THE UNDERREPRESENTATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF THE CAUSES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE IN UGANDA

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The underrepresentation of Muslim women in Higher Education: a Case study of the Causes and Opportunities for change in Uganda

Abstract

A mixed methods research focusing on the feminist perspective was applied using an adaptation of Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) ecological cycle to investigate the causes and appropriate responses to the underrepresentation of the Ugandan Muslim Woman in the field of higher education. The premise of the study was based upon human rights. The UN Millennium Development Goals Report (2007) suggested that despite the leaps and bounds female emancipation groups were taking toward a free, fair and equitable environment toward education, women still fared poorly in accessing higher education. Equality of access to and attainment of educational qualifications was necessary if more women were to become agents of change since education for girls was argued to be the single most effective way of alleviating poverty (King 1993). However, "Traditional cultures and sexist stereotypes diffused by media and religious extremists often affect girls' access to education; dropout rates and professional or higher education opportunities" (UN Report 2003). Notwithstanding Uganda's affirmative action policies that openly favoured women’s progress in education, various factors adapted from Bronfenbrenner's ecological cycle (2005) were found to combine to lower the academic performance and aspirations of girls even when they did remain in school. An online questionnaire and semi structured in depth interviews captured women’s voices at Makerere University, Uganda and these were qualitatively analysed and coded into themes which were identified as enablers, barriers and strategies adapted by Muslim women in their pursuit of higher education. Interestingly enough religion and culture were perceived as both barriers and enablers depending on the attitudes and perceptions of different families. It is hoped that the findings of this study would subsequently make a significant contribution, so that women’s education is more effectively represented as a means towards achieving targets set by several mandates including the Millennium development goals (MDG’s), Education for All (EFA) and Widening Participation into higher Education.
Acknowledgements

All praises and gratitude are due to my creator and sustainer Allah (SWT) without whom I would not have realised this achievement. The completion of this thesis was also a combined effort of people whose support has been profound throughout the entire period of my study. I would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of my supervisors Dr Paul Warwick and Dr Hugh Busher whose input have been invaluable to my research. I am extremely grateful for their supervision, constructive criticism and moral support. I am also grateful to Dr Saeeda Shah for her helpful guidance. To all my colleagues at the School of Education whose support has been remarkable: Dr. Jenny Martin and her husband Keith Martin, Dr. Wafa Zoghboun, Dr. Muhammad Amin and his wife Humera, Dr Ilyas Khan, Dr Nadia, Dr Khlood, Dr Fatimah, Dr Blu, Dr. Sukru, Anupam, Haiyan, Binyin, ldris, Amina, Anfal and Humaira. To my community friends in Leicester, who became like family, is my deepest gratitude: Fatma, Bashir, Shadya, Firdaus, Rukiya, Khadija, Kanwal, Kiran, Ifrah, Maryam, Aisha, Faiza, Halima Chawahir, Halima Wobi, Madeenah, Hassanat, Hibo, Jamila, Ayesha, Jemilat, Fadhila, Zara, Hala, Hawa, Summayyah, Shamillah, Hamida and all those unmentioned. To Salma Siddiqui a special friend who diligently proof read this thesis is my deepest gratitude. To my family: parents Migdad Saad and late mum Saada M Ali, brothers and sisters more especially Swalha, who were always there for me and gave tremendous physical, spiritual and moral support. To my supportive husband and daughters: Zaqiyah, Shahida, Sabrah and Maimuna whose sacrifice of an absentee mum saw me through the completion of this thesis. May God reward all their patience and support.
Dedication

“To my late mother Saada Mohammad Ali (1947-2014) who never stopped believing in me. May Allah (SWT) rest her beautiful soul in eternal peace and grant her the highest paradise” Ameen

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

Nelson Mandela (1918-2013)

This thesis is indeed dedicated to all women who have inspired change in the world: to mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, wives, nieces, sisters’ in-law, daughters’ in-law, granddaughters and grandmothers.
# List of Contents

Abstract

Acknowledgements

Dedication

List of Contents

List of Appendices

List of Figures

List of Tables

Abbreviations

## Chapter One: INTRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Background to the study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>This Research Project</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Importance of the study (Significance)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Historical factors affecting Muslim women Opportunities in higher education in Uganda</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Economic factors affecting Muslim women Opportunities in higher education in Uganda</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Political Factors affecting Muslim women Opportunities in higher education in Uganda</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Geographical factors affecting Muslim women Opportunities in higher education in Uganda</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>Gender disparities in Tertiary Education in Uganda</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>University and Tertiary Education in Uganda</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>The Case of Makerere University</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10.4</td>
<td>Summary of Statistics of Postgraduate students admitted and Graduates of Makerere University</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>Rationale and intended outcomes of the study</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Islamic Women and Education</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Muslim Women Education in the UK</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Relating religion and Muslim Women Higher Education in Uganda with</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bronfenbrenner’s ecological cycle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Relating Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model to factors affecting</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ugandan Muslim Women accessing Higher education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Criticism of Bronfenbrenner’s theory in its application to the focus</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the thesis on the Ugandan Muslim Women’s progress into Higher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Emerging Themes from the Literature Review related to</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Global Human rights</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.1</td>
<td>Human Rights Education</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.2</td>
<td>Sex discrimination under Human Rights</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>United Nations MDG Goals (2000)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9.1</td>
<td>MDG UNESCO Indicators (UIS)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Relating Bronfenbrenner’s model to the Key concepts of the study</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10.1</td>
<td>Religious factors in the Mesosystem</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10.2</td>
<td>Geographical Factors</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10.3</td>
<td>Gender Issues in the Macrosystem</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10.3.1</td>
<td>Sex-role socialization in the Chronosystem</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10.4</td>
<td>The Role of the family in the Mesosystem</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10.5</td>
<td>Health Issues and the Influence of HIV/AIDS and its impact on</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muslim Women’s progress in Higher Education in Uganda.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.10.6 Government policy and facilitation
2.11 Educational factors that act as enablers to the progress of Muslim women in higher education
  2.11.1 Guidance and Counselling
  2.11.2 Widening Participation into Higher Education in Uganda
  2.11.3 FAWE’S role in widening participation into Higher education in Uganda
2.12 Relating the Conceptual Framework for the Underrepresentation of the Ugandan Muslim Woman in the field of higher education With Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model

Chapter Three: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
3.1 Introduction
3.2 Research Objectives
  3.2.1 The Main Objective
3.3 Mixed Methods Research
3.4 Using Mixed Methods within a Feminist Paradigm
3.5 Research Design
3.6 Sampling Strategy
3.7 Sample Size
3.8 Mixed Methods data collection Instruments
  3.8.1 Online questionnaires
  3.8.2 Questionnaire design
  3.8.3 Administration of Online questionnaires
    3.8.3.1 Quality of Online questionnaires
    3.8.3.2 Advantages of online questionnaires
    3.8.3.3 Disadvantages of online questionnaires
  3.8.3 Using the Likert scale within the questionnaire
3.9 Semi-structured in depth interviews
3.10 Group Interviews
3.12 Validity and Reliability in Mixed Methods
Research

3.13 Triangulation in Mixed Methods Research 150
3.17 Mixed Methods Data Analysis 152
3.14.1 Coding into Themes from QUAN and QUAL data 154
3.15 Ethical Issues 157
3.15.1 Availability of/ Access to sites for Research 158
3.15.2 Initial Participant Consent form 159
3.15.3 Ethics in online questionnaires 160
3.14.4 Ethics for the in depth interviews 161

Chapter Four: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY 163

4.1 Introduction 163
4.2 Findings from the online questionnaire 163
4.2.1 Marital status 164
4.2.2 Family and Children 165
4.2.3 Ethnicity 165
4.2.4 University Entry 166
4.2.5 Faculty representation 166
4.2.6 Rural/ Urban Primary and Secondary Schooling 168
4.2.7 Influence of HIV/AIDS on Educational Achievement 168
4.3 Measurements of Attitudes on the Likert scale of the BOS On-line Questionnaire on factors that influenced educational progress 169
4.3.2 Influence of Family background on Educational progress 170
4.3.3 Influence of Religion on Educational progress 170
4.3.4 Influence of Culture and Tradition on Educational progress 171
4.3.5 Influence of Marital status on Educational progress 172
Chapter 5: IN DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN FACTORS OF THE STUDY

5.1 Introduction 178

5.2 Historical factors and the Influence of Imported Cultures 178

5.2.1 Historical factors: Civic-strife and War 181

5.2.2 Historical factors: Expulsion of Asians from Uganda 185

5.3 Economic factors 186

5.3.1 Effect of SES on Educational Progress 186

5.3.2 Economic status: Poverty and low living standards 188

5.3.3 Economic factors: Materialism and Peer pressure 189

5.3.4 Economic factors: Social Pressures 189

5.3.5 Economic factors: dependence on Agriculture 190

5.4 Social-Cultural factors: Religion and human rights 191

5.4.1 Social-Cultural factors: Religion as a Barrier 191

5.4.2 Social-Cultural factors: Religion as an enabler 192
5.4.3 Social-Cultural factors: Gender Issues
In a patriarchal society

5.4.4 Social-Cultural factors: Marriage of females
At a young age

5.4.5 Social-Cultural factors: Family and Children

5.4.6 Social-Cultural factors: Family support and encouragement

5.4.7 Social-Cultural factors: Polygamy
and extended family

5.4.8 Social-Cultural factors: Health Issues
HIV/AIDS

5.5 Government and Educational Policies

5.5.1 Political factors

5.5.2 University and Institutional Strikes

5.5.3 Government policies as barriers to Educational Progress

5.5.4 Educational factors as Enablers to Educational progress

5.5.4.1 High self-esteem
5.5.4.2 Career Guidance and Counselling as an enabler
5.5.4.3 Good role models

5.6 How the women were able to overcome Barriers

5.6.1 Resilience and Focus on achieving better
amongst families
5.6.2 Positive Attitudes towards female education

5.6.3 Affirmative Action policies
5.6.4 Overcoming the influence of Marriage and family

5.6.5 Overcoming Geographical barriers
5.6.6 Working while studying
5.6.7 Faith, belief in oneself and determination
To succeed

5.7 Summary of the main findings of the Mixed-methods research

Chapter 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Major themes of the study related to Bronfenbrenner's ecological model
6.3 Uses and misuses of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological theory
6.4 Linking Bronfenbrenner's Model with The Barriers and Enablers To The Progress of Muslim Women's Education
6.5 The Influence of factors identified in the study as related to Bronfenbrenner's model on Muslim Women's progress into Higher Education
6.5.1 Social Cultural Factors: Islam as a Religion and it's Impact on Muslim Female Education
6.5.2 Educational Factors
6.5.3 The Gender Mainstreaming Directorate of Makerere University
6.5.4 Political Interventions: More Parliamentary Representation for Muslim Women
6.5.5 District Representation of Muslim Women And Rural /Urban Settlement and Government Facilitation
6.5.6 Proactive Muslim Women in the Society
6.5.7 Human Rights Issues: Widening Participation Into Higher Education in Uganda
6.5.8 Funding, Scholarships and Bursaries
6.6 Critical Potential Solutions to the Problems In Assessing Higher Education in Uganda
6.6.1 Muslim Girls' and Women's Education
6.6.2 Launching Of New Courses
6.6.3 Eliminating Gender Discrimination through Investment In Prolonged Girls' Education
6.7 What Needs To Be Done To Ensure Supportive Environments Towards Muslim Women’s Higher Education
6.7.1 Institutional Facilitation
6.7.2 Building Capacity of Muslim Women Teachers and Education Leaders
List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Pilot online questionnaire 281
2 Pilot Interview questions 284
3 BOS On-line questionnaire survey results. 285
4 Interview Schedule 294
5 Participant Consent form 296
6 Respondents interviewed 297
7 Answers for follow on Questionnaire (2 pronged interviews) 307
8 Poster 309

References 310

List of Figures

Graph 1.5.1 Comparison of the real growth and inflation rates in four countries. 12
Graph 1.6.1 Composition of Ninth Parliament of Uganda (2011) 15
Map 1.7.1 Uganda 2011 Districts by Statistical Sub Regions 17
Figure 2.5.1 Adaptation of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological model (2005) to the factors affecting Muslim women’s progress into higher education in Uganda 49
Figure 3.3.1  Exploratory Sequential Design  115
Figure 3.14.2  Diagram to summarise the coding techniques Used for the study  155
Figure 6.2.1  Model linked to Bronfenbrenner’s Cycle and the Conceptual framework for the study  228

List of Tables

Table 1.10.1  Makerere University enrolment growths in percentage for females before and after the introduction of the 1.5 female bonus point scheme. Academic Year (1988-2010)  23
Table 1.10.2  Students admitted for a postgraduate degree at Makerere University  23
Table 1.10.3  Muslim Female post graduate students 2005-2010  24
Table 1.10.5  Total admissions statistics of Makerere University (2005-2011)  25
Table 1.10.6  Undergraduate Admission  26
Table 3.5.1  Data collected for the Case study, Makerere University.  125
Table 3.7.1  Sampling Strategy  132
Table 4.3.1  Likert Scale Findings  169
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABEK</td>
<td>Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCG</td>
<td>Classroom Construction Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCT</td>
<td>Co-ordinating Centre Tutors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPE</td>
<td>Complimentary Opportunity for Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPTC</td>
<td>Core Primary Teacher Training Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department of International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIC</td>
<td>Equity in the Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESIP</td>
<td>Education Sector Investment Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAWE</td>
<td>Forum for African Women Educationalists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRESH</td>
<td>Focussing Resources for Effective School Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSI</td>
<td>Female Scholarship Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSF</td>
<td>Female Scholarship Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEM</td>
<td>Girls Education Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMD</td>
<td>Gender Mainstreaming Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOU</td>
<td>Government of Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human Immuno Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno Deficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPU</td>
<td>Inter parliamentary Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUIU</td>
<td>Islamic University in Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAB</td>
<td>Joint Admission Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAK</td>
<td>Makerere University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGDSLD</td>
<td>Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoES</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUST</td>
<td>Mbarara University of Science and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPW</td>
<td>National Action Plan for Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGP</td>
<td>National Gender Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSGE</td>
<td>National Strategy for Girls Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTC</td>
<td>National Teacher Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEAP</td>
<td>Poverty Eradication and Alleviation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGE</td>
<td>Promotion of Girl’s Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph. D</td>
<td>Philosophy of Higher Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMT</td>
<td>Science Maths and Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UACE</td>
<td>Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCE</td>
<td>Uganda Certificate of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UIS</td>
<td>UNESCO Institute of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDC</td>
<td>Uganda National Curriculum Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEB</td>
<td>Uganda National Examination Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPE</td>
<td>Universal Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USE</td>
<td>Universal Secondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a general overview of the importance of Education with regard to the human rights notion of gender parity in access to Higher Education. More specifically, the chapter highlights the current trends of Muslim Women’s progress into Higher Education, using a case study of Makerere University in Uganda. Education forms the key part in uplifting individual well-being, nurturing development and fostering economic and social welfare (King et al 2011). Through education, men and women are able to claim their rights and realize their full potential in the economic, political and social arenas of life (Agosin 2002, Archer et al 2003). Education contends King and Hill (1997), is the most powerful way of lifting people out of poverty, playing a particularly significant role in girls’ development, and an intrinsic part in addressing gender-based discrimination towards females. In many communities, great challenges remain since many females are still excluded from education thus allowing educational gender inequality to persist, resulting in females being less likely to access, remain or achieve in school (Ahmad and Tyrer 2006, Roudi-Fahimi and Moghadam 2003, King and Hill 1997).

