communal land has also been grabbed by powerful people like government officials, army majors and politicians leaving very vulnerable people particularly women landless. The government has instead of rendering support to the affected women and widows gone ahead to attempt to obtain land in the Acholi community to give to rich businessmen and companies. Acholi women In Apaa, Amuru District have attempted to fight back through prostration by naked women in April 2015 as a way of defending their land, from the government, but with little success. Amone and Lakwo (2014) adds that this situation was worsened by the emergence of groups of Acholi elites and government authorities who were appointed

to handle the land tenure system in the region of Acholi but are now commonly seen as state-orchestrated land grabbing agents

Furthermore, the local leaders attribute the problem of land grabbing by investors to the complex use of tradition by men to deprive women of their land rights and the perception that women are property of men and do not own land. Wasswa (2016) adds that in Amuru District, for example, the situation has been made worse by the finding of minerals such as oil which has increased land conflicts as Investors are flocking the region. Women especially widows have found themselves on the disadvantaged side as men deny them their land rights in a bid to fulfil their greed and selfish interest of benefiting from the land.

4.2.4. Land management and law enforcement.

Women's equal participation with men in policy formulation at implementation level is a requirement for effective land management and administration and a necessity for ensuring gender equality in any land tenure system. It enables their involvement in community-level decision-making processes and helps women gain access to established rights.

Burke and Kobusingye (2014) state that, in line with this, the State through the Uganda Local Governments Act advocates for the inclusion of women in the District Council at the lower committee, parish or village level and dictates that one-third of the positions are given to women these were reinforced by the Land Act that advocates for inclusion of women as at least one-third of the members of the sub-county land tribunals, land board and land committee. Although, the legislation ensuring the participation of women is broadly recognised as effective in the eradication of gender discrimination amongst a wide range of civil society international observers, Burke and Kobusingye (2014) argue that the low representation of women in local governance structures limits women's land rights protection as rulings are often easily overturned by the majority of male members. This is because the election of these women is done by an already existing structures that is made up of two-thirds of men that tend to work in favour of socially conservative women who may not necessarily support the broader interests of women

Besides, Burke and Kobusingye (2014) state that their study revealed that few women exist in the communities with the required levels of education and experience to participate effectively and engage in decision-making processes.

The Land Act (1998) requires that the chairperson of the land committee communicates and write in English, and committee members should be knowledgeable and experience in land related issues. Furthermore, it also requires that the sub-county land tribunal members should possess a minimum formal education of ordinary level or its equivalent. However, Burke and Kobusingye (2014) state that women and men without the necessary qualifications as stipulated by law are rarely appointed. Identifying women at the community level to meet these criteria is often more challenging than with men. This serves to underscore the marginal representation of women in local governance structures as a result of the socially embedded power imbalance between the genders. Thereby limiting their voices and concerns in decision making which has put their land rights in a risky situation.

Furthermore, Joireman (2008) as cited by Doss (2010) cites corruption and lack of capacity as obstacles to the smooth implementation of land laws in Uganda. the legal system is weak and sometimes inefficient in the enforcement of laws, especially in rural areas. Poor infrastructure and the use of laws themselves to produce gender inequality also leaves women in Acholi women challenged in their claim for land rights. Where legal structures do exist, they are mostly led by local leaders who often choose to rule in favour of customary laws, rendering state law obsolete. In addition to the above, law enforcement agents like policemen and the courts most especially local council courts at grass root levels are poorly equipped

with skill and resources for facilitation and implantation. This presents a major challenge as it inhibits their capacity to execute their duties effectively and, in most cases, slow down responses to women who desperately need protection from land wrangles and domestic violence associated with land issues.

4.2.5 Women's lack of awareness of the land legal framework and illiteracy

Hannay (2014) argues that Acholi women have low effective awareness of land and gender issues including their land rights. This is especially more pronounced among rural women who are illiterate and have limited or no access to legal advocacy or the Uganda Constitution that protects them from land rights. This according to Hannay (2014) is because once land policies and laws are approved and passed there is limited effort made by the state to sensitize the general public on the contents of land rights documents especially women's land rights.

In addition to that, illiteracy still lags women far behind men when it comes to land rights-related issues in the Acholi community. Apecu (2018) states that this could be due to the gender stereotypes about girls' education where parents still prefer boy's education to educating girls.

