

TH2.1: Understanding femininities: Implications for women's Participation in Agricultural interventions in central Uganda

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CGIAR GENDER Science Exchange, Nairobi, 12-14 October 2022



Outline



Background

- Femininities is defined as gender-based roles & expected behaviors of women in a given community.
- Women economic empowerment - **access to income, & productive resources, Power to make decisions, control over use of income** continues to present a development challenge (Una, 2019)
- Failure to understand how men & women from farming communities define femininities may deter efforts to women's economic empowerment.



Research questions

How does the community construction of femininities influence WEE within rural agricultural communities?

What are the perceptions/ beliefs about who an ideal woman should be by men & women?

How do the different manifestations of women's expected behaviours & practices (femininities) affect their economic empowerment outcomes?



Methodology

- **Area of study:** Bukomero and Lwamata sub-county in Kiboga district.
- The district had a project targeting women's economic empowerment working within a diverse multicultural context & intense project activities.
- **Approach:** Qualitative methods bringing a deeper understanding of a phenomenon in a given context (Ridder, 2017).
 - Ideal woman's behaviour in the home inline with how she relates with the husband tolerating any negative behaviour, passive, financially dependent on the husband
 - Ideal woman's belief in terms being a subject to the husband, not supposed to leadership positions, where she can or cannot go, who she is expected to associate with
 - Ideal woman's practices inline with what work is she expected to do



Study population and sample size

- **Target Population:** woman & men
- **Sample size & sampling:**
 - 14 FGDs with men & women
 - Purposively selected FGD participants (5-6 participants @ FGD)
 - Men interviewing men and women interviewing women
- **Analysis:** Transcribed FGD Recordings verbatim & coded through computer-aided Atlas ti version 22 & grouped into meaningful themes (Ose, 2017; Dietrich et al., 2021)



FINDINGS

Expected roles/ practices of women as perceived by men and women

Theme	Old Women	Young women	Old Men	Young women
Custodian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are expected to be a caretaker of the household property 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The woman is a 'vice president' in the home that takes care of property when the man is absent. 	
Hard work <i>Reproductive roles</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does household her compulsory work of HH chores. She must be caring, for her husband, and children. Cooks and serves food to her husband and children and warms bathing water for him. She trains and disciplines children to be well behaved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should prioritise household chores because it is her role
Fulfils productive roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman should work hard to meet increased personal needs and household needs. Work for money to put in savings groups A woman was supposed to only engage in food crop production for HH food security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work for income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman should engage in income generating activities and support her husband financially in meeting HH basic needs and school fees for children Grow food crops for HHD food security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works for money and not depend on a man for everything but this should not be frequent. Grows food crops to ensure HH food security Avoids masculine jobs including serving as a porter

Expected roles/ practices of women as perceived by men and women

She must be caring, she should be a hard-working woman and one that cares for her children.....Your daughters must look up to you

(Old Man, Bukomero)

the woman should respect the husband so that even others respect him, she does not undermine the husbandso that the woman herself is not respected at all in the community

(Man, Lwamata, men group)

A woman should not dig a pit latrine or engage in building.It is ashaming for a woman to work as a porter on a building. If she goes with the husband, they say but so & so's wife!
(Youthful Man, Lwamata)

“.....if the woman goes to work, it should not be a daily routine. Should go once in a while, because it is the woman to grow food for the home and the man works for money. Because, it is the man's money that helps a lot in a home. If you work for wages for two days a week the three days should be spent in a garden to increase the food availability at home.” (Young man Lwamata).



Expected behaviour of women as perceived by men and women

Theme	Old Women	Young women	Old Men	Young women
Behaviour Should respect people	Respects her husband, every man and woman		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect her husband first and everyone else in the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman should respect her husband, neighbours and the husband's family
Be calm/ submissive/ tolerant in all situations			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should not argue with her husband at all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should not argue with her husband in public Should not quarrel with neighbours
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A woman is supposed to follow all the husband tells her- one who upholds everything that was told to her by her aunt. 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Love the husband's family including step children and welcome every visitor in the home. 	

Expected behaviour of women as perceived by men and women

Theme	Old Women	Old Men	Young women
Confinement <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women should/ Not socialize	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A woman was expected to remain at home,• Today when a woman socialising with fellow women equate to rumourmongering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should socialize with fellow women as long as she is not rumourmongering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A woman should socialise with fellow women

“A woman should welcome visitors, and should be calm. When the husband annoys her, should not shout at him in the public, instead should wait for him in the bedroom.”
(Young man Lwamata, Kiboga)



Expected Behaviour or practice of women as perceived by men and women

Theme	Old Men	Young women
Woman's Behaviour on reach, benefit and empower	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good behaviour is a leeway to finding favour from the husband though this may also deter a woman	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good behaviour is a leeway to finding favour from the husband• Whether well behaved or not men will allow her participate in interventions to help meet HH needs.



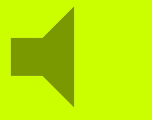
Expected Behaviour or practice of women as perceived by men and women

- *“With money whether the woman respects or not it cannot stop the husband to allow her to go out and work with the present situation where one head is not sufficient to provide all money needed for the needs of a home.” (Young man, Kyooma)*
- *“A well behaved woman will have easy access to everything. The husband will not hinder a well-mannered woman. He will just support her to earn more but also to get support from the husband. Because if you respect the husband, he puts trust in you and you plan for everything including money together.” (old man, Bukomero)*



Conclusion and Implication

- Defining who a woman is (femininities), enables us understand social norms that regulate what they can/cannot do.
- ❖ *Men highlight the importance of women observing femininities as per the community expectations promotes the ability to win “favour” and support leading to their women’s economic empowerment.*

 *Interventions targeting enhancing women’s benefit, reach and empowerment should be intentional about understanding community’s expectations of a woman by involving the norm holders in planning & implementation of interventions.*



Acknowledgment



Study Participants



Thank you





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