In sub-Saharan Africa countries like Uganda, free access to secondary and Higher Education, which are necessary for the development of a skilled and knowledgeable labour force, continues to elude females (Abal and Khamis 2012). Despite being considered an essential social right – a view set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1949) and reinforced by international conferences like the Fourth World conference on Women in Beijing (1995) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2000). This situation persists despite the approval of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by nearly 190 countries, including Uganda at the United
Nations Millennium Summit in 2000. These goals include improved education to sustain economic growth. Gender equality and women’s empowerment provide prerequisites of a democratic society, fundamental in fostering development, since neglecting them “often means poor health care, inadequate legal rights and closed access to labour markets” (Lynch et al 1992:62).

Despite almost universal endorsement and approval of these development goals, globally some 72 million primary aged children are still not enrolled in school, 57% (41 million) of whom are girls. Lack of basic education severely limits choice and opportunities for young people, making it harder for developing countries to tackle poverty and disease. Moreover, Uganda and other sub-Saharan African countries accounted for more out-of-school children than any other region - 33 million children including 18 million girls (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2008).

In spite of some progress, global enrolment in primary schools only increased by over 41 million children between 1999 and 2005. Thus 95 girls for every 100 boys enrolled in school in 2005 compared with 92 girls for every 100 boys in 1999. Although global numbers of primary school children outside the education system fell by over 24 million between 1999 and 2005, enrolment rates in sub-Saharan Africa only increased from 57% (1999) to 70% (2005). The 65% increment in Uganda (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2008) led Kasente (2003) to note that girls’ enrolment in Ugandan secondary schools consistently lagged behind that of boys by about 20%. This gap was persistently wider at secondary than at primary level.

Moreover, the UN Millennium Development Goals Report (2007) reflected that although female emancipation appeared to be progressing toward a free, fair and equitable environment in education, women still fared worse than their male
counterparts in accessing Higher Education. This report also indicated that despite Uganda and other sub-Saharan African countries’ progress towards universal enrolment, girls and children from poorer or rural families in those countries were least likely to attend school (UN Report 2007), contrary to MD goals. Since education plays a central role in democratic societies, building and sustaining economic growth, increasing productive capacities and improving national incomes, the report argued that women needed appropriate education and training to take full advantage of these opportunities, particularly in Uganda and other sub-Saharan countries where women’s progress and the development of their societies (Nwonwu 2008) was defined by their skills.

Notwithstanding previous attempts to educate women about birth control and economic advantages of smaller families, the Ugandan population has one of the highest fertility rates in the world with 6.14 children born per woman (CIA fact book, 2012) and continues to grow (Kasente 2003). Uncontrolled birth-rates, according to Lynch et al (1992) mean that uneducated women have less economic control over their lives. Traditionally according to Ssekamwa (1997) Ugandan children are regarded as wealth, with many families deciding to have more rather than fewer children, to provide economic security in old age.

Although rising birth-rates pressure the education system and national economy, lowering living standards, without education, women would find difficulty in providing proper nutritional and sanitary environments for families (Agosin 2002, Mohanty 2000, and Keet 2010). Improving educational opportunities for them would help to develop skills, improving decision-making and influencing community change in key areas like the economy, social wellbeing and health (Odin and Manicas 2004, Dale et al 2002).
Thus “when you educate a girl in Africa, everything changes. She’ll be three times less likely to get HIV/AIDS, earn 25% more income and have a smaller, healthier family” (Camfed International mission statement). Moreover, “a nation that wants stable population growth, healthier citizens and a large labour force has to consider women’s education as a major priority” (Lynch et al 1992:63), breaking the cycle of female deprivation through access to education (Agosin 2002, King and Hill 1997). Recognising that women’s education also has a critical role in the process of globalization (Agosin 2002, Burbules et al 2000), issues surrounding “unequal access to or inadequate educational and training opportunity of good quality at all levels” provided the predominant area of critical concern at the Beijing Women’s conference (Conference proceedings 1995).

King et al (2011) still regard the development of Higher Education as central to economic and social progress. Many successful national Higher Education systems are simply the by-product of increased global co-operation and competition. Thus if state funding is withdrawn from education, serious human rights and ethical questions are raised. Recently, market-oriented schooling and changes in the global economy amplifying educational inequalities have resulted in sub-Saharan Africa and Uganda in particular becoming one of the lowest educationally achieving regions (Asankha and Takashi 2011), despite the belief (King and Hill, 1997) that ultimately, the amount of education received by women in any community would make a significant, positive economic impact on the local and national quality of life.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY: UNITED NATIONS INITIATIVES

Subsequently, the women’s struggles for human rights culminated at the United Nations 4th world conference on Women in Beijing, where large numbers of female delegates including some Ugandans came to the fore, pledging to remove barriers to women’s
active participation in all private and public spheres of life. Claude and Weston (2006), Maslak (2008) and Murthy and Smith (2010) contend, this meant sharing power with men in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making at home, at work and in wider national and international communities. This would only be achieved if women and men had equal opportunities to pursue Higher Education (Murthy and Smith 2010). Despite apparent good intentions Uganda has emerged as one of the nations where men and women, and Muslim women in particular, have not had equal access to educational opportunities.

Further efforts through the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI 2010), convened at Dakar to recommit participants to the acceleration of gender equity-related actions, agreed ten years earlier at the World Education forum (2000), and attempted to remedy this situation. Most developing countries, including Uganda agreed to debate girls’ education, accelerating action towards the Millennium development goals: MDG 2; to achieve universal primary education (already implemented in Uganda in 1997) and MDG 3; to promote gender equality and empowering women. Developing countries had to establish a broad understanding of gender equity, girls’ education and the strategic actions (UNGEI, 2010). Three common themes were paramount - poverty, quality and violence. Consequently the Dakar Declaration aimed to accelerate girls’ education on, reinforce notions of gender equality, suggesting positive interventions in education to address poverty and violence, ensuring the development of a complex notion of quality and equity in education to make ‘gender equality’ ‘a reality’ (UNGEI, 2012: v–vi).

To achieve these goals, it was nevertheless important to maintain an understanding of gender in relation to history, location, political economy, and the influences of social and cultural relations (Aikman and Rao 2012, Manion 2012, Unterhalter 2012, Oduro, Swartz and Arnot 2012). Meanwhile "traditional cultures and sexist stereotypes
diffused by media and religious extremists’ still negatively ‘affect girls’ access to education, dropout rates, professional or Higher Education opportunities” (Women’s United Nations Report Network 2003:12), reinforcing the previous status quo.

1.2 THIS RESEARCH PROJECT

The study took a mixed methods approach to explore the reasons behind the patterns of Muslim women’s underrepresentation in Higher Education in Uganda. Using Makerere University as the case study, the research was able to identify barriers and enablers affecting Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education. Although the study was based on a mixed methods approach emphasis was on the feminist interpretivist paradigm whereby women’s voices were captured to uncover the complexity of reasons behind this underrepresentation, so as to identify corrective measures regarding Muslim women’s underrepresentation and contribute to the body of existing knowledge on gender disparities in education. Since previous research was limited, this study might provide a basic frame of reference for more detailed investigation in the future.

This study will investigate the causes of underrepresentation of Ugandan Muslim women in Higher Education. By addressing human rights issues in terms of gender parity in that context and generating recommendations from the evidence that is useful to policy planners and implementers, this research may enable improvements to the current situation, facilitating a more positive approach to the advancement of education among African Muslim women.

1.3 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY (SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY)

As a Muslim female graduate, a product of the Ugandan educational system, the researcher’s concern for this topic arose from observing how very few African Muslim women seemed responsive to the educational opportunities, especially those at higher
levels, available to them. The study therefore explores reasons behind such disparities by capturing the voices of Muslim women respondents from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda.

Emerging themes of the study were developed using an adaptation of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model of human development which is discussed more fully in Chapter 2 (Figure 2.9) whose factors were strongly related to the complex ecologies affecting Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education in Uganda, identifying key factors relevant to Makerere University, Uganda. These were developed to create a conceptual framework (Figure fig 2.5.2) whose factors are discussed in detail in the Literature Review. Major themes identified were strongly linked to Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model. Subsequent developments of the conceptual framework were the: Historical, Economic, Political and Geographical and Historical factors.

1.4 HISTORICAL FACTORS AFFECTING MUSLIM WOMEN OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN UGANDA: UGANDA AS A BRITISH PROTECTORATE (1894-1962)

Initially Ugandans invested in their children's education with the Christian missions that emphasized literacy skills encouraging African converts to learn to read and write. Thereafter a number of factors influenced the growth of education in Uganda from the 1920s, when the government first established a small department of education, through to the mid-1950s, when native Ugandans took control of education as part of a constitutional move towards self-government (Mukherjee 1985). Uganda was fortunate in having a relatively buoyant economy based on cotton and coffee exports, and two governors, Sir Phillip Mitchell and Sir Andrew Cohen. The latter was probably the most dynamic and controversial of all British colonial governors, but both placed a very high priority on promoting education. Education policy in Uganda, however was strongly
influenced by the Christian missions and the highly significant de la Warr Commission, requested by Mitchell, which reviewed the future of Higher Education in east Africa in 1937 (Thompson 2003). Unpublished but influential in 1951, the Colonial Office sponsored a study of educational policy and practice in East and Central Africa, when the colonies began drawing up ten year economic and social development plans. The appointment of Sir Christopher Cox, as the Educational Adviser to the Colonial Office in 1940, in addition to the strong influence of the London-based Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies saw Uganda begin to assume a path in secular Education (Thompson 2003). Not until the early 1990s, did the education policy address issues of gender disparities in enrolment, dropout rates, performance and general attainment, for until then, the glaring disparities in the education system were attributed to historical and cultural factors, regarding males as more important than females. Gender disparities persist today (Uganda Education Sector Policy review 2006) despite reforms to secure greater educational equality (Kasozi 2003, Muhwezi 2003, 2006 and Kasente 2003).

Significant measures were taken to increase the female student population through cooperation with development partners like United Kingdom’s DFID (Department for International Development). These strategies included the Universal Primary Education (UPE) program launched in 1996. This strategy required each family taking four of their school-aged children to school, ensuring that two of the four were girls. With 1.5 bonus points awarded to females entering University the female population at Makerere, Uganda’s largest University increased to 41% in 2002, compared with 23% in 1989 (Asanka and Takashi 2011).

Kasente (2003) observed that enrolment in Ugandan secondary education was again determined by two factors: -the pupil’s performance at PLE (Primary Leaving
Examinations) and the availability of secondary school places. Contemporary data showing girls’ enrolment in secondary education was 20% behind that of boys, demonstrating a wider gap than had previously existed at primary level. With the success of the UPE policy, the Ugandan government became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to introduce the USE (Universal Secondary education) in 2007 (Asankha and Takashi 2011). Students passing their primary examinations were given access to free secondary education. Nevertheless, the biggest hurdle for most low-income families was that, although the tuition was free, parents still had to pay for boarding fees, scholastic materials and medical care. Recent data resulting from USE suggests; half a million secondary school children currently attend 1,471 schools (Asanka and Takashi 2011).

As a master plan to foster gender parity in education, several strategies were implemented which included the National Strategy for Girls Education (NSGE) 2003 (Kasente 2003, Muhwezi 2003), the Promotion of Girl’s Education (PGE) scheme launched in 15 districts, and expected to roll out to the entire country, facilitating female retention and performance at primary level and the Equity in the Classroom (EIC) program which was implemented, to encourage equal participation of girls and boys in the classroom. Additionally, the Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education (COPE) and the Alternative Basic for Karamoja (ABEK) programs were implemented in 2003, to cater for marginalised Communities in Uganda (Muhwezi 2003, Kasente 2003).

Despite these affirmative strategies, female Muslim University enrolment remained low and despite an identified social need, there was still no government science and technology policy for Higher Education. Imitating colonial models the curriculum of
most Ugandan universities was no longer appropriate. Kasozi’s (2003) main concern in this area was with proposed reforms in University management, establishing the current two-tier system of public and private universities, institutional capacity, financing and coping with decreasing resources and curriculum design appropriate for African development needs. Other matters for concern were correcting the imbalance in arts/humanities and science students, addressing the shortage of academic staff, access to tertiary education, improving its quality and increasing institutional and academic autonomy (Nyanzi 2002).

1.5 ECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECTING MUSLIM WOMEN OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

Like other sub-Saharan countries Uganda has lower levels of women’s education and labour force participation. At both secondary and tertiary levels, girls and poorer young people comprised the bulk of those locked out of educational institutions by financial and cultural constraints. The government’s contribution to Universal Secondary Education (USE), approximately 141,000 Ugandan shillings ($52) per student is spread over 3 school terms, barely covering essential needs. While parents must provide uniform, stationary and meals, poverty and low standards of living (Abal and Khamis 2012) make this difficult for many poorer families, leading Tembon and Lucia (2008) to conclude that Uganda’s economic status has a greater impact on the uptake of female educational opportunities than inequalities associated with gender, rural/urban settlement or orphan hood, largely caused by HIV/AIDS.

Although educational attainment may vary, as victims of gender discrimination, geographical settlement and the HIV pandemic, generally throughout the educational cycle, the Ugandan poor increasingly drop out of schooling. Despite official attempts to accommodate UPE (Universal Primary Education 1997) and USE (Universal Secondary
Education 2007) as a way of stimulating access to schools, the gap between rich and poor persisted (Muhwezi 2003), partly explained by grinding poverty and hunger, coupled with the socio-cultural bias found in most African countries favouring males over females (Brock and Cammish, 1997). Having a negative effect on female’s educational participation especially in rural Uganda, poorer parents with large families may have regarded their daughters’ education as unwarranted and expensive especially since girls were often used as the caretakers of family homes. Thus, school attendance presented a double loss of family income; vital help at home and on the land would need to be accounted for (Kasozi 2002, Muhwezi 2003 and Kasente 2003).

As long as women’s traditional economic contribution to family income remained substantial, though hidden and unpaid, lack of experience combined with low economic and social standing further undermined female status and power, increasing vulnerability. Moreover, dominant patriarchal and patrilocal values meant investment in female education was generally regarded as wasteful. Educated females would only benefit the family of marriage rather than families of origin (Kasente and Muwezi, 2003). Alternatively for more privileged women, educational investment presented opportunities of 'marrying well' (Brock and Cammish 1997:56). Poor turnover in many Ugandan schools also reflected an official inability to resource schools adequately, resulting in irregular payment of teacher’s salaries, low morale, teacher absenteeism and parental dissatisfaction (Kuteesa et al, 2010).
Graph 1.5.1: Comparison of the real growth and inflation rates in four countries: Kenya, Uganda, UK and Pakistan (UN REPORT 2005)

Graph 1.5.1 illustrates the real growth rate compared with the inflation rate among four countries – one, a developed country (in this case the United Kingdom). The United Kingdom was chosen for several reasons. Having been colonised by Britain, the current Ugandan education system generally follows the British curriculum despite some structural amendments relevant to Uganda (7 years in primary, 6 in secondary and 3, 4 or 5 years at University level). Pakistan is also included for comparison as another British colony but one with a high Muslim population. Kenya is also part of East Africa, a British colony like Uganda sharing a similar educational and administrative curriculum, with a similar social, economic, political, geographical and historical background regarding the development of education as an independent nation since 1963.
Series 1 of graph 1.5.1 represents the Real Growth rate while series 2 represents Inflation. The United Kingdom has the least difference between these rates, indicating economic levels or standards of living are favourable i.e. people have comparatively better lifestyles, earning enough to assimilate rising inflation, unlike Pakistan. Although comparatively better than Kenya and Uganda who have the largest percentage difference in real growth rate and inflation, Pakistani people still do not earn enough to cater for their living expenses. Living standards in Uganda, Kenya and Pakistan are relatively low compared to those in the U.K. Low level incomes affect the enrolment of children into Higher Education (Kasozi 2002). This is especially true for females. In Uganda for instance this represents the greatest barrier for Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education.