Acholi men have thus taken advantage of these situations of women to deprive them of their customary land rights. Even in a situation where women know their legal land rights, the state has not empowered women enough to exercise and enforce their legal land rights example, women are still unable to speak out in meetings where men are present however women with family support are socially active and involved and have better access to knowledge concerning their rights

4.3 Customary institutions

Under customary institutions, land is held collectively by lineages or families. Customary institutions in the Acholi community have their knowledge, procedures, techniques, and methodology of handling land issues within their local settings. According to Shelly (2017), over ninety percent (90%) of Acholi land is under the customary tenure system and customary laws are applied in the management and any arrangement related to customary land. Women's rights to access and use of land is protected under the customary tenure system in the Acholi community however studies have shown the existence of gender discrimination in inheritance and discriminative practices which deny especially women compared to men their rights to customary land as discussed below:

4.3.1. Customary laws and women's customary land rights

Joireman (2018) defines Customary law in the Acholi context, as a body of rules that govern communal resources, personal status, and local organization. Acholi customary laws and norms in most clans are 'informal' and not codified or documented and agreed-upon conditions and rules are passed orally from generation to generation. Non-documentation of these customary laws and norms have often posed challenges for women's land claims in the Acholi community. Anying (2012) mentions, challenges that arise due to the largely undocumented norms are the high misunderstandings and misconceptions among different people in their understandings of the customs. Besides the elders who are knowledgeable about the customs have and are continuing to die out, hence leaving gaps for new leaders to distort and misuse the customs, for personal gain. Men often take advantage of a lack of clarity about customs, in order to violate the law, bend customary laws and come up with new

customs that match their own interests and tend to cause the discrimination of women from accessing, owning and using of customary land.

According to Anying (2012), efforts have however been made to document and put in writing these norms into what is call the Acholi Practices, Principles, Rights, and Responsibilities (PPRR), however, this has been criticized basing on the fact that consultation process was not extensive enough since only 38% of the traditional leaders took part on formulating this document across the region and the process lacked female involvement.

4.3.2 Inheritance rights under customary law

Customary laws grant women in the Acholi community significant rights to customary land as mentioned by Viet (2011). Yet, these rights are mostly reduced to user, and access rights, and in most cases, may not be considered socially legitimate rights at all, but privileges. Customary law inhibits women from inheriting or owning land by favouring male inheritance and granting men primary rights over land. Hannay (2014) states that when a household head dies, a customary heir who is generally a son, usually a responsible oldest son, is selected by the clan and inherits and manages his father's land. In the absence of a male child born to the deceased, a brother or other male relative is next in line of inheritance. Women do not inherit customary land under Acholi customary laws but have only secondary rights through being attached to the men who keep changing according to different occurrences as mentioned by Hannay (2014).

These statements by Hannay (2014) show the gender bias entrenched in the law in favour of men. This gender bias has rendered women's land rights insecure. Anying (2012) however attributes this to the fact that the male gender assumes a vital role in the primary organization of land access making it easy for them to bend the laws to their interest. In Addition to that, Amone (2014) argues that under the patrilineal customary system of land tenure, men have individualized land rights and women's land rights discussion tends to concentrate on the misconception that customary tenure systems are discriminates against women yet on the contrary its due to men's greed.

However, it should be noted that, even in situations under Acholi customary settings where women can inherit customary land, they mostly give it up in exchange for long term social support from brothers or relatives or to avoid domestic violence instead of long-term economic benefit.

4.3.3. Participation under customary tenure

The control, management, and administration of customary land and laws in Acholi according to Kakuru (2017) starts with the Acholi paramount chief, followed by local chiefs or area chiefs, clan leaders, and heads of extended families, household/ homestead head, to the preferred or eldest son of the family. However, in daily practice, elders, clan heads, family heads, or other assigned committees are responsible for ensuring that land rights are being honoured and are governed by customary laws. Women are mostly excluded from these managerial positions and almost exclusively men are the key decision-makers on how for What and to whom clan land is allocated. Shelly (2017) argues that gender mainstreaming still lags in clan level land management and women's voices are excluded since most trustees and custodians are almost made up of the male head of household. This constructed hierarchies in administration, control, and management that positions men on top of authority threaten women's customary land rights as it gives men more power to make decisions in their favour. Anying (2012) urges that men who are interested in grabbing land from women for themselves have often taken advantage of this positioning to claims that women don't own land leading to discrimination and deprivation of women of their customary land rights.

