

The Relevance of Prismatic Sala Model to Village Administration in Otuke District: A Critical Look at Kamdini as a Presidential “Neighbourhood” Village

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims at analyzing the relevance of Prismatic Sala Model to village administration. Village administration in Uganda was formalized by Article 181 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995), and CAP 243 of the Local Government Act (1997). Conceptually, in Kamdini village, traditional elements of village administration covered the field of agriculture, health and environment. Heterogeneity was categorized under constructs such as political diversity, religious affiliations, literacy levels, and employment status while village administration was looked at the elements of mobilization and conflict resolution. The Prismatic Sala Model was highly considered to guide the development of this paper. Despite having over 70,626 villages in Uganda, there are currently limited empirical researches that provide comprehensive analyses of in-house challenges of village administration, thus this paper was premised with a view of analyzing the relevance of Prismatic Sala Model to village administration with two specific objectives set: to identify the traditional elements posing threats to Kamdini village administration, and to analyze the effects of heterogeneity on the administration of Kamdini village. The paper adopted a mixed research approach and descriptive design. It targeted the entire population of Kamdini village but purposively sampled the 20 elders, 09 Local Council One executive members and 01 Parish Chief to provide interview and avail the necessary secondary data. Data was analyzed using computer generated software, notably SPSS and STATA to generate both descriptive and inferential statistics. In the first study objective, the finding reveals that Kamdini village is still majorly a traditional community, and that tradition negatively affects the village administration in the study area. In the second study objective, the finding from correlation analysis reveals that heterogeneity positively affects village administration where political diversity ($r=.811$; $p\text{-value} = 0.05$) was found to be positive, very strong and statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level; that religious affiliation ($r=.449$; $p\text{-value} = 0.05$) was positive, moderate and statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level; that literacy level ($r=.614$; $p\text{-value} = 0.05$) was positive, strong and statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level; and that employment status ($r=.179$; $p\text{-value} = 0.05$) was positive, very weak and statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level. The paper concludes that traditional practices negatively affect the administration of a village; and that having heterogenic village is more conducive in enhancing better village administration. The study recommends that a spirited campaign be made to transform villages from the elements of prismatic societies to a modernized society.

Keywords: Traditions, Heterogeneity, Village Administration, Mobilization

INTRODUCTION

The paper analyzes the selected features and outlook of Baralegi village in Otuke district, Northern Uganda. It explores the traditional practices and the heterogenic components of a typical rural village. Chronologically, it presents the introduction and background of the village, the problem statement, methodology, findings and the subsequent discussions and recommendations arising from analysis of the study area.

Background of the study

Just a-stone-throw! Everyone would expect a village which neighbours a presidential residence to be highly modernized, or at least transformed. This paper aims at unearthing the traditional practices which are still sitting on the way to modernity in Kamdini village; and analyzing the heterogenic nature of Kamdini village, sitting a few meters away from His Excellency General (Rtd) Y.K Museveni's Baralegi village which also doubles as one of Uganda's State Lodges.

Historically, in most developing countries, rural villages are still the bedrock of traditions. As cited by Paudel (2019), even in the remote hill tribes, with "village India" lying stretched out in underdeveloped country. The nature of this crisis can be more clearly understood if a theoretical model, entitled the "exoprismatic society," is used for analysis (McGavock & Novak, 2023). The greater will be the social gap between its rural and to speak of a prismatic society experiencing diffraction through. Kolapo (2023) argues that at present, perhaps it is generative of realistic pictures of rural conditions if combined with these political-economic understandings with other methodological approaches.

Theoretically, the Prismatic Sala Model was highly considered to guide the development of this paper. In essence the model links the external environmental factors and public administration which, according to Gunawati (2024), is radically influenced by the other sub-systems like economic and cultural dimensions, social, and political influences. It has to be noted that the model assumes that in every prismatic society, there is the presence authority and control, nepotism, and heterogeneity, amongst others.

Contextually, the village administration in Uganda was formalized by Article 181 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995), and CAP 243 of the Local Government Act (1997). As stated in the Local Government Act (2003), a village or a cell shall have a chairperson and eight other executive committee members, with the latter charged with the responsibilities to preside over the council and executive committee meetings, monitor the general administration of the area under his or her jurisdiction, oversee the performance of persons employed by the Government; to provide services in the council's area of jurisdiction and to monitor the provision of Government services or implementation of projects in the area under the council's jurisdiction; and also to perform other functions that may be necessary for the better functioning of the council, or which may be incidental to the functions of the chairperson or imposed on the chairperson by any law.