1.6 POLITICAL FACTORS AFFECTING MUSLIM WOMEN OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

The research acknowledges that the current policies, widely praised for introducing affirmative action in favour of marginalized groups have resulted for the first time in Ugandan women's rights being enshrined in the constitution. The government ensured the equitable representation of women in parliament using Article 78 (1) of the 1995 Constitution, prescribing the composition of Parliament to have one woman representative for every district resulting in the eighth Parliament (2006-2011). In itself that parliament had 79 District Women Representatives. With a national women's movement growing dramatically into a vibrant political force, affirmative action ensured at least a third of legislative and civic positions were reserved for females (Ssekamwa 1997, Nyeko 1996, Karugire 1980). With the affirmative action policy for women in place, all 95 districts in Uganda have female representation in parliament. Thus, Uganda became the first African country to have an appointed woman vice-

According to its Demographics Profile, Uganda’s population in 2011 was 34,612,250 rising in 2012 to approximately 36 million. Although the 2002 census recorded a Muslim population of 12.1%, it is now estimated to be over 25%. Based on the findings of the CIA World facts book, whose estimation of Uganda’s population in 1998 was 20,158,176 people, Muslims constituted 7,256,943 in 1998, or 36% of the total population. Therefore, the current estimated numbers of Muslims should range between 30% and 40% of the 36 million people (CIA World facts 2012).

Despite active involvement of Muslim women in the political arena of Uganda, the researcher felt there was little advocacy in sensitising and encouraging the Ugandan Muslim woman to progress higher in education due to a combination of reasons that were mainly financial, traditional and due to the changing structure of the Ugandan family (Ssekamwa 1997, Nyeko 1996, Karugire 1980). The government has not only fostered its aims at both primary and secondary levels but in 1991 introduced the practice of affirmative action at University level (Kasazi 2002) giving an extra 1.5 points for girls to increase their ‘A’ level (GCSE) points score, increasing female enrolment at Makerere University by 35% from 1991 to 2011 (Makerere University fact book 2011). While this may have encouraged female involvement generally, the researcher had noticed the absence of Muslim females and begun to consider possible explanations for this phenomenon.

Graph 1.6.1 shows the current ninth Parliament of Uganda (2011-2016) made up of 375 members, 244 males and 131 females. Only 9.4% of males and 8.4% of female
members were Muslim, making the overall percentage of Muslim representation in Parliament, 9%. The pattern shows that Muslims in parliament are underrepresented within the mainstream political system of Uganda. Feeling a need to include respondents who were current students with earlier graduates from Makerere University with current government roles to provide an insight into why Muslim women in Uganda fared badly in accessing Higher Education and whether or not, existing national strategies had been developed to address this problem, the research began.

Graph 1.6.1: Composition of the Ninth Parliament Representatives in Uganda (2011)

1.7 GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS AFFECTING MUSLIM WOMEN OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA: INFLUENCE OF RURAL-URBAN GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The study acknowledges that Uganda records much (of the) rural-urban migration. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2012), the process urbanisation, generally understood as the increase in the proportion of the population living in urban areas, represents a fluid concept since its definition has changed with time. The Ugandan 2002 Census, defined urban areas as only the gazetted ones while the earlier
censuses included ungazetted trading centres with more than 1,000 people. The net migration rate of Uganda is estimated at -0.02 migrant (s)/1,000 population (2011) while its urban population constituted 13% of the total in 2010. There is an estimated 4.8% annual rate of change (2010-15).

Urban growth in Uganda was estimated at 0.8 million persons in 1980 and increased to 1.535 million in 2009. Currently estimated at 5.0 million persons in 2012, the urban population has increased more than six times its size. This is mainly attributed to the creation of new urban administrative units, natural growth, demographic factors (excess of fertility over mortality) and rural-urban migration (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2012). People continue searching for employment, better markets and improved livelihoods. Usually attracted to urban areas, most Ugandan women perceived opportunities for a better life but in most cases found poverty and less educational opportunities (Birch and Wachter 2011, Soja 2006).

The map 1.7.1 reflects current regional distribution of districts in Uganda. Although, Kampala, an area of 197 km² is the smallest district it has a relatively high population, estimated at 1.72 million in 2012 (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2012). This situation is the result of rural-urban migration. The majority of the rural working population while engaged in agriculture had incomes that fell below the poverty line. A report on the urban labour force in 2010 indicated that 29.1% of this workforce had neither primary level or no education at all while only about 22% had specialized training of post-primary level (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2012).
1.8 GENDER DISPARITIES IN TERTIARY EDUCATION IN UGANDA

The study established that at tertiary level, although the policy of awarding females 1.5 additional points on entry yielded positive results in recruitment, problems persisted regarding gender ratio in each faculty. As females were mostly admitted to arts based faculties it was felt there was need to introduce Gender Studies as a subject, from as early as the pre-primary level, to inform children of the importance of educated women.
in society, eradicate negative attitudes towards female education, reduce hidden
discrimination and reinforce girls’ self-confidence (Asankha and Takashi 2011).

The study recognised that the current policy was based on expanding the functional
capacity of educational structures to reduce inequalities of access on the grounds of
gender (sex), geographical areas and social class, and also by reforming the education
system and redistributing resources, while increasing funding for higher tertiary
education to enhance equity of access for older girls in the same way that UPE
(Universal Primary Education) has reduced differential access to primary schools.
Unfortunately, this liberalisation has led to Ugandan privatization of schools, hence
reducing opportunities for poorer females accessing Higher Education (Asankha and
Takashi 2011).

The study acknowledges how the 1990 affirmative action to expand the number of
Ugandan women qualifying for public University entry undoubtedly increased
enrolment from 23% in 1989 to 35% in 1999, and 41% in 2002, producing greater
numbers of women graduates. Meanwhile, at Makerere University, the academic year
2009/2010 saw women’s enrolment increase to 48% (Makerere University fact book).
Raising teacher awareness of negative attitudes towards girls’ education was coupled
with training in more effective ways to promote equity in the classroom, carried out
through gender mainstreaming workshops organized by the Ministry of Education and
Sports and the Ministry of State for Gender, Labour and Social Development.

The study established that the EIC (Equity in the Classroom), implemented through the
Core Primary Teacher Training Colleges (CPTCs) was later mainstreamed in the
National Reform Programme of MoES. All 18 CPTCs (Core Primary Teacher Training
 Colleges) were covered. The PTC (Primary Teacher Colleges) coached 446 Co-
ordinating Centre Tutors (CCTs) with the capacity of reaching over 9,000 (85%) primary schools. Other initiatives included the Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education (COPE) program, and the Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) aiming to increase access for disadvantaged children, especially girls who were not able to participate in formal education. COPE and ABEK were programmes facilitated by UNICEF Uganda CP 2001. In 2003, 162 COPE/ABEK centres benefited 3,502 disadvantaged girls and 2,906 disadvantaged boys in 10 districts (Muhwezi 2003).

The Classroom Construction Grant (CCG) programme built classrooms and pit latrines, specifically separating girls’ from boys’ latrines; a strategy set up by the Gender Desk at the MoES headquarters. Further aims included equitable access to basic education, increased girls’ retention in school, improving female performance especially in science and mathematics, protecting female students against all forms of child abuse, making the curriculum gender sensitive and improving educational facilities to broaden their appeal to disadvantaged minorities. This policy also stressed the importance of providing courses in gender awareness for teachers particularly senior women/men in gender responsive methodology and practice. Finally, there had to be a gender policy formulated for the MoES (Musisi and Dodge 2002).

The study recognised that the Girls’ Education Movement in Africa (GEM) launched in Uganda in August 2001 aimed to promote gender parity, enabling girls themselves to identify best practices improving participation in education and enhancing their life skills. GEM specifically targeted girls with special needs to create greater awareness of the benefits accrued from female education. GEM is a product of the MoES gender desk. The Child Friendly School programme provided another strategy facilitated by
the UNICEF GoU CP for 2001, to promote girls’ education in friendly school and home environments at local, district and national level, co-ordinated by the gender desk of the MoES (MoES 2001a). Other rural initiatives included girls in Focussing Resources for Effective School Health (FRESH) encouraging the provision of safe water and sanitation to schools, with washrooms for girls and urinals for boys housed separately. About 642 child/girl friendly primary schools benefited approximately 145,500 girls and 259,000 boys (Muhwezi 2003).

The chapter addresses the numerous strategies that have been introduced to encourage female participation in education in Uganda. The focus of my study would therefore consider the reasons behind the poor representation of Muslim women in the field of Higher Education by capturing the voices of the students and Muslim female graduates from Makerere University.

1.9 UNIVERSITY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION IN UGANDA

The study recognises that various institutions including University, teacher training and vocational institutions make up Uganda’s tertiary education sector. University admissions usually start with the release of UACE (Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education) results by UNEB (Uganda National Examination Bureau). With the exception of Makerere University, the Joint Admissions Board at the MoES (Ministry of Education and Sports) handles Mbarara, University of Science and Technology (MUST), Gulu University, and Kyambogo University plus all admissions to other public institutions. Admissions to University education are based on three major requirements: - UACE (Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education) results, Mature Age entry examinations, and Diploma entry (Makerere University fact book).
The Quota System, with each district allocated a number of places, was introduced in 2003. Gender inequalities rose out of this scheme since boys out-numbered girls studying for ‘A’ level and girls who failed to take up offers immediately, almost automatically lost their place. The Mature Age Entry Scheme did not benefit women since it had no set syllabus and required girls to have had some type of “continuing education” which for most was not readily available (Makerere University fact book).

Thus, tertiary institutions tend to reflect the pronounced gender disparities of enrolment and although University education has grown rapidly since the 1970s from about 5,000 students in 1975 to 55,000 in 2000, in 2001, there were 75,462 students. Universities and teacher training colleges accounted for a combined enrolment of 86% of the total tertiary sector. While increased enrolment has seen an increase in female admissions, there are currently 15 registered Universities, 4 public and 11 private (faith owned and private investors), 10 NTCs (National Teacher Colleges), and a host of other vocational and technical colleges (Kasozi 2002).

1.10 THE CASE OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

The study is based in Kampala, the capital city of Uganda which is located at the Northern shore of Lake Victoria at an altitude of 4,300ft. (1,310 metres above sea level) and has a population of approximately two million people (Barlas and Lin 2010). Kampala hosts the case study Makerere University, which is one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in East Africa. The particular context of this study aims to investigate the causes to the underrepresentation of the Ugandan Muslim women in the field of Higher Education. The case study focuses on Makerere University, which as the largest public institution, currently represents a cross section of the Ugandan population. The most significant growth in enrolment in the University sector since
1986 has occurred at Makerere University where enrolment grew from around 2,000 in the latter part of the 1970s to some 20,000 students in 2001. This includes an increase in the number of females, the result of various state interventions to bridge the gender gap in enrolment (Bishop-Sambrook 2000).

The study acknowledges that the female enrolment at Makerere University was raised to one third from a mere 25% of female students (423 females) admitted in 1989, just before the introduction of the 1.5 points scheme. These figures have since fluctuated between 30% and 35%. A further scheme called the Female Scholarship Initiative, supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, was introduced to support applications from female students from disadvantaged schools and rural areas. When the scheme was launched in 2001, ninety students were able to benefit for the three-year degree programmes. The package covered tuition, accommodation and special faculty expenses. Of the female faculty staff, Makerere University had only 0.26% out of the 1053 in 2001. Another intervention known as the Gender Mainstreaming division was also launched at the University in the same year to enhance and incorporate gender awareness in the University function (Bishop-Sambrook 2000).

Furthermore, the study establishes that there was a subsequent increase in the ratio of females to males in Ugandan Universities. According to the Makerere University website, during the 59th graduation ceremony, in January 2009, the female graduates made up 46.2% while the males were 53.8%. The percentage figures clearly indicated that great strides were being made to educate more female students and make Makerere University, a truly equal opportunities institution, in line with the National Objectives of empowering the women. In 2008, the Figures were 43.7% females and 57.3% male,
thus showing that the gap had significantly closed and parity could soon be realized (Makerere University Fact book 2011).

Table 1.10.1 looks at the enrolment percentages of female students before and after the introduction of the 1.5 bonus points for female students who had qualified for entry into any public University. The differences before and after the scheme are clear. The percentages steadily increased from 23% in 1988/89 to 48% in 2009/10 showing a remarkable improvement in female admission at Makerere University.

Table 1.10.1: Makerere University enrolment growth, in percentage, for females before and after the introduction of the 1.5 female bonus point scheme. Academic Year (1988-2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>Female percentages</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1988/89</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>Before the Introduction of 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989/90</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990/91</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>After the Introduction of 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991/92</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992/93</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993/94</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994/95</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995/96</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/97</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997/98</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/99</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999/2000</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>20 years after the introduction of the scheme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.10.2: Students admitted for a postgraduate degree at Makerere University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL MALE</th>
<th>TOTAL FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>2608</td>
<td>1219</td>
<td>3827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2006/2007</td>
<td>2294</td>
<td>1153</td>
<td>3447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2007/2008</td>
<td>2041</td>
<td>1096</td>
<td>3137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2008/2009</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1050</td>
<td>3045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2009/2010</td>
<td>2114</td>
<td>1223</td>
<td>3337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL FOR 5 YEARS</td>
<td>11,052</td>
<td>5,741</td>
<td>16,793</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR OF GRADUATION</td>
<td>NO OF MUSLIM FEMALE POST_GRADUATES</td>
<td>TOTAL NO OF FEMALE POST GRADUATES</td>
<td>PERCENTAGE OF MUSLIM FEMALES TO OTHER FEMALES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 2005</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 2006</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>3.75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 2007</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 2008</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 2009</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>4.43%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 2010</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Makerere University Academic Registrar's department nominal roll records, (2011)

The low percentage in 1994/95 (24%) can be explained by the establishment of private universities that saw more females enrol for professional courses like Law, Education and Business Studies at the Islamic University in Uganda, Nkumba University, Nkozi University and the Uganda Christian University in Mukono. This was in preference to flat B.A. courses they would have qualified to undertake with the additional 1.5 points.