In some clans within the Acholi community, women especially elderly women and married women have been involved in customary committees, however, their contributions are mostly secondary to those of men and conditioned. Ochan (2017) states that an elderly woman in the Acholi clan has equal rights over customary land like males in some customary laws and can also be included in solving conflicts but only if she is respectful and lives in harmony with the people of the clan.

Furthermore, Sherry (2017) mentions that although decisions on land transactions are supposed to involve the whole family or clan including women, in most cases this provision does not prevail. Customary Land is sold out without the consent or knowledge of the clan members. Men always dominate the activity of land transactions and women have no voice.

This lack of decision-making power thus forces women to remain in a disadvantaged situation which becomes even more acute due to the challenges they face in protecting their land rights. This in turn creates a vicious circle that perpetuates poverty and generates greater gender inequality.

4.3.4. Custom Fails to Protect Women's Land Rights

Shaheed (2017) states that although the clan is responsible for protecting women's rights under customary institutions and laws, abuse often occurs due to inadequate knowledge or limited confidence about the Acholi guiding principles on customary land law by women plus community members at large. Women face a situation of eroding authority, as greed and corruption cause some clan leaders to by-pass traditional values in their decisions. Ochan (2017), attributes the weakening of the strong customary system in the Acholi community to British colonialism which led to the commoditization of land and the twenty years of war in the region.

According to Shaheed (2017), in the pre-colonial era, customary laws were very strong and adhered to by the Acholi community and clan leaders were accorded respect and the authority they needed in handling land matters, and men were always held accountable by the clan for failure to protect their families. Every woman married or not married, divorced, or widowed had a right to access land for use and had the ultimate power to determine how that land was used and by who, except women had no right to give it away or exchange land. Widowed women inherited estates of their deceased spouses, both boys and girls had equal access and use rights and single and divorced women had rights to access land at their birthplaces if they lived there.

However, British colonialism which led to a system of private land ownership, the recognition of men as heads of households and the introduction of the cash economy, created a direct impact on the gender and social relation as pertains customary land access and ownership rights as pointed out by Shaheed (2017). This also weakened the existing customary laws and institutions. Women's authority to determine land usage was changed in favour of men and their access started to be violated out of the selfish interest of men to gain commercially from the land. Land that was in women's names started being referred to by men's names who assumed greater control over them. This has been the practice to date and still poses a lot of challenges for women in land access and ownership rights claims.

In addition to that, Scalise (2012), the long conflict between the Uganda government and the rebel group known as the Lord Resistance Army in northern Uganda severely affected the customary leadership and tenure system in the area when the Acholi people were forced into internally displaced camps for twenty years. Many people were killed, disappeared, and separated from their land for a long period. Shelly (2017) noted that Widespread violence and upheaval in the region caused by the conflict led to the death of male household heads, erosion of traditional systems, including the distortion of practices that once protected

clans' weakest member such as women. As people began to return from internally displaced people's camps to their homelands in 2008, land boundaries were heavily disputed, giving rise to inter-clan conflict and unequal economic development. Among those most disadvantaged were women who had weak claims to land, especially those made vulnerable by the ravages of war such as widows, orphaned girls, child-mothers. New customary committees were set up customary land tenure rules that lacked necessary answers to land issues faced by the Acholi people. Men took advantage of this situation to grab land from women leaving the landless.

4.3.5. Dispute Resolution

Although customary dispute resolution bodies are generally more accessible in terms of location, they cause other challenges to women. (Hannay 2014) mentions that, disputes are often settled during the normal and regular clan meetings by Clan leaders where mostly men are commonly the only ones accepted and allowed to speak. Woman often have to solicit the fore support from male relative or her husband in order for her voice to be heard of her problems handled, Additionally, women are not well protected under the formal law at the local level if customary leaders are unaware of their positions in the society or in contest of their land rights. More so Hannay (2014) states that women as primary victims of land related conflicts are mostly excluded from the management of land conflicts, and public decision-making, which especially poses a lot of challenges in the access and ownership of customary land for widows whose husbands in most cases die without living a will on who should inherit or manage his land.