Although currently located in Abongower parish, Kamdini was one of the 14 villages in the greater Arwotngo parishes. According to the UDHS report (2022), the village shares geographical boundaries with the villages of Agweng, Okerkok, Alam "B" and Baralegi "A" to the East, South, West, and North, respectively. It is located in Okwang sub-county in Otuke County, Otuke district in Northern parts of Uganda. The village is home to 79 households and 235 people who comprised of 103 males (43.8%) and 132 females (56.2%). The village reportedly has 122 of population comprising of children aged below 18 (51.9%), whereas 82 people were between the ages of 18 and 35 years (34.9%), and 31 people (13.2%) of the village population was above 35 years.

Conceptually, in Kamdini village, traditional elements of village administration covered the field of agriculture, health and environment. Ironically, Whitehill (2022) defines tradition as a long-held view which is associated with a society's custom, practice or belief which may be rigorously parallel to any modern changes, while Lwasa (2019) explains that traditional agriculture is a primitive type of food production and farming that makes extensive use of indigenous knowledge, land use, traditional equipment, natural resources, organic fertilizer, and farmers' cultural values.

Lesthaeghe (2023) contends that heterogeneity in any prismatic society is high due to the continuous presence of different systems, viewpoints, and practices. Heterogeneity can be categorized in the field of political diversity, religious affiliations, literacy levels, and employment status while village administration was looked at the elements of mobilization and conflict resolution (Rodrik, 2018). The major fields where mobilization can be carried out in Kamdini village includes government development programmes, immunization campaigns, school calendar, income generating activities, amongst others. In areas of conflict resolution, the village administration can be analyzed in terms resolving conflicts that arose as a result of Gender-Based Violence or GBV, criminal offenses, land conflicts, property inheritance among residents of Kamdini village.

Problem statement

Despite having over 77,626 villages in Uganda, the heterogenic nature of those village residents has not attracted much interest; and there is currently limited empirical research that provides a comprehensive analysis of the challenges of village administration. The seemingly greatest underlying challenge facing these administrative units is always a result of heterogeneity in communities, and so, there is a broader invite to carryout research into the different elements of heterogenic community living in a village, thus this paper is premised with a view of analyzing the relevance of Prismatic Sala Model to village administration.

Objectives of the Paper: Specifically, the paper set two specific objectives: to identify the traditional elements posing threats to Kamdini village administration, and to analyze the effects of heterogeneity on the administration of Kamdini village.

METHODOLOGY

The paper adopted a mixed research approach and descriptive design. It targeted the general outlook of the entire population of Kamdini village with hope that the heterogeneity component would be of great importance in analyzing this heterogenic community. In data collection, 20 elders, 09 Local Council One executive members and 01 Parish were sampled to provide interview and avail the necessary secondary data especially records that were later used to generate research findings upon which the conclusions were drawn. The inclusion and exclusion criteria was that only Kamdini residents who derived their livelihoods from the day-to-day engagements with the village met the inclusion criteria and was catered for in the study, but those residents who were either working elsewhere across Uganda or abroad were not catered for in this study. In considering the basic ethical research practices, the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), Otuke and the Gombolola Internal Security Officer (GISO) of Okwang sub-county were briefed and later permission was granted to undertake the study. Respondents and data givers were also briefed about their rights to participate in the study, the purpose of the study and its likely outcome was also explained to them, and their consent to participate was also sought. Data was analyzed using computer generated software, notably SPSS and STATA which resulted to both descriptive and inferential statistical findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

Objective One of the Study: The first objective of the paper was set to identify the traditional elements

posing threats to Kamdini village administration, and the finding reveals that the village is majorly a traditional community especially in the field of agriculture and health. The village chairperson, Mr. George Ogwang who has been at the helm of the village administration since 2011 to date contends that agriculture is the most traditionalized in this village:

“The only ‘modern’ practice is the adaptation of both organic and inorganic use of fertilizers to boost production. The crop varieties are purely traditional, notably, pigeon and cow peas, sorghum, local cassava and potatoes varieties, simsim, yams, and other crawling plants. There is limited success in attempts to introduce new crop varieties simple because the villagers contend that such varieties cannot sustainably be grown in their soil. Other villagers do believe that the new varieties such as Longe V maize and Num II bean varieties lack the ‘natural tastes’ and the high costs associated. The local animal and poultry breeds are highly preferred and dominant in the village simply because of cost of production, and the ‘un-natural’ characteristics of the new and improved varieties” (Face-to-face interview with KI-01, Thursday, 14th Dec, 2023)

To substantiate the chairperson’s sentiments on traditional agricultural practices in the village, the summary of agricultural activities extracted from the Local Council Record (2023) showed that the local varieties of peas was grown on approximately 22 acres by 15 households majorly for consumption and sale; cassava and potatoes on 108 acre by 67 households purely for consumption purposes; millet, sorghum and maize on 28 acres by 35 households for consumption purposes; and rice on 120 acres by 52 households for consumption and sale. The records also showed that 137 local breeds for goats and sheep were herded by 75 households for both consumption and sale; 14 local breed for pigs was being kept for sale; 322 local poultry breed was being kept for both consumption and sale; and 108 local cattle breed was being kept for farming and sale. This statistic is further shown in the table below:

Table 1 shows the different farming households in 2023

S/N	Activity/ Crops	Acreage/ No	Variety	No. of HHs	Purpose Of Production
1	Peas	22	Local	15	Consumption and Sale
2	Cassava and potatoes	108	Local	67	Consumption
3	Millet, sorghum, maize	28	Local	35	Consumption
4	Rice	120	Local	52	Consumption and sale
5	Goats and sheep	137	Local	75	Consumption and sale
6	Piggery	14	Local	9	Sale
7	Poultry	322	Local	77	Consumption and sale
8	Cattle	108	Local	24	Farming and sale

Source: Kamdini Local Council Record Book (Dec. 2023).

In the field of health and environment, traces of traditional beliefs still exist, for instance the belief that false-tooth extraction guarantees a child’s health; that all the scientific birth control measures are unsafe and are automatically health risks; and that the introduction of exotic trees in the village has greatly affected “*Nyig-yao*” or the shea nut flowering processes thereby reducing its ability to bear fruits.

The findings of traditional aspects of Kamdini village shares similarities with those identified by Lwasa (2019) who hinted that traditional leaders in Africa can deliver million of their subjects who still reside under traditional beliefs and practices This heterogeneity may even be present within the same on

appreciating the heterogeneity in the unity of Africa when he was looking at the socio-ecological perspective on Africa’s geographies. The finding further provides proof and reality to the Prismatic Sala Model, and although Whitehill (2022) provides the advantages of traditional farming to include improvement in soil fertility and conservation of biodiversity due to the absence of ‘exotic’ varieties, the blatant implication of these findings on village administration is that the external stakeholders such as agricultural extension workers from Otuke district Local Government, and other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) would find it extremely difficult to assist the village in its quest for transformation. This would mean that Kamdini village would be at a disadvantage to receive extension services, and other inputs, thus the village would continue be engaging in traditional agricultural practices which are associated with longer time to get harvested, and farmers will not be able to make much money because of ‘subsistence’ components.

It is also worth remembering the views of Fleisher and Hufford (2020) who assert that Schultz advanced the thesis that the traditional agricultural sector cannot grow with the aid of the traditional factors only, except at a very high cost, thus Fleisher and Hufford (2020) believe that a new and totally different production factors are necessary which is a component in the theory of modernization into agriculture. Here, Akumu (2022) writes that President Museveni introduced and demonstrated the 4-acre model practices in Baralegi “A” in 2018, but one wonders why this neighbourhood or to be direct, Kamdini village, has not picked interest in this model. Similarly, Paudel (2019) made reference to Ricardo’s widely acclaimed comparative advantage theory suggests that nations can gain an international trade advantage when they focus on producing goods that produce the lowest opportunity costs as compared to other nations. In this view, Kamdini village could not continue with subsistence nature of producing “every” crops or agricultural practices, and so it is imperative to ‘decentralize’ Ricardos sentiments of comparative advantage theory to ensure that Kamdini village residence identify a crop or such an economic activity which they can gain a production advantage with the lowest opportunity cost as compared to other villages.