**1.10.4 SUMMARY OF STATISTICS OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS ADMITTED AND GRADUATES OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

The disparity in female enrolment at Makerere University is highlighted in Table 1.10.2 and 1.10.3. A summary of the percentage of females admitted to postgraduate programmes at Makerere University is given in Table 1.10.2. The extremely low percentages of Muslim females on postgraduate courses, compared to other females are reflected in Table 1.10.3, yet statistics suggest that the current Muslim Population of Uganda is between 30% to 40%. Table 1.10.3 and 1.10.5 provide justification for the study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL FEMALES</th>
<th>TOTAL MALES</th>
<th>TOTAL MUSLIM FEMALES</th>
<th>TOTAL MUSLIM MALES</th>
<th>TOTAL MUSLIMS</th>
<th>% MUSLIM FEMALES</th>
<th>% MUSLIM MALES</th>
<th>TOTAL % MUSLIMS</th>
<th>GRAND TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2005/2006</td>
<td>N/M 5,079</td>
<td>9,630</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>1,234</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>15,943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M 525</td>
<td>709</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOT 5,604</td>
<td>10,339</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 2006/2007</td>
<td>N/M 3,688</td>
<td>8,780</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>1,522</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>13,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M 646</td>
<td>876</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOT 4,334</td>
<td>9,656</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 2007/2008</td>
<td>N/M 4,040</td>
<td>6,470</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>1,736</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>12,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M 749</td>
<td>987</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOT 4,789</td>
<td>7,457</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 2008/2009</td>
<td>N/M 5,204</td>
<td>7,450</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>1,761</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>14,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M 773</td>
<td>988</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOT 5,977</td>
<td>8,438</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 2009/2010</td>
<td>N/M 7,456</td>
<td>8,742</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>989</td>
<td>1,790</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>17,988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M 801</td>
<td>989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOT 8,257</td>
<td>9,731</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 2010/2011</td>
<td>N/M 5,222</td>
<td>6,980</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>1,032</td>
<td>1,871</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>14,073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M 839</td>
<td>1,032</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOT 6,061</td>
<td>8,012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 2011/2012</td>
<td>N/M 9,210</td>
<td>9,463</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>1,032</td>
<td>1,848</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>20,521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M 816</td>
<td>1,032</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOT 10,026</td>
<td>10,495</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL OVER A PERIOD OF 7 YEARS</td>
<td>45,048</td>
<td>64,128</td>
<td>5,149</td>
<td>6,613</td>
<td>11,762</td>
<td>Average 4.8%</td>
<td>Average 6.2%</td>
<td>Total Muslim Average 11.1%</td>
<td>109,176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total PERCENT: Female 5.0% Male 6.1%

Retrieved from Nominal records, Makerere University Academic Registrar’s Office, August 2011

Key: N/M- Non-Muslim, M-Muslim, TOT Total

Despite the increased enrolment of female students at Makerere University, there was a significantly low enrolment of Muslim females in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. The total percentage of undergraduate Muslim females enrolled at Makerere
University over a period of seven years was only 5.0%; the average enrolment over the same period per year was 4.8%. This was slightly lower than the male Muslim total enrolment of 6.1% and 6.2% average over the seven years. An even worse scenario existed for the postgraduate students with an average of 2.8% Muslim females over a period of five years. Despite the gradual increment of female students at Makerere University, there was no percentage increase in Muslim female enrolment. The study would therefore like to establish the reasons why the Muslim female population was not taking advantage of the various affirmative strategies in place.

Makerere University’s admission policy ensured that students from each of the 95 districts were enrolled every academic year. The University would therefore represent a cross-section of the community (see Map 1.7.1). Below is a summary of admitted undergraduate students statistics obtained at the Makerere University nominal roll records 2011 (Makerere University Fact Book 2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1,048</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>1,366</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>2,414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>7,618</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>7,956</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>15,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8,666</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>9,322</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>17,988</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.10.6: Undergraduate Admission by Sponsor 2010/2011

Table 1.10.6 affirmed that the female population at admission was still slightly less than that of male. The statistics also suggested that there were still more males than females under both the government and private sponsorship scheme. The study therefore sought to establish whether there was proportionate representation of Muslim females as compared to the rest. A look at the undergraduate Admissions by units suggests that there were courses that were more female populated than male. These included
Psychology (68%), Librarianship (64%), Social Sciences (60%), Arts (55%) and Law (53%). The rest of the courses especially the science-based courses were male dominated (Makerere University fact book 2011).

Although the study focused on both undergraduate and postgraduate students at Makerere University, statistics reflected that there was even lower Muslim female representation at postgraduate school (see Table 1.10.2). The total percentage of undergraduate Muslim females enrolled at Makerere University over a period of 7 years was only 5.0%; the average enrolment over the same period per year was 4.8%. This was slightly lower than the male Muslim total enrolment of 6.1% and 6.2% average over the seven years (see Table 1.10.5). The postgraduate students had a worse scenario with an average of 2.8% Muslim females over a period of 5 years (see Table 1.10.3).

The study recognized that the number of excellent performing Islamic founded schools was on the increase and the number of female students excelling their ‘A’ level studies was also significant (New Vision Education supplement report March 2011). These percentages indicate clearly that women are not underrepresented in Higher Education but a closer look at the religion/gender statistics manifests the opposite for the Ugandan Muslim Woman.

The researcher, being a member of the administrative staff of Makerere University, has realized this underrepresentation among the staff members too. According to the University website, 2,036 staff were employed (1,161 Academic Staff and 875 Administrative Staff); females constituting less than 30%. Concerning religious representation among the Senior Administrative Staff of Makerere University, there were only 10 Muslim women by 2011. The Muslim female Academic Staff were also
underrepresented in this respect with less than 30 women within the main campus (Makerere University fact book 2011).

1.11 RATIONALE AND INTENDED OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY

With the ratio of male to female population in Uganda being almost at par and taking into account the affirmative action policies that the current President of Uganda, Kaguta Yoweri Museveni has put in place, the researcher would like to explore the reasons why some Muslim women have failed to take up these educational opportunities and hence continue to be left behind. The researcher would also like to establish why Muslim female graduates do not take up opportunities to access further studies. The researcher would like to explore the reasons behind the limitations on Muslim women’s access to Higher Education in Uganda and whether it has been influenced by various ecological factors that can be linked to Bronfenbrenner’s ecological cycle. This cycle suggests an interplay of causal factors of a number of environmental layers, that the Ugandan Muslim woman is in contact with which include: the family background, the socio-economic status, the geographical location, the government policies and politics of the region, religion and beliefs, traditional and cultural practices.

The researcher is specifically interested in capturing the voices and perspectives of Muslim women on these issues, barriers and points of resistance. The Research would also explore Muslim women’s convictions that were thought to be helpful to create supportive environments for attaining Higher Education in Uganda. The research therefore sought to identify whether similar issues that affect female’s progress from primary to secondary school and secondary to tertiary institutions (Universities and Colleges) were similar to those that affect her progress from the undergraduate to the postgraduate level. The study hopes that its findings will impact Educational research.
on theory, practice and policy so that women’s education is effectively represented at Makerere University and becomes a means toward achieving targets set by several human rights mandates.

1.12 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter One; the Introduction and Background of the study, Chapter Two; the Literature Review, Theoretical Framework and the Development of the Conceptual Framework, Chapter Three; the Mixed-methods Research Methodology, Chapter Four; the findings from the study, Chapter Five the discussion and analysis and finally Chapter six; the critique of Bronfenbrenner’s work, Conclusions and Recommendations. Chapter One reflects the general background of Uganda and identifies factors which may have influenced the current trends of Muslim women’s education. These include various environmental spheres as outlined in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological cycle (2005) that may have had a causal effect on the Muslim female child’s progress into Higher Education, i.e. Uganda’s political, geographical, social, economic and educational factors. The chapter discusses in detail Uganda’s tertiary Education with emphasis on Uganda’s response to human rights and with specific focus on Makerere University as an institution of higher learning. The premise of the study is based upon the human rights notion of gender parity in access to education. The Introduction looks at human rights issues and Uganda’s response for human rights and the strategies developed to promote gender parity in Education. Despite these affirmative action policies, the study poses the persistent problem of Muslim women’s underrepresentation in the field of Higher Education in Uganda.

Chapter Two reviews literature on Muslim women and Higher Education. The first section gives a general overview of the trends in development of Muslim Women’s
Higher Education in the world and in Britain and then highlights specifically Muslim women in Higher Education, in Uganda. The chapter identifies Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) ecological model as a theoretical framework and adapts the major themes to the situation in Uganda, establishing a conceptual framework categorising the different but interlinked factors that may have influenced Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education.

Chapter Three offers a justification of the Research Methodology, which is a mixed methods approach placing emphasis on the feminist qualitative paradigm and gives a discussion of the objectives, significance of the study, scope, data collection instruments and data analysis. Chapter Four reflects the findings and the narrative that develops from the data. Chapter Five gives an in depth discussion and analysis of the study highlighting the enablers and barriers to higher education. Chapter Six focuses on a critical account of Bronfenbrenner’s work and how the factors influenced the case study. Finally it will present a discussion of the main conclusions or potential solutions to the problems of accessing HE and recommendations of the study with suggestions that may hopefully positively impact practice and policy on Muslim women’s Higher Education in Uganda. It is hoped that the findings of the study would subsequently make a significant contribution enabling women’s education to be effectively represented as a means towards achieving targets set by several mandates, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDG’s), Education for All (EFA) and Widening Participation into Higher Education.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 INTRODUCTION

This research into Uganda’s education system will focus on the experience and perceptions of Muslim women at University level, reflecting their knowledge of government mandates in addressing educational gender inequality. These include the Millennium Development Goals (2000), Education for All (EFA), widening participation in Higher Education and movements supporting women’s equal representation in Higher Education like the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE, 2005). The research will initially highlight current development trends regarding the state of Women’s education worldwide reflecting on Muslim women, British Muslim women in higher education in the UK and finally the case of the Ugandan Muslim woman.

Applying ‘feminism’ as a perspective is justified as it is appropriate to any research that is “… based on, or in any way touches base with, the variety of real life stories women provide about themselves” (Lugones and Spelman, 1990: 21). Such an approach is quite appropriate since the research data, supplied by female respondents will give real life stories about themselves, challenging gender inequalities while simultaneously recognizing how differences in social location, orientation, age and race, shape women’s educational experience. Maguire (1987:79) relates feminism to a belief that women universally face some form of oppression or exploitation. The aim of feminist research therefore, would be to uncover and understand the causes of persistent repression. This research has significance since it draws on the experience of Muslim women in a developing economy to reveal strategies for women working individually or collectively to reduce prejudice and counter the effects of marginalisation.
2.2 ISLAMIC WOMEN AND EDUCATION

"God has given girls qualities and potential. If they aren’t allowed to develop them, if they aren’t provided with opportunities to study and learn, it is basically a live burial." – Shaykh Dr Mohammed Akram Nadwi (2013)

Despite the persistent focus on women’s education as a priority in global discussions of human rights and quality of life, and increased efforts of activists and governments, the study recognizes that women still lag well behind men in many countries of the world, even at the level of basic literacy. Many countries boast of male and female literacy rates being similar using data supplied by the countries themselves (UNDP HDR 2013). Although relative male-female equality can also be found in many poorer nations, such as Trinidad and Tobago, Panama, Russia, Belarus, Romania, Thailand, Colombia, Venezuela, Jamaica, Sri Lanka, Paraguay, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, South Africa, Guyana, Vietnam, Botswana, and Lesotho, there are, however, 46 countries in which male literacy rates are higher than the female rate by fifteen percentage points or more. The report lists 162 nations; this means more than one-fourth of the nations in the world.

The study acknowledges that a large percentage of these nations have a high population of Muslims and include countries like India, Syria, Turkey, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Sudan, and in general most, though not all, of the poorer nations of Africa; including Uganda and Kenya. In absolute terms, women’s literacy rates are below 50 percent in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Egypt, and the preponderant number of the nations listed in the “low human development” category. Some of the lowest rates are Pakistan at 30%, Nepal at 22.8%, Bangladesh 29.3%, Yemen 23.9%, Senegal at 26.7%, Gambia at 28.5 %, Guinea-Bissau at 18.3%, Burkina Faso at 13.3%, and Niger at 7.9% (UNDP HDR 2013). What is strikingly similar amongst these nations
is the fact most of them have a majority Muslim population which suggests that women play a less significant role towards attaining higher literacy levels.

The study established that the gaps were even more striking in secondary school education. According to the UNDP report (2001), in 27 countries the secondary school enrollment of girls declined between 1985 and 1997. What was even more surprising was that this happened, as the HDR stresses, during a time of rapid technological development, in which skills became ever more important as passports to economic opportunity. Consequently, although data on university enrollments of women were not presented in the HDR, it was quite apparent that that, in many nations, women and more so Muslims formed a small fraction of the university population. Despite the notion that literacy is a “Western” value, it’s also a known fact that women all over the world are struggling to attain an education and some of the biggest success stories in women literacy are non-Western countries like Kerala (South West Indian State), whose literacy rates raised to virtually 100% for both boys and girls due to the great government concern and creative school designing. This is a remarkable achievement from a poverty stricken developing country that was met with extreme joy and energy by the girls and women (Nussbaum 2004).

The study acknowledges that contrary to the educational opportunities availed to women worldwide, in most developing countries, women still have to struggle to become literate therefore making the issue of women’s struggles to attain higher education valuable since African and Asian women still fight to obtain an education every day, often at risk to safety and even life. The study contends that Education is synonymous to development and that is where literacy gains great value because it acts as a bridge which connects to other capabilities for which women all over the world are
striving to attain. Without literacy the study recognizes that employment chances are few as the nature of the world economy is such that illiteracy condemns a woman (or man) to a small number of low-skilled types of employment. This goes hand in hand with domestic violence because with limited employment opportunities, a woman is also limited in her options to leave a bad or abusive marriage (Hoodfar 2007).

The study realizes that an educated woman’s chances of independence increases with work opportunities since she attains independence. Furthermore illiteracy may incapacitate a woman to remain in an abusive marriage for lack of options, or she may leave and have nothing to fall back on. It’s a sad fact but that is why many women with no means to earn a living end up as prostitutes in less developed countries (Tamale 2011, Nannyonjo 2007). The study reflects how her position in the family is undermined because she has a low bargaining position for basic resources such as food and medical care; therefore her perceived contribution to the success of the family unit is seen as low. Subsequently in cases where women have decent employment options outside the home, it would reflect a higher valuation of her worth (Kwesiga 2002).

Although the study recognizes Education as one of the key factors for improving women’s bargaining position: training in other marketable skills that is essential alongside literacy to enhance women’s access to the political process. Developing countries like India and Uganda which have increased women’s involvement in the political arena is significant because given seats are designated as woman’s seats. Ironically this shows that increasing women’s literacy by itself would not have produced anything substantial because as we can see from the United States (a developed nation), women still hold only 13% of the seats in congress. Thus the
assumption of the study is that for development to be effective it was imperative to avail both educational and political opportunities for women (Nussbaum 2004).

The study contends that the process of mass education is underway globally, more so in the 21st century which has seen a mounting trend of the education infrastructure which is a part of the process of modernisation in most countries of the world (Morley 2013, Bradley 2000, Walsh and Morley 1996). Data analysed by the study shows that primary level education is now widely available in most countries with a Muslim population and opportunities for secondary and higher education are increasing, however resource limitations pose constraints. Sadly, countries that have legislated for compulsory primary education do not have the resources to implement the policy with a good example in Peru, where primary education has been compulsory since 1905 and free since 1933, but the lack of government resources coupled by poverty amongst the rural and newly-settled urban populations have prevented compliance with these bold policies. Closer to the focus of the study is the Arab region where although education is compulsory in all but eight states, the legislation is not fully implemented and consequently 60% of Muslim women are still illiterate. In most Asian and African countries with large populations of Muslims class sizes and lack of facilities were still major causes of concern (UNDP HDR 2013).