According to Amone and Lakwo (2014), although Traditional leaders have stepped in to stress the need for respecting women's land rights, their voices have not been reflected in practice. Men have always viewed the struggle for women's land rights as a struggle against local traditions and customs. This has become even more challenging since traditional leaders and women themselves don't realize that the protection of women's rights is part of justice. This can thus mean that the complexity of women's land rights does not often occur due to existing traditions and the patriarchal nature of the community but because men have often individualized land rights in a way that benefits them. Therefore, using tradition has a coverup for their self-interest.

4.4. Family as Institution

Although land among the Acholi community is mostly communally owned and generally used, each family is allocated individual land for building, cultivation of food crops, and cattle grazing. According to Ochan (2017), In each family under customary land tenure, women relate to land not only as workers and farmers but only as a wife, a daughter, and a mother. Several factors determine women's land claims and rights as discussed below.

4.4.1. Power relations within the household.

Although both men and women in the Acholi community have a right to use and access of land, the household power relations still cause challenges and limit women's control, use and access to land (Anying 2012). This is because except in the case of a widow, the household head is often a male. A woman's right to use and access land at household level is often subordinated to her husband during marriage and before marriage her rights are subordinated to that of her father and brother which places women in an unequal position with men.

In some cases, land owned and bought jointly in marriage are often managed by the husband he may not have a legal obligation to consult her wife before or after disposing of or entering into a transaction in respect of that land posing risks to women's land rights. According to Kindi (2010), in a situation of such inequalities in marital property customs and laws, several married women are now opting to buy their separate land instead of contributing to joint marital property. However unfortunately the attitudes of society towards such women is still negative as a result of their financial independence and many men continue to accuse such women of adultery on claims that a woman cannot succeed without a man as mentioned by Kindi (2010) this kind of statement is meant to discourage women from gaining independence over themselves, and make them continue to submit to male domination

4.4.2. The number of male children

Women's land rights in most Acholi families are determined by the number and sex of children born of the woman. Female children in the Acholi community are still mostly considered insignificant in connection to the land and are usually more uneducated than boys. Male children are more cherished, valued, and respected than girls as mentioned by Apecu (2018). Apecu (2018) adds that a woman's failure to produce sons can affect her customary land rights severely; it can destroy her marriage and she can be replaced speedily with a potential son bearer.

Men often remove the senior wife's land access and use rights and give it to his younger wife with sons if the senior wife only has girls. A woman with older sons will have a bigger share of the land while a woman without children or only daughters may have challenges defending her need and rights for extra land. However, even though a woman might secure land-based on the number of male children she has; the woman still has no control over the land and her access rights are still controlled by her husband or grown-up sons. In addition to that, Ssemutooke (2014) mentions that in case of death of a family head, female children of the deceased are denied land inheritance, and sometimes their male siblings chase them away into forced marriages to secure land for themselves

4.4.3. Polygyny

Polygyny in the Acholi community was and is still a socially accepted practice because Acholi men were and still in some clans rated by the number of wives and children they had or have (see for example Amone 2020). A man can marry a new wife on the grounds of the old wife bearing only female children, being lazy, sexual dissatisfaction, witchcraft, and persistent illness of his wife. This is because having grown up children guaranteed family security and economically, the many wives and children acted as an extra labour force for tilling the land to produce food and in social activities such as clan meetings, burials. Hence polygyny was a way of achieving family social and economic steadiness through the efforts of multiple wives and their children. In addition to that having more wives and more male children also meant an increase in a man's chances of securing more land for himself and his sons.

However, the result of polygyny, too many children being born in a family which strains the land specifically as women fight to secure land for their sons. Today with the introduction of modern technologies and commercialization of land, land wrangles have increased in the community as sons compete to secure more land for their economic benefits. Apecu (2018) noted that the worse cases of land conflicts exist in most polygamous families, in which every woman wants extra land for her offspring and the situation is worse when they mostly have boys are considered more entitled to the land as they remain in their fathers' land after marriage, unlike girls. In case of passing of a household head, Widows in polygamous marriages

as compared to those in nuclear families face worse discrimination and conflicts over customary land from fellow wives, stepchildren, and brothers in law and unfortunately polygamous marriages are not even recognized in the Uganda law which poses risks to their land rights.