Objective Two of the Study

In the second objective, the paper was set to analyze the effects of heterogeneity on the administration of Kamdini village, and the indicators under this included the political diversity, religious affiliations, literacy levels, and employment status while village administration was looked at from the elements of mobilization and conflict resolution. The findings from correlation analysis and descriptive statistics; and its subsequent discussions are presented below:-

Table 2: Results of Pearson Correlations (N=10)

Study Variables		Village Administration	Political Diversity.	Religious Affiliation	Literacy Level	Employment Stat
Village Administration	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Political Diversity	Pearson Correlation	.811**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
Religious Affiliation	Pearson Correlation	.449**	.025	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.413**			
Literacy Level	Pearson Correlation	.614**	.027	.041	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)					

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.114*	.032		
Employment Status	Pearson Correlation	.179**	.119	.171	.021	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.007	.032	.029	

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

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Political Diversity and Village Administration

The finding from correlation analysis reveals that political diversity ($r=.811$; $p\text{-value} = 0.05$) is positive, very strong and statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level implying that a variation in political diversity was associated with a significantly positive and very strong variation in village administration in the study area. This could probably be true because of a much reduced opposition when it comes to matters of consensuses.

The finding from descriptive statistics reveals that political diversity had 97 people or 85.8% of the 113 village adult population, and was majorly those individuals who subscribed to the ruling National Resistance Movement or NRM, and 16 people or 14.2% of the village adult population who either were formally registered members of Uganda People Congress or UPC and other party affiliations (NRM Village Register, March 2024); and Chairperson LC1 records).

The findings are in line with the literatures by Wang, Chen and Wang (2021) which stated that at the level of a village, there is need to first of all understand the political nature of the society, thus providing diverse institutional modalities with the social-ecological and political-economic structures in the rural. The findings are in line with prismatic model which Venugopalan, Bastian and Viswanathan (2021) assert that it assembles a pool of ideas and input from the diverse stakeholders to explain an effective political representation and governance of the society.

Whereas the 14.4% of the village population had a politically different view, the fact that 85.6% of the village population subscribe to NRM typically translate to easy mobilization for the local people to embrace and participate in government development programmes, embrace immunization campaigns, support school calendar, and undertake income generating activities, amongst others. This could probably be because the minority of the village population would just be influenced to support government programmes like their colleagues in the NRM. In conflict resolution, the village has been registering very few cases of Gender-Based Violence or GBV, criminal offenses, land conflicts, and limited cases of property inheritance crisis among residents. This could be as a result of a very strong traditional attachment and practices which is still dominant in the village.

Religious affiliation and village administration

The finding from correlation analysis reveals that religious affiliation ($r=.449$; $p\text{-value} = 0.05$) is positive, moderate and statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level implying that a variation in religious affiliation was associated with a significantly positive and moderate variation in village administration in the study area. Technically, it implies that a unit increase in religious affiliation would statistically lead to a positive but substantial success in the village administration in the study area; probably because of religious affiliations seem to widen the rife between community members if compared to politics and other heterogenic elements in society. The finding from descriptive statistics reveals that although the entire village population of 235 was basically a Christian community, religious affiliation was found to be spread across Anglican 140 people (59.6%); Catholics 74 people (31.5%) and Born Again Christians 21 people

(8.9%).

The findings are in line with the literatures by Rubiyanto and Hirota (2021) holding that globalization that takes place through changes in the religious system has most impacts on the diversity of livelihoods of rural communities. The findings are in line with the prismatic model which according to Puspita, Tamtomo and Indarto (2017) explains the presence of differing beliefs in societies which could be regressed on against a common variable societal variable to explain a retardation or acceleration in development of such a society.

According to Rohimah, et al (2024), religion is most often used as a centre for mobilization through churches and other religious gatherings or events to pass and disseminate information. Mobilization is carried out in Kamdini village included government development programmes, immunization campaigns, school calendar, income generating activities, amongst others.

Similarly, religion also plays a significant role in conflict management through preaching against GBV, criminal offenses, land conflicts, and against disputes for property inheritance among residents. It is hopefully a reason as to why religious affiliation could be playing a positive role in the village administration in Kamdini village.