In contrast the study identifies that in Europe (Finland, France and UK) and America (USA and Canada) the north reflects increasing numbers of students remaining at school to complete their secondary education. With the increasing population of Muslims in these areas due to mass immigration, this was a surprising development that suggests that young people including the Muslim females recognise that in the new technological era their job prospects would be bleak without some form of post-
secondary education (Walsh and Morley 1996, Kasente 2003, Kasoozi 2002). Therefore the rising aspiration for further education has placed a growing pressure on governments to increase all forms of post-secondary education. Although Muslim girls have benefitted from the extended opportunities for education with participation rates rising more rapidly than for boys, the perception of equality is frequently deceptive. Unfortunately, Muslim girls were still underrepresented, even at primary level in many countries, and illiteracy figures for women and girls were excessively high, particularly in rural areas of some of the Muslim developing countries like Indonesia, Niger, Bangladesh, Yemen, and amongst newly-settled urban populations (UNDP HDR 2013). In parts of Africa (Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania) and India many Muslim women were still gravely marginalised and deprived of education (Mirza 2009, Nannyonjo 2007, Tripp and Kwesiga 2002).

The study establishes that in instances that Muslim girls do attend school, their education may be prematurely shortened due to early marriages or to provide support to the family structure as a carer or as a labourer in the rural agricultural set up (Abal and Khamis 2012, Kwesiga 2002, Khan 2001). Nonetheless in developing and industrialised countries, the Muslim girl child who progresses with school may find themselves limited to traditional female subjects leading to traditional female professions. Most researchers agree (Morley 2013, Kasente 2003, Kwesiga 2002, Bradley 2000, Walsh and Morley 1996) that the source of this discrimination is the persistent cultural values and attitudes of patriarchal, agrarian societies which define man as the primary significant figure and woman as the secondary support figure. Even where economic and technological development has progressed beyond the Agrarian model, these attitudes persist, informing expectations and behaviours. It is this narrow definition of
the female role which limits girls’ access to education, causes early attrition and restricts them to traditional female areas of study (UNESCO 1993).

The study acknowledges that these general principles are reflected yet again in most parts of the world with the dominance of the male being asserted over the female whenever resources are scarce. Further to this, Zamora (UNESCO 1993) notes that where a family cannot afford to educate all the children it is the girls who miss out since a girl’s education is more likely to be delayed or interrupted by the need to help the family in the farm work or other domestic and economic activities. For example, in an Indian village a girl of aged three may be a net contributor to the family income although promoting the significance of the male as the bearer of the family name would be paramount when hard choices are to be made about who is to be educated, as is the expectation as the study suggests for the male rather than the female to be the one given the priority to progress academically (Morley 2013, Bradley 2000, Walsh and Morley 1996).

The study affirms the role of the woman as child bearer which is asserted whenever girls are denied education or withdrawn from education for early betrothal or marriage. In Muslim countries like Nigeria and Indonesia reflects Nussbaum (2004), the practice of early betrothal delays or terminates the education of girls. In Indonesia the drop in female participation after the elementary level is attributed to early marriage, especially in the village areas. However, in the South Pacific, even though there is legislation providing for both boys and girls to attend school, girls are underrepresented at secondary level, particularly in Melanesia (UNDP HDR 2013).

Therefore the study recognizes that in many countries like Africa, Asia and parts of Europe and America educating girls is seen as a poor investment due to marriage and
taking on of family responsibilities. Cultural values and traditional stereotypes, which see women as subordinate, vulnerable, in need of constant protection, or nurturing due to their domestic role are evidenced by the restrictions placed on girls within formal education systems. In the Arab states for example cultural and religious morals lead to strict segregation of the sexes at school and at work, with girls taught in single sex schools by female staff and restricted to a curriculum which favours home economics over science and maths. This does not prepare girls for full and equal participation in the workforce and thereby limits their career options (Morley 2013, Mirza 2009, Bradley 2000).

According to the UNESCO report (1993) the study recognized that most high schools in the South Pacific were generally co-educational with the curriculum differentiated so that girls took arts and home economics while the boys took sciences, commerce and industrialised arts. Whereas Government scholarships for tertiary study abroad in the past directed young men into professional courses like medicine and engineering, young women were engaged in teacher education training.

Although the policy is no longer in place; its implications are still evident as seen by women in a limited range of traditional female professions. What is particularly interesting is the fact that this phenomenon was not only visible in developing countries but discrimination against girls was also prevalent in developed countries too. Strange as it may seem despite the industrialised world enjoying widespread primary and relatively widespread secondary education during this century, the study recognizes that equality opportunity for girls has been minimal. These concerns are existent in North America and Europe; who inadvertently channel girls into traditional areas, thus encouraging underrepresentation in science and maths and causing stereotyping in

Nevertheless, the study argues that despite years of active promotion of equal opportunity policies by governments, women were inadvertently clustered in traditional female subject areas and professions and were underrepresented in science and technology and in higher level research and study. This has promoted many developing countries like Uganda to introduce equity programs in schools backed by extensive training to stimulate a change in patterns of female participation. The economic incentive which will be discussed in greater detail has played a big role in the success of many women worldwide breaking out of the traditional pattern and more so Muslim women to progress to higher education. The study acknowledges that despite the notion that it is the women’s’ capacity to contribute to the family income that frequently forces females in rural societies out of school, similarly it is the same driving force that can be facilitated to encourage more women to progress into higher education (Morley 2013, Kasoozi 2002, Kwesiga 2002).

A study done by Findlow (2004) indicated that much work was needed in Islamic countries to support and facilitate women’s advancement in education and the workforce, and that it would have to be accomplished through initiatives that revolved around Higher Education for women. Relevant strategies would take into account a deep understanding of the cultural and traditional barriers in place. The establishment of the Islamic University in Uganda that would cater for both males and females was clearly a step in the right direction (Kasoozi, 2002). Findlow (2004) further reported that it was encouraging that between the 1970s and 1990s, some of the more developed Arab countries substantially increased women participation in education, in some cases
doubling girls’ enrolment in all levels of educational institutions, and this in many ways similar to these developments in Uganda.

2.3 MUSLIM WOMEN EDUCATION IN THE UK

Although Muslim immigrants began arriving in the UK from the Indian subcontinent and parts of Africa in the 1950’s, 60’s and 70’s, the study notes that their arrival marked the long and hard negotiation with the local education authorities and other school bodies to accommodate the religious and cultural rights of their children. Since then, Haw (1998) contends state schools in Britain have attempted to adopt measures to accommodate the needs of their Muslim pupils through equal opportunities initiatives adopted by state institutions.

The study recognizes that the British Muslim community has shown tolerance and understanding over the years on the important matter of the education of their children. Their greatest concern however contends Bagguley (2007) was to make every effort possible to fulfil their duty as Muslim parents in helping their children to be conscious of their heritage and identity as Muslims, while at the same time taking full advantage of the opportunities available. The parents had to ensure that, as Muslims, they also contributed towards maintaining high moral Islamic values, within a predominantly non-Muslim society (Haw 1998, Masood 2006, Bagguley and Hussain 2007).

The study contends that it’s the rise in British Muslim population that saw the increase in admission of Muslim students to state schools. Masood (2006) argues that since state schools were considered a site for the production of foreign cultures, state education became a central concern of established Muslim communities in Britain. Muslim parents most often backed their children especially sons to view education as one of the keys to future success, however Jacobson (1998) stresses the fact that British schooling
was also seen as a threat to Islamic cultural upbringing due to the fact that children learnt values that were different and culturally inacceptable at home hence which the study argues made it difficult for most parents to maintain the balance of having their children progress in higher education while maintaining their identity as Muslims (Ahmad 1998, 2001, 2008).

The study acknowledges Tyrer and Ahmad’s (2006) findings on Muslim women’s experiences of studying in Higher Education Institutions (HEI) across the UK which reveal how Muslim women, through their participation in university, challenged dominant stereotyped assumptions prevalent in both the literature and institutions about the lives of Muslim women and their families. The study gave an insight on Muslim women as academic achievers and role models instead of housewives and how these women had to overcome challenges in career advice and recruitment into higher education because of the racist, stereotypical perceptions of Muslim women. The report sought to address a significant gap in the literature on Muslim women in Britain which was in line with Ahmad’s previous work (2001, 2006) on Muslim women which looked at those studying in London, and similarly to this study, it was among the first to explore motivation, experience and identity as Muslim women in higher education. It also covered the impact of these experiences on Muslim women’s religious, cultural identities and family relationships while exploring their implications in view of the equal opportunities that can be obtained in higher education.

The study acknowledges that according to the 2001 UK census, there were 1.6 million Muslims in Britain and today by most estimates; it is probably more than 2 million. The census reported that although most Muslims lived in and around London, in terms of education and employment, they were the least successful of minority groups.
Compared with the 63.7 million UK population in 2013 (The Independent, Mon 19th Aug 2013), however Muslims were three times more likely to be unemployed (15% against 5%) and much more likely to live in deprived areas and this may have been a result of religion, colour or socio-economic status. Thus 15% of Muslims lived in the 10 most deprived districts compared with 4.4% of the population as a whole. Unfortunately as the study reports in more than 60% of Muslim households, the main breadwinner had very low incomes due to low progress into further education (Masood 2006).

The study recognizes that the overall performance of Muslim children in UK schools was generally below the national average, although this was gradually improving, with girls now outperforming boys. Approximately one-third of Muslims have no qualifications, the highest of any religious group, whilst approximately a quarter of Christians and Sikhs have no qualifications. A positive indication with regards to Muslim education is that approximately 53% of British Muslim youth choose to attend university. This is higher than the figure for Christians (45%) and the non-religious (32%), but lower than the figure of Hindus and Sikhs, who score 77% and 63% respectively. This indicates that 15% more Muslims are progressing into further or higher education, against the 38% of the white population. Nonetheless this was considerably lower than the rates for children of Indian and black-African households.

Moreover the study recognizes that there are around 140 Muslim faith schools in the UK, twelve of them being state-funded with these schools regularly outperforming those of other faiths. For example, in 2008, 86.5% of pupils attending Muslim schools achieved five GCSEs, compared to a figure of 72.8% of Roman Catholic schools and 64.5% of Secular Schools (Focus on Religion 2004).
The study establishes that according to the Department for Work and Pensions, 76% of Muslim graduates of working age were in jobs, compared with the overall graduate employment rate of 87%. The study acknowledges that the primary motivation for most migrants in Britain was the betterment of their economic situation with many being successful with tangible benefits compared to the circumstances they had left behind. Similarly their contribution to the culture, politics and infrastructure of Britain was significant and growing. At the same time the study affirms that the experience of embedding Islam in Britain was clearly changing Britain; as it was changing Britain’s Muslims (Masood 2006). Moreover the study noted that researcher’s University in Leicester had one of the most vibrant and ethnically mixed Muslim populations in the UK which was within a city that boasted of over 60 mosques serving the steadily growing Muslim population (Ahmad and Tyrer 2006).

The study reflects on the report of the London development agency (2008) which stated that Muslims made up 3% of the UK population and was the largest of the ‘emergent’ religions in the UK. The study affirms that UK is reported to have the youngest age structure of all the religious groups since 46% of Muslims were less than 25 years old. However, within the next ten years, Muslims would account for one quarter of the growth in the working age population in the UK. Furthermore the study establishes that British Muslim women remain the most disadvantaged faith group in the UK labour market, with 68% defined as inactive in the labour market and only 29% in employment mainly due to employers’ restrictions and family responsibilities. In relation to this report the study assumes that British Muslim women had low levels of educational attainment, which explained their low levels of employment, when in fact only 22% of British Muslims had no qualifications compared to 29% of the general population.
Meanwhile, 50% of British Muslims now enter higher education compared to 38% of their White counterparts.

The study established that despite the assumptions made, 36% of British Muslim women respondents in the small-scale survey undertaken had graduate or post-graduate qualifications. However, graduate qualifications did not directly translate into employment for all British Muslims, particularly women. Only 76% of British Muslim graduates were working compared to 87% for all graduates. Thus there were more male British Muslim graduates (61%) than female (39%) in work (London Development Agency 2008).

This research is valuable in challenging Bagalee’s claims (2003) that gender disparity in education is magnified by Islam, which he contends, often leaves large numbers of women with inadequate or no schooling. Bagalee argues that Islamic culture and tradition also undermines women’s motivation towards educational achievement, limiting their opportunities to participate fully in the workforce. While Bagalee’s study never established any direct link between Islam and opposition to females progressing through education, there is evidence from Islamic countries of momentous efforts being made to encourage their young women to enter and complete secondary schooling, attend universities and enter professional fields. These actions are supported by measures such as remedial education, affordable childcare provision, internships and active workforce mentoring (Abdalati 1993, Badawi 1995, Ahmad 2001). Thus there is cause for optimism that every Muslim regardless of gender should have the opportunity to study, reflect, and make the best use of his/her talents and intelligence, a view not challenged but endorsed in the holy Qur’an (Badawi, 1995).
Islam remains a significant factor in the research which draws from Bronfenbrenner’s ecological cycle. The study adapts Bronfenbrenner’s theory which Burns (2002) demonstrated as developing in the context of multiple reciprocal interactions in a continuous fashion over time between the child, family, neighbourhood, school and community. Thus the Exosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model recognizes the positive and significant impact religion has on Muslim women’s pursuit of Higher Education. Although Bronfenbrenner did not highlight the close links between cultural factors and religion, they nevertheless have a significant impact on girls’ motivation and achievement. Socially it has been argued that women need to be actively engaged at all levels of decision and policy making to bring about a more just, sustainable, and equitably developed society. Thus many countries aim to become more gender equitable in terms of education and professional development whether they are Muslim or not.

It is essential therefore for communities to consolidate women’s participation in governance through adequate and accessible education from its earliest stages through to the highest levels (Kwesiga 2002, Bagalee 2003, Louise e al 2003). However the problem of Muslim women’s underrepresentation in Higher Education persists in Uganda denying them opportunities to access the educational qualifications necessary to become agents of change in the alleviation of poverty (King and Hill 1997). Women’s literacy, key to improving health, nutrition and education in the family and empowering women to participate in decision-making in society (Brock and Levers 2007, Findlow 2004, Agosin 2002, Haw 1998) may also prove difficult.
Female education in Uganda had for a long time lagged behind that of males (Muhwezi 2003). In 2002, female school enrolment was 49% in primary school and 44% in secondary school (Kikampikaho and Kwesiga, 2002). Females made up only 35% of the tertiary sector population. Only 57% of female adults but 78% of males were literate, a situation possibly defined by cultural norms and practices. Tripp and Kwesiga (2002) argued this situation may have been caused by the patriarchal arrangement of society that policy-makers had been exposed to as children.

However, the Ugandan government has since acknowledged the need for gender parity in education and taken very positive steps to achieve that goal, linking equality of access to education to human rights through Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Number 3, emphasizing gender equality and the empowerment of women as essential tools for achieving equality, development and peace. Non-discriminatory education benefits both girls and boys, ultimately delivering more equitable relationships. Investing in formal and non-formal education and training for girls and women, with its exceptionally high social and economic return, has proved to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development and economic growth (Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995).