4.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, the concept of gender has thus been applied in the analysis of findings by looking at the element of institutions and how they reinforce discrimination faced by Acholi women with regards to customary land rights. The family, state, and customary institutions have thus been examined. As discussed above, institutions are very vital in shaping human behaviour and perceptions.

The state has in its power ratified several international Agreements as well as endorsing domestic laws and creating institutions with the aim to protect women's land rights, however, gaps still exist in promoting gender equality and protection of women's rights brought about by legal pluralism. The recognition of customary laws and practices by state laws poses risks for women's land rights and given that government ignores the issues of women's rights, customary practices are continuously employed to the disadvantage of women providing a fertile ground for the increased deprivation of women's right to access and ownership of customary land. Even state bodies and other institutions that are expected protect laws are severely ineffective thereby living women vulnerable and at the mercy of customary practices that trample on their right. customary institutions have weakened due to war and British colonialism and fail to protect women from land grabbing.

Besides, land disputes and conflict resolution do not always favour women both under state and customary institutions due to costs associated with conflict management, illiteracy rates, and exclusion furthermore, Investments threaten women's land rights and women are excluded from land administration and management both under state and customary institutions due to low levels of education, traditional beliefs, stereotypes, norms, and greed. corruption has also affected smooth implementation and law enforcement that would protect women's land rights.

Furthermore, women have limited awareness of legislation as compared to men and under customary inheritance, women are more deprived than men. Power relations, male preference, and polygamy within the household have also worked in favour of men thereby affecting women's customary land rights.

Chapter 5 : Summary and Conclusions

5.1 The study

This study has presented a comprehensive review and analysis of available data from secondary sources using the concept of gender and intersectionality in examining the experiences of discrimination faced by women in accessing their customary land right in the Acholi community in Northern Uganda

This research paper has argued that women in the Acholi community face challenges of discrimination in the access, use, control and ownership of customary land due to their gender but more so when gender intersects with other axes or marginalisation such as socio-economic situations, and marital status. The research shows that, although land is very vital for the economic empowerment, wellbeing, and socio-economic situation of women, their rights to access, use, control, and ownership of land under the Acholi customary tenure system are increasingly being denied and weakened. Land remains a male privilege and the issues that surround the discrimination and deprivation of women of their land rights are complex and connected to gender biases and other intersecting axes or marginalisation in these women's lives.

In chapter one of this paper, I discussed the background of the study and the problem including the nature of customary tenure system in Uganda and the Acholi community. I also presented the research objectives and formulated the questions for the research. Chapter two involves the discussions of the concepts of gender and intersectionality as employed in the analysis of the findings of this research. The research method, data analysis, limitation of the study and ethical consideration including my positionality as the researcher was also discussed in this chapter.

5.2. Key Findings

In the chapter three, the concept of intersectionality was used and this concept helped in the understanding of how gender, marital status and socio economic situations of women interlock to create different experiences of discrimination faced by Acholi women in the access, use, control and ownership of customary land .the findings reveal Women's land rights whether married, single, divorced, or widowed are subordinated to men and women have access to lesser land and fewer land rights than men.

In addition to that, the research findings also showed that widows and divorced women face more discrimination and have lesser rights to access or use of customary land as compared to married and single women due to the loss of ties with male figures caused by death and separation respectively. Married women, however, have more secured use and access rights from her husband after marriage. In addition to that, the payment of bride price and the ability to bear children determines whether married women and widows will have full rights to access and use of land. Single women are considered temporary family members in their natal homes who will get married in the future and for that reason, they are often given a smaller portion of land restricted for the cultivation of subsistence food crops only. Furthermore, married women can decide on land use while divorced and widows often find difficulties accessing where they can cultivate. Widows' rights to access and use of land are also determined by whether she gets inherited by her deceased husband's uncle or brother or not.