Literacy level and village administration

The finding from correlation analysis reveals that literacy level ($r=.614$; $p\text{-value} = 0.05$) is positive, strong and statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level implying that a variation in literacy level was associated with a significantly positive and strong variation in village administration in the study area. Technically, it implies that a unit increase in literacy level would statistically lead to a positive and a strong success in the village administration in the study area, probably because of having a relatively informed society given the fact that education helps in reducing ignorance in society. The finding from descriptive statistics that 138 people (58.7%) of the entire village population were could not read and write and that 97 people (41.3%) were able to read and write meaningfully in a language of their convenience.

The findings are in line with the literatures by Ntiri (2023) which states that Africa remains the world's least literate continent but as literacy level increases, enlightenment also increases. The findings are in line with the prismatic model which posits that Individuals' literacy proficiencies affect the levels of engagement in development practices. (Reder, Gauly and Lechner, 2020), suggesting that literacy interdisciplinary developments in affect theory have forced considerations of the uncontrollable

According to Cunliffe-Jones et al (2021), education plays a key role in reducing the negative impacts associated with ignorance in society. The fact that in Kamdini village, the mobilization is carried out in for people to embrace government development programmes, immunization campaigns, school calendar, income generating activities, amongst others means that the literate community would be easily mobilized than when they were not literate. The literate community also tends to like a peaceful society; hence conflict resolution is made possible through a reduction in cases involving GBV, criminal offenses, land conflicts, and conflicts over property inheritance among residents of Kamdini village.

Employment status and village administration

The finding from correlation analysis reveals that employment status ($r=.179$; $p\text{-value} = 0.05$) is positive, very weak and statistically significant at the 0.05 alpha level implying that a variation in employment status was associated with a significantly positive but very weak variation in village administration in the study area. Technically, it implies that a unit increase in employment would statistically lead to a positive and a very low success in village administration in the study area, probably because economic interests tend to

breed more conflicts in society especially when the elected leaders are not into the economic status of such as society. The finding from descriptive statistics reveals that of the 113 employable populations in Kamdini village, 5 people (4.4%) were into formal employment, while 38 people (33.6%) were into informal employment, notably other income generating activities, and 70 people (62%) were into subsistence economy.

The findings are in line with the literatures by Zizzamia (2020) which states that employment creation is almost universally held up as the key to achieving meaningful poverty reduction. Also Espi, Leibbrandt and Ranchhod (2020) contend that employed, and the persistent non-employed societies are to be brought together in order to address administrative and development barriers faced by Africa. The findings are also in line with the literature of Sutarna, Margono and Hadna (2021) who employed the theory of decentralization and a prismatic society to foster development in a traditional society.

In the views of Adegboye (2020), being gainfully employed is translated to mean that there is both the social and economic independence in society. An independent personality is very easy to be mobilized when there is a call towards mobilization. Thus, the gainfully employed individuals would be easily mobilized to embrace government development programmes, immunization campaigns, school calendar, and income generating activities, amongst others in Kamdini village. It would be very easy to mobilize such a gainfully employed class of individuals to guard against involving themselves in acts that are related to conflicts. Thus, in Kamdini village, employment status was found to positively impacting on the village administration because of its role in reducing Gender Based Violence, criminal offenses, land conflicts, and minimizing struggles for property inheritance among residents of Kamdini village.

The paper concludes that having many employed people in Kamdini village would enhance better village administration; and that traditional practices still have a deep root in Kamdini village from which low food production is experienced due to persistent practice of traditional agriculture, hence making the village administration to be difficult. The paper further concludes that political diversity; religion; and high literacy level among the residence of Kamdini village greatly enhance community mobilization.

The paper recommends that stakeholders should endeavor to create better avenues that would enhance both formal and informal opportunities for employment in the village if the administration and management is to be effective. The paper recommends that stakeholders in both government and non-governmental entities should consider planning for an exposure inform of tours to areas that are believed to be relatively 'modernized' as a way of transforming the mindset of Kamdini village residents who are still embroiled in the belief that modern practices are dangerous for the community. Generally, it is recommended that a continuous effort to modernize the villages should be embraced by all the relevant stakeholders such as the village residence, Okwang sub-county local government, Otuke district local government, the Central government, Civil Society Organizations and Non-governmental Organizations that could be directly or indirectly linked to the village.

AREAS OF FURTHER STUDY

Analysis of bazzar canteen situations; and authority and control in a prismatic society.

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