2.5 RELATING BRONFENBRENNER’S ECOLOGICAL MODEL TO FACTORS AFFECTING UGANDAN MUSLIM WOMEN ACCESSING HIGHER EDUCATION

Using Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological (2005) Model of Child Development the study sought to explain the complex interplay of interconnected factors combining to create multiple barriers or facilitators later helping or hindering Muslim women’s access to Higher Education in Uganda. This Ecological Model theory relates a child’s development with the different interactions that the child has with the environment. According to Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) children are influenced by experience of a
number of contexts/environments or systems, each containing roles, norms and rules that shape development. The environment is divided into five levels; the Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem and the Chronosystem (see fig 2.5.1).

It is therefore always important to study behaviour within each context/system or environment to better understand the individual. Thus the study looked at the possibility of adapting Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model to investigate whether similar environmental factors acquired during childhood have affected Ugandan Muslim women in their progress or lack of access to Higher Education. Bronfenbrenner’s five systems could be compared to the different factors influencing these women’s progress which might also be similarly interconnected (Berk 2000).

Using Bronfenbrenner’s theory, Kail and Cavanaugh (2010) argue that each complex layer of the environment has a different sociological and psychological effect on child development. Bronfenbrenner (Watts et al 2009:502) defines this development as ‘individuals’ evolving in their understanding of the ecological environment and their relation to it as well as their growing capacity to discover, sustain or alter its properties. While the individual remains a proactive feature of the environment, s/he is capable of refashioning the environment to make it more compatible with his/her needs, abilities and desires.

This study borrows from Bronfenbrenner’s primary theoretical framework, based on the belief that the environment affects the course of development of the child. Bjorkund and Blasi (2011) describe levels of the environment as the Microsystem. This includes the active participants in the child’s life such as the family, peers, classroom or school. The Mesosystem involving all the Microsystem in interaction including the child’s behaviour in school, is also related to family and peers. The Exosystem includes
external environments children are not regularly a part of but nonetheless indirectly influence development for example the parental workplace, extended family, family friends, local community, school board and law enforcement agencies. The Macrosystem covers the larger socio-cultural context and includes values, attitudes, laws and ideologies of the culture in which children and adolescents belong.

The study establishes that the culture one grows up in affects each of the previous three levels of the ecology; the Microsystem, Mesosystem and Exosystem (Bjorkund and Blasi 2011). The fifth level known as the Chronosystem or time dimension reflects that the child and the systems change over time (Bjorkund and Blasi 2011). As the primary engine of human development over extended periods, the Chronosystem represents a series of proximal processes where people, objects, and symbols participate in the life of the developing person, on a fairly regular basis. Furthermore, Bjorkund and Blasi (2011) suggest that the child and the four levels of the ecology from Microsystem to Macrosystem are subject to change over time. Characterized by dynamic relationships between the developing individual and the integrated multi-level ecology of human development, a relationship develops when the active changes across the ecological system are embraced within the learning environment. Moreover, only the Chronosystem takes into account the fact that major changes might occur involving societal upheavals like wars, natural disasters like famine and draught and the outbreak of diseases like HIV/AIDS (Bjorkund and Blasi 2011).
Figure 2.5.1: Diagram of the Bronfenbrenner Ecological Model theory of Child development within the context of the system of relationships in the Environment (Bronfenbrenner 2005).

Closely related to Bronfenbrenner’s model in fig 2.5.1 is the conceptual framework in fig 2.5.2 showing the levels embedded in the ecosystem with interconnecting factors affecting Muslim women’s progress into Ugandan Higher Education. These systems developed and categorized into themes, can be applied with reference to Makerere University. The inner layer (Microsystems) suggests that female students are a product of their environment, referring to ‘environment’ as the closest familial relationships
with (parents and siblings), school friends, peers, religious affiliation, work colleagues, neighbours (see fig 2.5.1 and fig 2.5.2) and/or immediate surroundings (Berk, 2000). These influences may affect the educational progress both positively and negatively as most close relationships do. For example, parental religious affiliation generally means the child is brought up with a set of principles, values and beliefs - rules which in the case of Islam the child has to abide by. This affects beliefs and behaviour towards the family and the University environment. However, if the child is female, she in turn also affects the behaviour and beliefs of parents as well as the people she interacts with at University.

The study establishes how the Mesosystem and Microsystems interact with different components of this model affecting each other in a two-way action. For example a girl growing up with educated parents and siblings, having higher aspirations tends to perform better and learn more in school. Meanwhile children from families where education is considered unimportant, valuing the family business or farm more highly often aspire to learn entrepreneurial or agricultural skills. What the student gives back to the community will be a reflection of what was learnt in the environment she grew up in. Thus the Mesosystem reflects the continuous interplay and interactions of the Microsystems of the child’s immediate environment.

The study recognizes that in the case of Ugandan Muslim females, this interplay affects progress into Higher Education, since the connection between these two systems reflects the influence they have on each other. Thus, as human beings and institutions interact with each other, they make up the Microsystems, affecting attitudes to education, home, work or University environments which are interconnected actively and emotionally. These factors are fundamental towards the development of the female
student. Similarly family background and societal structures play a major role in encouraging Ugandan Muslim females to progress. Family spiritual and moral support cannot be measured physically but affect children enormously, either negatively or positively. The study may reveal that some Ugandan Muslim women have not been able to progress in the field of Higher Education because of missing supportive elements in the Microsystem (Kailand and Cavanaugh 2010) like positive gender discrimination facilitating female access to primary, secondary and tertiary Institutions.

The study affirms that the Mesosystem provides a connection between the structures of the female student's Microsystems (Berk, 2000) with those of the Exosystem. For example when student, school, peers and parents have similar values, drawn together by religious and neighbourhood affiliation, educational advancement becomes more likely or unlikely depending on the nature of these values. Although the student may not experience all these social influences first hand they are nevertheless developmentally influential since the exosystem includes economic, political, social, educational, official and religious influences.

Thus Ugandan policies like the Millennium Development Goals regarding the welfare of the female students, deprived of access to education, who would otherwise have few opportunities for social mobility, contribute to this Exosystem layer. For Ugandan women culturally specific practices like family tradition, the extended family, FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), early marriage/bride price, poverty, geographical isolation, rural/urban issues, patriarchy, polygamy and health issues like HIV/AIDS, may complicate and even frustrate personal ambition, since this layer includes attitudes and ideologies, values, laws and customs of a particular culture or subculture. Thus factors in the Exosystem can be summarized as Socio/Cultural which if set within the Islamic
culture they can act as barriers or facilitators to women’s progress in higher education (Berk 2000).

The study acknowledges that three features of the ecological system need to be understood and described by Bjorkund and Blasi (2011) as ‘activities, relationships and roles’. ‘Activities’ include that which is done during a typical day like spending time with the family, studying, worship and working. In this research context, Ugandan Muslim women have many socially based everyday activities with a range of individuals they commonly interact with but they may assume a different role in each situation. For example in the family, a female student may also be a daughter, wife, mother, niece, aunt, granddaughter, grandmother, sister, friend and member of the local community and all these relationships may work together to affect her progress into higher education.

The study adapts the chronosystem see fig 2.5.1 to refer to the process of time as the engine of development where individuals learn what is expected of them. The type of activity considered appropriate or inappropriate and the way society expects them to engage with these activities (Tudge 2008), is reflected in the way people deal with girls and young women and how they in response are expected to deal with others. In other words, they learn to fit into their own culture through given roles and by observing others fulfilling additional roles (Bjorklund and Blasi 2011). The cultures of the Microsystem, Mesosystem and Exosystem are embedded in the broadest environmental context known as the Macrosystem (Kailand and Cavanaugh 2010). The study contends that members of the Macrosystem share a common identity, heritage and values within unique Macrosystems that evolve and emerge gradually with each successive generation that may reflect on her progress into higher education.
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE UNDERREPRESENTATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

Figure 2.5.2: Diagram of the conceptual framework for the underrepresentation of Muslim women in Ugandan Higher Education.
The study affirms that Bronfenbrenner’s theory facilitates the identification of the many levels and layers of influence faced by the Muslim female wishing to become a University student. These include the Ugandan parliamentary laws, Human Rights education, Ugandan culture, economic system, social conditions and history from colonialism to post colonialism. Thus from birth female children may experience direct influence from family members and friends, reinforced by indirect pressure from social systems, beliefs and her own culture, neighbours and her religion. Ethnicity and gender represent important dimensions of culture with powerful effects on human development (Walter et al 2009).

The Ugandan Muslim woman comes from a rich cultural heritage based on beliefs, tribe, language and customs. Moreover with colonialism and the settlement of early Muslim traders, missionaries and Asian entrepreneurs, Uganda evolved its own distinct culture. All these aspects of cultural development have evolved into distinct patterns of social interchange. While some acted as facilitators of women’s progress, other cultures acted as hindrances (Kail and Cavanaugh 2009).

Consequently, a conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2) based on Bronfenbrenner’s model of interconnected factors was developed which highlights a myriad of factors influencing Muslim women’s educational progress. The ecological cycle has helped to frame different factors of potential influence regarding their access to Higher Education in Uganda. Key factors range from the influence of female student’s family and physical environment to the government’s policies and Human Rights Laws, put in place to encourage female enrolment and retention. The study affirms that every change in the student’s environment will impact their lives with each layer having a profound effect on the individual as the individual influences the environment. Meanwhile the
cultural values experienced within the ecosystems may affect the amount each society invests in education and health care, which in turn influences how the female child develops (Bjorklund and Blasi 2011). This study will explore this system further and may take into consideration factors that may not have been present in the west or applicable to less developed countries like Uganda when Bronfenbrenner developed this theory. The conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2) identifies all the main factors that may have been enablers or barriers to the educational progress of the Ugandan Muslim woman. The study will further focus on the four main themes that have played a major role in her progress in higher education; Social cultural, Historical, Economic and Political/Educational all working towards enhancing human rights issues.

2.6 CRITICISM OF BRONFENBRENNER’S THEORY IN ITS APPLICATION TO THE FOCUS OF THE THESIS ON THE UGANDAN MUSLIM WOMEN’S PROGRESS INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

The research was heavily based on the conceptual version of Bronfenbrenner’s theory and therefore did not include each of the elements of the PPCT (Process-Person-Context-Time) model to qualify it being termed as a complete test of the model. This study has applied a partial test which is possible but should only be identified as such. The introduction of the Process-Person-Context-Time model (PPCT) which became the essence of his theory focused more on person-context interrelatedness where he laid emphasis on the processes of human development (Tudge et al 2009) that was similar to the main factors identified as the barriers or enablers to Ugandan Muslim women’s pursuit of higher education.

Although these were later referred to as proximal processes and were key factors in the development of Bronfenbrenner’s theory from the early 90’s to 2005 most case studies that adopted Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory with the PPCT model had conceptual
incomprehensibility because ideas were borrowed from the theory as it developed from the 1970’s, 1980’s and 1990’s (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Bronfenbrenner and Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). The study therefore chose to adapt the spatial (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem) and temporal contexts (chronosystem) of Bronfenbrenner’s theory leaving out the complex myriad of interrelated factors highlighted by the PPCT model (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Bronfenbrenner and Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006).

The study acknowledges that the theory written by a Russian was based on the western concept of life and may not have addressed or taken into consideration the economic and environmental factors of less developed countries like Uganda where people with lower living standards frequently struggle to get essentials like water and electricity to survive. Applying aspects of Bronfenbrenner’s Chronosystem to the concept of the female student, Trudge (2008:72) argued that changes over time needed to become “progressively more complex if they were to be effective” while their development would continue, although the African Muslim female student’s parent might remain conservative in their attitude and behave in the same manner towards her. Thus it seems possible for people to act and interact with objects, symbols and the social world without regard for the apparent appropriateness of their development. The concept of diverse cultures and traditions which were a strong hold in Uganda was an aspect that Bronfenbrenner’s theory overlooked.

The study argues that Bronfenbrenner’s theory has been criticized for not dealing adequately with the cultural concept of diverse communities. Although his definition of a Macrosystem encompasses culture, he failed to highlight particular cultural groups, their values, beliefs and patterns of social interchange. Based on middle class families
living in North America his study failed to acknowledge that they would experience different types of chronological processes. Therefore the study acknowledges that what might appear complex to one group might be viewed differently by another hence the effect of higher poverty in Uganda, patriarchy, set against particular social and political arrangements, might produce a totally different outcome for Muslim female education. Bronfenbrenner (2005) used the Mesosystem to discuss its effect on home-school linkages rather than to provide insight into the ways in which different Macrosystems (or subcultures) are related to different and equally effective chronological processes. Bronfenbrenner points out that the culture within the Macrosystem of the growing female affects the previous three levels of the ecology, namely the Microsystem, Mesosystem and Exosystem (Tudge et al 2009).

The study recognizes that Bronfenbrenner (2005) acknowledged the variability of development, depending on the culture and historical period in which the individual lived in compared to the process of ‘changing individuals in changing environments’ (Bjorklund and Blasi, 2011:26). The study reflects on Bronfenbrenner’s development theory being the result of a progressive and continuous interaction between an active and changing female child and the active and changing environment in which that female child lives. These elements although useful had various limitations since the study was conducted over a period of 6 months nevertheless the study sought to explore the changes within the Muslim female individuals mirrored by their voices as they related their past experiences within the Ugandan environment.

The study further contends that whereas Bronfenbrenner may have plotted an account that does not seem to underestimate the complexity of development, the research reflects that it may be a difficult explanatory model to apply due to two main reasons;
the theory requires an extensive scope of ecological detail with which to build up and validate a suitable development account and the range of his model seems to suggest that almost everything within an individual’s developmental environment could possibly play some role in their progression (Burns 2002). Though this may appear true in theory in reality it may not hence the study would find it difficult to establish the level of detail and complexity necessary for appropriate development. Therefore the study wasn’t sure at what point of the research that one would have enough detail and information to base a tentative clarification for behaviour or personality as purported by Bronfenbrenner (2005) and related to the progress of the Ugandan Muslim woman in the field of higher education.

The study recognizes that earlier development theories like those of Freud and Erikson (Sigelman and Rider 2012) sought answers for outcomes in immediate familial or social environments, while Burns (2002) argued that Bronfenbrenner’s scope of development impacts seemingly knows no boundaries and this made his model like that of the study difficult to apply in a stable and comprehensive way. It was often difficult to capture so much information and when one has so much information available which was the case with this study. Therefore the study found it challenging to hierarchize information according to the relative importance of development influence (Paquette and Ryan 2001). Similarly the study collected so much data that had to be captured in a conceptual framework in fig 2.5.2 which may have not given justice to the width and breadth of the information available for the research.

However, contends Gabriel et al (2010), Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory states that social interactions like biological interactions are always part of a larger
ecological system and each person would continuously be in interaction with a set of complex social relationships. This explains why the main problem that the study faced was in identifying and conceptualizing this multiplicity of sociocultural and environmental factors mentioned within the conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2). Nonetheless, if Bronfenbrenner was right it meant that the study needed to conceptualize development influences only in systems terms which have been effectively highlighted using the model (see fig 2.5.1).