Furthermore, the patrilineal nature of inheritance in the Acholi community prohibits women from inheriting customary land. Men often inherit the land and have full control and ownership over the land. Men's rights are not conditioned by marital status and few men report that they are divorced or widowed because they often remarry. However, the research findings reveal that in some clans, married women and widows are more likely to inherit land as compared to single and divorced women. Married women often have co-ownership of land and control rights with their husbands while widows who become heads of households have the right to control and allocate land, but this is if she remains unmarried. The study also reveals that widows often face eviction from their deceased husbands' land by the relatives of the deceased due to land scarcity and greed. And widows who produce only female children face more challenges in claiming their land rights than those with male children. Divorced women have the most insecure rights to control and ownership of land because they are not considered as part of the clan after separation from their husbands. Single women only inherit land in situations where there is no suitable male inheritor. In addition to the above, the research also demonstrates that, compared to rural women, urban women; whether widowed, divorced, single, or married have stronger land claims due to a higher level of education, exposure, proximity to legislations available, better awareness of their rights, and financial ability.

Gender stereotypes inform of practices, words, beliefs, sayings, and assumptions and how they reinforce women's discrimination in the access and ownership of customary land was also examined in chapter 3. My findings show that gendering spaces where women are confined to the domestic sphere with the responsibility of childbearing and domestic chores and men in the public spheres as breadwinners tasked with productive responsibilities have created obstacles for women to enjoy their land rights. Secondly, the assumption that all women born in a family will have to get married in the future has also made land rights very insecure for single women and women who do not wish to marry in the future. Bride price as a means of legitimizing customary marriage has reinforced the traditional belief that women are men's acquired "property" and cannot have land rights, this coupled with the misconception that only men can own land have made women's rights to land access and ownership difficult for especially widows and married women. Findings from the research also revealed that women are perceived as having lesser capabilities than men, they are considered physically and emotionally weak to defend land in case of disputes and for this reason, they are often deprived of their rights to ownership and control of land.

chapter four, involved the examining of institutional gendered practices, laws and policies and how they affect women's access, use, control, and ownership of customary land. Findings show that, the state institution has made progress in creating gender equality through enactment of national/statutory but the legal pluralism that exists in Uganda's land legislation system has affected women's land rights due to unharmonized laws. The Constitution of Uganda (1995), as well as the land Act (1998), have provision for the protecting of women's rights to land however the two laws recognize the customary system of land management, acquisition of land rights, and conflict resolution which is characteristically patriarchal and conflict with state laws that protect women.

The study also shows that the Succession Act 1906 which protects guides inheritance in Uganda is biased against women as it recognizes a male relative to the deceased as an heir. Widows' land rights are protected by this Act, but they are only accorded 15% of deceased property while single, married and divorced women are not protected by this Act. Furthermore, my findings also disclose that the state failed to recognize and pass the co-ownership clause meant to create gender equality in land control and ownership in marriage due to male favouritism which has also made the right to land for women insecure in the region, especially for married women.

Furthermore, women are underrepresented in the land tribunal leadership roles besides land tribunals also fail to follow the constitution, which is gender-sensitive in dispute resolution. In addition to that land tribunals also keep land dispute settlement far away from most rural women who are less educated and less financially stable than men. Corruption and low level of education of grass root leaders and court leaders including policemen have also limited women's ability to claim their land rights. The increased need for land due to the high level of investments has also affected women's land rights especially widows, as investors grab their land. The state has instead of rendering help to widows, gone ahead to support investors and sometimes state workers participate in the land grabbing.

The findings also show that women's high illiteracy rate has limited them from participation in land management and administration which has affected the consideration of their voices in land decision makings, more so it has also affected their ability to interpret laws and the Constitution that protect them leaving them vulnerable with insecure land rights.

In addition, customary laws although grant Acholi women the right to use and access to land, the law prohibits women from land inheritance in favour of men. The lack of written customary law leaves room for men to manipulate and set laws that discriminate against women. Women's voices and participation in land-related disputes and decisions are excluded. Elderly women can participate in decision-making on land issues but in most cases, their voices and participation are considered secondary.

Finally, the family institution has also been ineffective in protecting women's land rights. The existence of power relations in the household where men are in control and assume responsibility of household heads has limited women's control, ownership, and access to land. The study also shows that the number of male children born in the household by a married woman determines her land claims, those with sons have more secure land claims and rights than those with female children and those with older sons have more secured rights than those with younger sons. However, those without children have the most unsecured land rights. lastly, polygamy also poses risk for women as wives in a polygamous marriage struggle to secure land for themselves and their children especially those who have many children and sons

Drawing from this summary and conclusion it is clear that women in Acholi still face challenges of accessing their land rights due to the gender biases caused by the action and wrongful use of laws and traditions by men and institutions gendered institutions However my study show that women have shown very little effort to claim their land rights, thus further studies would be vital to examine factors that hold women from attaining or fighting for their land rights.

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Appendix 1

Questions for secondary data

Question 1

How does the intersection of gender with marital status and socio-economic situations lead to different experiences of discrimination faced by women in the access and ownership of customary land in the Acholi community?

The questions below will help to get information about marital status and its effects on land ownership and access for women in the Acholi community.

- What rights do single, divorced, widowed, and married women have as pertains customary land?
- How is access and use of land handled according to the marital status of women by customary law and the family?
- How are land ownership and inheritance handled according to the marital status of women by customary laws and the family?
- How is decision-making on land handled by the customary laws and the family according to the marital status of women?

The questions below will help to get information on how gender affects land ownership and access for women in the Acholi Community

- How are women/ girls and men/boys treated under the customary land system??
- What is considered as the involvement of women in land-related issues?
- Are women's land access and ownership rights taken into consideration by the Acholi community?

The questions below will help to get information on how socio-economic situation influences land ownership and access for women in the Acholi community.

- In what ways do rural women experience discrimination differently from Urban women?
- How are the poor, rich, and middle-class women treated concerning inheritance, ownership, control, and access to customary land?

Question 2

How do gender stereotypes lead to discrimination against women in the Acholi community in the access and ownership of customary land?

These questions will help in finding out how ideologies constructed around women limit their access to customary land

- What are the beliefs gender norms and social norms of the Acholi community about women that deny them the rights to access and ownership of customary land?

- What are the religious beliefs about women that deny them access and ownership of land?
- What are the stereotyping words, stories, sayings, behaviors, assumptions, teachings about women that limit them from accessing and owning of land?

Question 3

In what ways do the family, customary, and state gendered practices and laws lead to the discrimination against women in the Acholi community in access and ownership of customary land?

These questions will help in finding out how the family as an institution limit access to customary land for women in the Acholi community

- Who owns customary land in the family?
- Are these lands registered and in who's custody?
- who inherits customary land in a family and how?
- Who transfers the right to land and how and to who?
- How are decisions about the sale of land made, by who and how?
- What is land used for?
- Who accesses, uses, controls customary land in the family, and how?
- Who makes decisions regard ownership, use, access, and control of land-related issues in the family?
- How do female-headed households own, access, or use customary land?
- How is land allocated after the death of the family head?
- What family traditions and norms affect customary land ownership for women?

These questions will help in finding out how the customary institution/ discriminates against women in the aspects of access and ownership of customary land among women in the Acholi community

- What are the customary arrangements/customary laws that govern land rights, access, use, and ownership and how are they bias against women?
- Who is part of the customary committee and what are their roles?
- How are customary laws agreed upon and by who?
- Are customary laws documented or written and by who?
- How do roles played by traditional authorities and customary committees affect women's land ownership and access?
- Who owns the land under customary arrangements?
- How does one acquire land?
- How is land inherited under customary law and from who?
- How do women access, use, and own land under customary law?
- What are the available traditions and customary norms, roles that limit customary land access for women?

- How are sons and daughters treated when it comes to land inheritance under customary land tenure?
- How often do women in this community bank on traditional leaders and religious leaders to resolve land conflict? Are they favored or not?
- How effective are these traditional elder's interventions in land issues?
- How are women treated in decision making concerning land under customary laws?

These questions will help in finding out how the state as an institution discriminates against women in accessing and ownership of customary in the Acholi community

- What are the state laws that oversee land rights, ownership issues, and access and how do they protect or not protect women's customary land rights?
- What are the roles states bodies play in protecting land rights, ownership, and access and how do they cause discrimination against different women along with issues of accessing and ownership of customary land?
- How do the state and its representatives handle and respond to issues of violations committed against some citizens' right to land? And how do they deal differently with different complaints advanced by different groups in terms of gender, religion, age, size of land, education, connections to the power structure within the community, etc.)
- Have there been any legal cases against any state official for being corrupt due to his role in land disputes?