This meant that the study needed to establish how the smallest factor of stimulus had to be understood only as a part of a complex multifaceted system of influence. Moreover since all factors of development were mutually and systematically significant as was with the study, it required taking all the identified factors into account whilst trying to establish the significance of even the smallest development variable. This fact as highlighted by Bronfenbrenner’s critics Sigelman and Rider (2012), Gabriel et al (2010) and Burns (2002) who established once again the complexity of Bronfenbrenner’s model being virtually unmanageable. The refined and complex nature of his model makes it very difficult and complicated to implement practically thus failing to sustain his argument that development is always a two way process, further preventing the model from being reductionist and wholly applicable to the study. The researcher therefore chose to concentrate on four major themes that all the factors fell under namely Social-Cultural, Historical, Economic, Government and Educational factors.

Bronfenbrenner (2005) concluded that the dynamic relationships between developing individuals and the integrated multi-level ecology of human development meant the study of human development was characterized by a commitment to understanding
the evolving systems (Tudge 2008). Bronfenbrenner’s main concern was making a difference in people’s lives and ideas of what needed to happen for positive development to take place; nonetheless he emphasized policy implications of his and others research. Although his research was based in Canada, the Ecosystem had strong components that could be adapted to resemble that which a Ugandan Muslim female student at Makerere University might experience.

Notwithstanding the critics’ views, the environmental processes enshrined in the ecological theory have helped the study develop objectives that could capture factors influencing the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into Higher Education. The whole idea of the ecological model is that each component interacts with other components, making the environment in which the student grows up, highly complex. The Muslim female Ugandan students at the centre of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model interact directly or indirectly with all the factors embedded in the ecosystems and the effect of the interactions are reciprocal. Similarly the conceptual framework for women’s representation in Higher Education in Uganda shows no woman is passive but she is capable of determining the direction she takes in her pursuit of Higher Education. She would also have an influence over the people with whom she interacts just as other people and factors would affect her progress into higher education in Uganda.

Further to this, Bronfenbrenner’s model suggests that the ecology has changed our society. Whereas man has directed a lot of energy in defence of our physical environment against technological development, nothing similar has been done to maintain the social security of our lives in the environment (Paquette and Ryan 2001). The conceptual framework in fig 2.5.1 identifies family life as losing more ground to the challenges of work where most women in most developing communities have to
leave the children at home and go out to earn a living. Although Paquette and Ryan (2001) emphasize the trend in the USA but evidently the tendency is now global with Uganda being inclusive.

Consequently the study adapts Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) own definition of human development: which he describes as the process through which the growing person acquires a more extended differentiated, and valid conception of the ecological environment, and becomes motivated and able to engage in activities that reveal the properties of, sustain, or restructure that environment at levels of similar or greater complexity in form and content. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory (2005) is the human development theory which simultaneously describes socialization as the way of becoming a member of the society and similarly the conceptual framework in fig 2.5.2 illustrates this. Naturally, since the theory allows better understanding on education and the problems attached to it, the researcher felt it would be well placed within her theoretical framework.

Furthermore Gabriel et al (2010) reflect upon the applicability of Bronfenbrenner’s developmental theory to the phenomenon of early childhood education. Conclusively the theory suggests that development and education are different things, even if they are present at the same time. Nevertheless since the goal of education is to support optimal development, the researcher’s study which focused on the development of Muslim women in Uganda, felt that Bronfenbrenner’s model (2005) would be the most appropriate to reflect how education within other complex social systems of the environment impact the progression of human development.
Similarly the concept of the Chronosystem highlights similar related themes suggesting that the environment is constantly changing. Paquette and Ryan (2001) contend how it was surprising although Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory referred to human development through time it was quite difficult to chart the development of features within flow time period, hence his first theory did not include the time systems but was developed a year later. Nevertheless the chronosystem is a description of the evolution, development or stream of development of the external systems in time. Bronfenbrenner’s description of how the chronosystem models can cover either a short or long period of time can be applicable to certain political and environmental elements of the research. The study has focused on this by including respondents who were previous students of Makerere University (within a period of 20 years) and the current students that were on session during the time of the interviews.

The time change has been shown in the model (2005) by using the terms like change, development, history, time and course of one’s life. Similarly these aspects were reflected in the merging themes which included historical factors and the changing government systems. Nonetheless the chronosystem would include the roles and guidelines that would have a strong influence on educational progress of Muslim women in Uganda. The study found it difficult to include the entirety of roles, relations and actions as factors that had influenced the educational progress. Hence as the Ugandan Muslim female grows the factors affecting her pursuit of knowledge change as different life events occur (Berk 2000). As she progresses from primary to secondary to tertiary education she has different needs and aspirations which may have not been reflected in the chronosystem layer of Bronfenbrenner’s cycle. Nonetheless the study
has captured some of them and developed them into a conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2).

2.7 EMERGING THEMES FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW IN RELATION TO BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEM

2.7.1 THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BRONFENBRENNER'S EXOSYSTEM

Despite having the problem of identifying and conceptualizing the multiplicity of sociocultural and environmental factors within the study, the researcher was able to break down Bronfenbrenner’s model to locate educational issues in the Exosystem, which mirrored the educational structures in the Ugandan system. Uganda’s education system involves seven years of primary, six of secondary education (4 in lower secondary and 2 in upper secondary) with ‘O’ Levels (equivalent to the British G.C.E’s) taken after Senior 4, and ‘A’ levels (equivalent to the British G.A.C.E’s) taken after Senior 6 and lastly three to five years in tertiary institutions. This system, influenced by the British colonial administration, was established in the early 1960s (Brynes 1990). Until the early 1990s, the Ugandan education system was full of gender disparities in enrolment, dropout rate, performance and general attainment. This was the result of historical and cultural factors rooted into a patriarchal society (Muhwezi 2003).

The study establishes that education as a fundamental human right fosters economic growth and human development (World Bank 1993). Uganda’s constitution Article 30 states that education for Ugandan children is a human right while Article 34 states that children are entitled to basic state education. Formal education has been modified since it was introduced by Christian Missionaries in 1880 (Muhwezi 2003) and although mission schools were established in the 1890s, the government only established the first secondary school for Africans in 1924 (Brynes 1990). Currently Higher Educational
institutions are funded variously by the government, parastatal private ownership and religious organizations.

This research focused on Makerere University, established in 1922 as a technical school, but now one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in Africa. From humble beginnings the school developed into a technical college, later offering courses in Medical Care, Agriculture, Veterinary Sciences and Teacher Training, becoming a centre for Higher Education in East Africa in 1935. In 1949, it became a University College affiliated to London University, offering London University degrees, gaining the status of the University of East Africa in 1963, granting its own degrees. On July 1, 1970, Makerere became an independent national University of the Republic of Uganda, offering its own undergraduate and postgraduate courses (Work for Progress-Uganda’s 2nd five year plan 1966-1971 p 139).

Seeking to understand the African University education system, Ezati (2002) investigated the gendered structures and processes affecting universities and analyzing how University education contributed to gender inequality. Although Ezati (2002) was concerned only with gender implications of the existing reforms of the University system, Kwesiga (2002) acknowledged that the gender divide in accessing to Higher Education in Uganda was a result of family, societal, and institutional influences on women's lives. Ezati (2002) made further comparisons between the enrolment ratio of women and that of men across faculties and subject areas, an assessment of the performance of the two categories, access to employment in Higher Education and the impact of qualified women on management in Higher Education.

Through this study the researcher realized that although affirmative action policies may have addressed the increment of female students to the University, they still did not
address the Muslim women’s representation in the field of Higher Education. Research has established that there were fewer women professors than men in Uganda. Culturally the academic careers of men and women were different. Women had the productive role governing their families and in addition to these roles, women had to contend with extra multiple responsibilities of reproduction and nurturing families. Women had to ensure that the children were taken care of, a responsibility which most men in Uganda would shun (Agosin 2002, Aguti 2002, and Ahmad 2008). Kwesiga (2002) further acknowledged that although great strides had been taken in representation of women in Ugandan academia, a recent report developed in 2010 highlighted how the gender mainstreaming division had organized a charity dinner in celebration of only 10 female professors at Makerere University. The proceeds from the dinner were to be channelled towards the scholarship of young girls from disadvantaged backgrounds. The report cited that out of the 10 female professors none of them were Muslim (Makerere University fact book 2011).

The study identifies that women have different capabilities but having also to carry out the delicate balance of the private and public world, must at the same time strive to fit into a space that was historically considered to be male centred. In addition to this, women face difficult choices between careers and family. For example due to fewer Muslim women being educated, very few make it to tertiary institutions and hence very few become empowered to vie for political leadership positions, like those in parliament. Though for those few that are successful, there are not enough strong educated women making a significant impact to encourage Muslim females to go further into Higher education as a result of this interplay of causal factors and responses (Agosin 2002, Aguti 2002, Ahmad 2008).
To attest further to the underrepresentation of the Muslim woman is the fact that Uganda is a predominantly Christian nation, and this led to the establishment of either Catholic or Protestant faith based schools. Historically the Christian Missionaries used the lure of free education and hospital care to attract converts. The Anglican Church of Uganda operated over 969 primary schools, while the Roman Catholic Church run more than 1,146 primary schools. By 1997 however there were approximately 200 Muslim schools (Ssekamwa 1997), established when the former president Idi Amin opened links to the Arab world. Idi Amin Dada’s (1971-1979) exertions in requesting the Gulf countries to set up Islamic tertiary institutions in Uganda were rewarded (Kasoozi 2002). A result of these efforts saw the inception of the Islamic University in Uganda in Mbale, Eastern Uganda established in 1989 by the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) to cater for the Muslim population of Uganda and hence facilitate increased enrolment of Muslim female students in Higher Education.

The study recognizes that local customs in many Islamic countries would dictate that for these initiatives to be successful, it would be the women themselves who should lead in their creation and implementation. Improving public resource management and protecting the poor during economic adjustment periods required not only the flexible fiscal targeting of budgets but also the development of sustainable policies that were pro-family and pro-women. Particularly in traditional societies such policies were more likely to succeed if they were created, led, and implemented by women, since women would work closely with their children in a more economical, practical and less corrupt way. They were also more likely to appreciate and not waste scarce resources (Mahnaz (2002).
The study contends that when the Islamic University in Uganda was established in Mbale, Eastern Uganda in 1988 the women administrators took an active role in providing a conducive learning environment for the female students. Although all female students had to wear hijab (Islamic head and body covering), the University was sensitive to the non-Muslim students and catered for their spiritual needs. The Deans of the faculties of Education and Social Sciences were Muslim women as were the senior warden, dinner ladies and clinic nurses. All these women had the important role of providing informal and formal guidance counselling to female students. Consequently this study will identify influential women in the community (Professionals and Government representatives) who have been active players in promoting female education and progress in Uganda.

At Makerere University for example the study acknowledged that the Department of Women and Gender Studies which was established in 1991 continued to contribute to female educational development in Uganda and the region at large. This was mainly done by ensuring that gender was an integral part of the development process and thereby working towards reducing Gender discrimination. Later a group of visionary women and men proposed the idea of institutionalizing gender in Makerere University’s functions, leading to the birth of the Gender Mainstreaming Programme in 2001, under the Department of the Academic Registrar, where it was nurtured to maturity (Makerere University fact book 2011).

The study acknowledges that achieving educational equality in the heavily populated and poorer Muslim nations was more difficult and needed a rapid and systematic approach (Findlow 2004, Afshar 2007, Ahmad 2008). Similarly Haw’s (1998) study on access of Muslim girls to equal educational opportunities in different main stream
British schools revealed that issues of race and gender also affected the education of Muslim girls. Whatever school environments they were in whether single sex schools, urban or private; their relationships were affected by the different educational settings and experiences they had. This study will also identify cultural issues that may hinder or promote the educational environments of the Ugandan Muslim woman.

2.8 GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Notwithstanding the critics highlighting the difficulty of encompassing the model’s complex multifaceted system of influence which state that all factors of development are mutually and systematically influential, the study has identified that the two major forces of the 21st century that were strongly related to Women’s progress in education were globalization and global human rights. Gabriel et al (2010) describes how the environment incorporates the child as a citizen of the global world. A child’s global society includes cultural conditions, patterning of environmental events and transitions over the lifespan. Influences may include the changes which flow from technological progress, global economics, and political strife.

The study establishes that globalization and human rights issues would be effectively embedded at the Exosystem layer of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model which relate to the overall systems that administer a country. Globalization is a product of the systems enshrined in the Exosystem layer that include the Economic, Political, Education, Government and Religious systems (see Figure 2.5.1). Globalization is a complex process that affects many aspects of human life through the growing integration of economies and societies around the world (Collier and Dollar 2002). Meanwhile numerous items of global educational literature stress the importance of the Human Rights Mandate the term gender needs, challenging the connotation that women are
inferior in all public and private spheres of life. To address this issue, the study adopts the feminist stance in encompassing different perceptions concerning the barriers and enablers affecting progress by women into Higher Education. Thus it will provide the Ugandan woman engaged in this study with a voice.

The study contends that globalization has affected women’s educational policy and practice worldwide; therefore, national, local, economic, political and cultural changes are affected and are actively involved in this response. Furthermore globalization has also developed new scholarship based on race, class and gender. The study acknowledges that this has raised further concerns about multiculturalism and identity in education, feminism, post-colonialism and the new social movements that have been supported by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the UN (United Nations). The study establishes that new educational models have formed from globalization to adapt to the changes within different cultures that address rural marginalization of education, education for the poor, migrant education and most commonly girls and women’s education in relation to the traditional societies and cultures that have suppressed women’s educational aspirations (Burbules and Torres 2000).

Although human rights mandates may help sustain progress by enforcing equal rights of girls and supporting governmental obligations, the human rights approach to education only seeks to deal with obstacles beyond and not within the educational system. For example the focus on poverty reduction enables the right to education act as a powerful tool, in making a change in women’s and girls’ lives. Poverty has been one of the greatest obstacles to human rights enjoyment and as a result of this; many girls and women cannot access further education due to gender discrimination. Denial to the right
to education reduces the number and quality of skills attained, exclusion from the labour market which perpetuates women’s poverty, leading to a vicious cycle which continues to make women’s progress into education a difficult task to achieve (Talesra et al 2000, Agosin 2002, Rao 2004, Maslak 2008).

Tomasevski (2005, 2006) further contends that International human rights law lays down a three way set of criteria stating that girls should have a right to education, equal rights within it, and that their equal rights should be promoted through education. This can only be achieved if their exclusion from education is overcome. The purpose of human rights education; ‘Is to challenge and change this discriminatory heritage’ (Tomasevski, 2005:3).

Adapting education to enhance the equal rights of girls requires women’s voices to be heard and also to partake in national and governmental decision making processes. Education is a central vehicle where most adaptations and responses occur. These include privatization, choice and decentralization of educational systems, paving the way in Uganda for the role of National and International organizations in education like the teacher unions, parent organizations and the social movements such as FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists 2005).

This study takes a feminist stance which, Arnot (2009) relates to the impact of women on gender relations, globalization, individual and societal interaction. Her ideas were synonymous with those of the Uganda Education report (1989) which gave the aim of Higher Education as the production of high-level human resources, enhancing research, advancing public service and the creation, storage and dissemination of knowledge. For generations, Higher Education has prepared individuals to learn and create ideas. It was

Due to the gender inequality in education that clearly existed, the study notes that girls were less likely to access or remain in school therefore of the 781 million illiterate adults, two thirds of them were women (Inglehart and Norris 2003). The study further argued that there was need for affirmative action to challenge this abuse and that it should be encouraged through international law because not only was access to education a sufficient condition for the right to education, but the discrimination within the education system needed to be abolished (Inglehart and Norris 2003). In addition to this the study noted that other problems that arose due to expansion of educational opportunities were low teacher expectations and gender-stereotyped learning materials.

The study established that other factors that hindered girls’ school participation and completion were sexual harassment, inadequate sanitary facilities and FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) which was still practiced in parts of Eastern Uganda (Aguti 2002). The lack of single sex schools in Uganda was another reason for Muslim girls not attending school and dropping out early. This led to the forceful movement, which involved women's organizations, mosques and religious leaders, who worked to raise awareness across the Muslim community on the importance of girls’ education. Other attempts included the religious patronage of schools and the formation of Muslim organizations like the Young Muslim Association and UMEA (Uganda Muslim Education Association) that sought to target improvements in the prospects of Muslim girls obtaining bursaries for Higher Education (Mutibwa 1992).
2.8.1 HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Human Rights education within the study reflects how the social interactions within Bronfenbrenner’s model (see fig 2.5.1) are always part of a larger ecological system (Exosystem) and each person will continuously be in interaction with a set of complex social relationships. Despite the difficulty of capturing all the wider themes within the study, the research establishes how the premise of the study is based upon human rights as has been recognized since the United Nations Universal declaration of Human Rights (1948). Article 26 states that:

“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace” and “Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children”(United Nations 1949).

The Macro System layer of Bronfenbrenner’s model identified laws as a one of the factors affecting the Muslim female student’s environment and this can be linked to human rights issues with regards to her educational progress. As well as being a right in itself, the right to education was also an enabling right and the declaration upholds that teaching and education were the tools to advance human rights and fundamental freedoms. The right to education as recognized in 1948 has since been enshrined in various international conventions, national constitutions and development plans. Consequently, UNESCO had to recognize that, while respecting the diversity of national educational systems, its duty was not only to prevent any form of discrimination in education but also to promote equality of opportunity and treatment for all in education.

Despite much progress since 2000, millions of children, youth and adults in less developed countries like Uganda still lack access to good quality education and the
benefits it brings. The inequality for opportunity is undermining progress towards achieving Education for All by 2015 (EFA Global Monitoring report 2009). However, human rights education from the Ugandan perspective should have a positive influence on the accessibility of Higher Education for the Ugandan Muslim female. Further to this the declaration of ‘The Right to Learn’ (UNESCO 1985) proclaimed that:

“The right to learn is: the right to read and write; the right to question and analyze; the right to imagine and create; the right to read about one’s own world and to write history; the right to have access to educational resources; the right to develop individual and collective skills….The act of learning, lying as it does at the heart of all educational activity, changes human beings from objects at the mercy of events to subjects creating their own history” (pp. 67-68)

Human rights Education (HRE) was at the forefront of the platform for action developed at the Beijing conference in 1995. The platform in which Uganda participated actively argued that equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice. The development of peaceful co-existence would in retrospect promote people centred sustainable development and commitment that would encourage the Ugandan men and women to work together for themselves, their children and the society to meet the challenges of the 21st century (Rao 2004). The Vienna declaration stated that the human rights of women and the female children were an integral and indivisible part of universal human rights (Afkhami and Friedl 1997). Uganda’s participation in the United Nations platform sought to not only promote and fulfil the enjoyment of all human rights for women but also to ensure this fundamental freedom throughout the female life cycle.

In Uganda, however greater effort was needed to sustain progress in educational goals, help women contribute to economic growth and share in its benefits (Kwesiga 2002, Ezati 2002, Muhwezi 2003). Promoting equality in educational opportunities involved entering the education system at the primary level, progressing to higher levels, and
making the transition to the labour market. Restricting women’s access to services (be it education, health, or transportation) and their economic opportunity was unfair since life chances should not be preordained at birth. In economic terms, restricting women reduced their well-being and the welfare of families. It limited economic growth and slowed down progress in poverty reduction which was the case in Uganda (Nwonwu 2008).

The study acknowledges that at the UN General assembly the main point of the UN resolution was to empower women, promote social change and advance gender parity. Many projects emanated from this since the statistical figures reflected at least 75 million girls around the world were not in school, and this seemed unfair and unreasonable and it couldn’t be ignored. Human rights advocates affirmed that investing in a girl’s education was vital because this raised awareness on her rights, allowed her to exercise them when she needed to and enabled her to achieve her potential (Keet 2010). In Uganda, education is central to unlocking the cycle of poverty because an educated girl is less likely to marry at an early age and to have children whilst she is still a child herself. Moreover, she was likely to be literate, healthy and survive into adulthood, as were her own children and above all, she was most likely to reinvest her income into her own family, community and country. The study acknowledges the support people receive to develop the communication skills to demand educational rights, include the confidence to speak in a variety of forums, and the ability to negotiate with a wide range of government officials and power holders (Right to Education project 2008). Bronfenbrenner’s model enshrines these rights in the Exosystem that cover the economic, political, educational, government and religious systems found within the community.
Thus a common understanding and observance of human rights depends significantly on education. The study suggests that in Uganda the state education’s primary responsibility was to transmit common values and principles as was in most governments. These include all the fundamental rights and freedoms on which Uganda as a democratic system depends (Osler and Starkey 2005). Rights based education as enshrined in the model and stressed by Tomasevski (2005, 2006) can be a means of attaining gender equality. Various researches have shown that it is easier to attain gender parity than sustain it. At the launch of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (2000), global strategies that were approved by the 190 countries were to eliminate gender disparities in basic education by the year 2005.

2.8.2 SEX DISCRIMINATION UNDER HUMAN RIGHTS

The study acknowledges that Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory (2005) lays stress on the quality and context of the female child’s surroundings therefore as the female child develops, the interaction with the environments acquire a complex nature since the physical and cognitive structures of the female child grow and mature dependent on the exposure she receives from the environment (Paquette & Ryan 2001.) Within this structure the study was able to identify what Muhwezi (2006) terms as gender discrimination, or sex discrimination, as being characterized as the unequal treatment of a person based solely on that person’s sex. While females have historically laid claim to the cry of unequal treatment, modern civil rights laws banning sex discrimination have been construed to protect males as well, especially in the area of employment. Most African countries including Uganda have reflected an increasing awareness of the prevalent gender imbalances in the provision of education. Thus combined efforts of governments and non-governmental organizations were established.
to redress the balance to realize the desired goal of gender-balanced education for the 21st Century (Katamba et al. 2002).

The study adapted Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) ideas, contained in the definition of ecology which observed how a female child in the study becomes a full-fledged member of the society; socialization in her case seen as a fruit of development. Bunyi (2003) further argued that most of the Ugandan socio-cultural values, beliefs and practices discouraged the education of girls, hence girls’ education was less valued and marriage, motherhood and the accompanying gender specific roles were more emphasized. Also owing to the depressed economies of many African countries coupled with academic programmes that were irrelevant to the job market needs, there were high rates of unemployment for both male and female TE (Teacher Education) graduates. This discouraged women’s enrolment into tertiary institutions hence the need for a rights based approach in facilitating women’s progress into Higher Education.

A study conducted in Uganda as far back as 2000-2001 reported that students in primary school needed proper management of puberty and sexual maturation issues since within the primary education the system was failing to meet the needs of all the children, more especially the females (Kasente 2003). The education system failed to provide children with accessible and accurate knowledge and information about the process of sexual maturation and an adequate and appropriate value system through which boys and girls can be guided into safe and healthy adulthood. Furthermore there was a lack of essential facilities to ensure that children, especially the maturing girls, were not excluded from full participation in school. The study revealed that poor management of sexual maturation had a negative impact on the girls’ learning ability.
and those who experienced menstruation without adequate preparation or facilities rarely attended school and subsequently dropped out of primary school (Kasente 2003).

The study cites an example of what could happen without human rights protection in Uganda in the instance of teenage pregnancy. Ordinarily the unfortunate teenager would face expulsion from school as a disciplinary measure and in most cases it would be difficult for her to go back to school after child birth. The advocacy by the Forum for African Women Educationists (FAWE, 1994) reported that in Eastern and Southern Africa, school careers of many girls were cut short because of pregnancy since “Premarital pregnancy among girls is stigmatized both in school and most African communities mainly on moralistic grounds, without addressing factors that lead to pregnancy among school girls” (Kasente 2003:6). Unfortunately, pregnancy in this case would end both her childhood and right to education, nonetheless it was deemed important for the Ugandan government to exercise a rights-based approach in allowing the female students to remain in school or create avenues for them to come back to school after delivery or child-birth.

The study acknowledges rights based education as enjoyment of full and equal human rights of which the objective was to add a qualitative dimension to global human rights. The study vies that with more than fifty years after the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948) the state of basic education provision across the world, was still not equitable. The study establishes that today millions of female children in countries across the world, including Uganda were still being denied the education they need to escape poverty. The study will therefore explore why these gender inequalities exist and how opening avenues for accessing Higher Education by Muslim women is a means by which these values can be upheld and passed on from generation to generation. One of
these avenues has been the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (2000).

2.9 UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (2000)

The study adapts the Macrosystem of the theory to reflect on the overarching beliefs and values which Bronfenbrenner (2005) was of the opinion had influenced or changed the Ugandan society. At the 2010 UN summit, the Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and Heads of State and Government, along with the private sector, foundations, international organizations, civil society and research organizations, kicked off major concerted worldwide efforts to accelerate progress on social conditions around the world (MDG Summit 2010). The study relates the social conditions at the Macrosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model ideally to encompass the Millennium Development Goals. Similarly the chronosystem would be applicable here in instances where the changing expectations and events in the larger society like the UN are experienced across generations due to the efforts of persons with resources that can influence their capacity to engage in the processes with the abilities, knowledge and skills to create change over time in the less developed countries like Uganda (Bronfenbrenner 2005). Nwonwu (2008) outlines the eight Millennium Development Goals as: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve Universal Primary Education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability and finally to expand global partnership for development.

The study features Education highly among the eight millennium development goals, where it was hoped that Universal Primary education could be achieved. It was seen as the main vehicle that would facilitate the progress of the remaining seven goals.
Nwonwu (2008) further contends that these included eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, and ensuring environmental sustainability while developing global partnership. In Uganda all these goals needed a nationally sustainable and easily accessible educational system that would form the background for their establishment (UN Report 2000).

The study acknowledges that in 2007, Uganda became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to introduce Universal Secondary Education (U.S.E). This followed ten years after the Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni’s government had introduced the Universal Primary Education (U.P.E). This action followed a UN report claiming that Africa had the worst secondary enrolment rates in the world with only 34% of secondary school age children being enrolled in class (Abal and Khamis 2012). With regard to working toward the Millennium development goals, UNICEF’s (2005) policy was that for every child there would be health, education, equality and protection. Carol Bellamy (UNICEF Executive director 2005) stated that: “If we are to meet the goals of ‘A world fit for children’ and attain the millennium development goals we will only do so with the full participation of children and young people”. Therefore the study acknowledges that to help the track progress, the United Nations Secretariat and the specialized agencies of the UN system, defined a set of time-bound and measurable goals and targets for combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. This meant selecting International experts to be indicators to assess progress over the period from 1990 to 2015, when the MDG targets were expected to be met. In theory, Uganda should not need the UN to draw up Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to target poverty since the country framed its own poverty eradication action plan (PEAP) in 1991, which had more
ambitious targets of reducing the poverty head count to 10% by 2017 with the government showing its commitment to factors that experts think are critical to conquering poverty (Kavuma 2009). Each year, the Secretary-General of the United Nations would prepare a report on the progress achieved towards implementing the Declaration (UIS 2008). The last report he quoted was:

“The millennium development goals can be achieved if immediate steps are taken to implement existing commitments. Reaching our goals for development around the world is not only vital to building better, healthier and decent lives for millions of people, it is also essential to building enduring global peace and security. Ours is the generation that can achieve the development goals and free our fellow men and women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty” (Ban Ki- Moon, Secretary General, UN 2007)

2.9.1 MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL (MDG) INDICATORS PROVIDED BY THE UNESCO INSTITUTE FOR STATISTICS (UIS)

The study acknowledges that similar to Bronfenbrenner’s layers of time dimension within the chronosystem, UNESCO’s indicators were significant in monitoring countries like Uganda to attain MDG goals. These included achieving universal primary education (MDG 2), reducing the under-five mortality (MDG 4), improving maternal health (MDG 5), and reducing the likelihood of contracting HIV/AIDS (MDG 6). Nwonwu (2008) reflects that promoting gender equality in education was the main key to sustainable global development as well as to greater well-being. Steady progress in women’s and girls’ education levels could be seen in most of the world’s poorest countries including Uganda. Sub-Saharan countries could boast of gender parity at the primary level which had improved from 92 % to 94 %. Furthermore, between 1999 and 2004, the number of out-of–school girls fell by 24 % compared with 18 % for out-of-school boys. There was also a sharp increase in the number of children starting school, with the highest gains registered in Sub-Saharan Africa (19 %) and South Asia (11 %)
and the Figures in Uganda could be attributed to the UPE (Universal Primary Education) (UIS 2008).

The study establishes that through UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) key data was provided on Universal Primary Education and gender equality for the monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals. The UIS was a key player in the global "Millennium Development Goals" initiative. As part of this, it was the lead agency for the collection of data and indicators for goals two and three that were Universal Primary Education and Gender Equality. The second goal which Uganda had implemented in 1996 was that of achieving universal primary education with the target of ensuring that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling under the UPE (Universal Primary Education). This was an area where Uganda has won acclaim and the government deserved praise for introducing tuition-free primary education in 1997, way ahead of the MDGs. Due to this enrolment into primary school rose from about 3 million children in 1996 to 7.2 million in 2006 (MS Uganda, 2006). In the same year, 84% of children aged between 6 and 12 were in school, suggesting that Uganda was well placed to score the UPE goal of 100% by 2015 (Kavuma 2009).

As seen through the study’s adaptation of Bronfenbrenner’s model, the Government of Uganda’s role in the implementation of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) was important. This saw school enrolment increase rapidly and in order to help countries make progress towards achieving educational expansion, the Department for International Development UK (DFID) recognized the need to work with partner governments and the international community, not just to attain universal primary education and gender parity, but to sustain the achievement of these goals as the basis for expanding and developing all levels of the education system and contributing
towards economic growth. DFID’s education policies whose priorities included Universal Primary Education (UPE) were a strong advocate for the removal of all financial barriers that denied children educational opportunities (Trip and Kwesiga 2002).

The study affirms that to measure the second goal of Uganda achieving universal primary education and ensuring that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, would be able to complete a full course of primary schooling, the following indicators were used: net enrolment ratio in primary education (UIS), proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reached grade 5 (UIS) and the literacy rate of 15-24-year-olds (UIS).

Additionally the Oxfam Education report (2000) gave an assurance that the government of Uganda was committed to paying school fees for marginalized children. It also provided grants spent on instructional materials, co-curricular activities like sport, and the management and maintenance of utilities like water and electricity. By the end of September 1999 six and a half million children aged 6-15 had enrolled for primary school education, one third of Uganda’s total population. Nevertheless, with the Universal Primary Education, Uganda was able to achieve the following, an increase in enrolment rates, as cited above, increased funding for primary schools, reduced illiteracy rates, especially amongst children and increased supply of building and instructional materials to schools (Watkins 2000).

The study branches from the overall Governmental position within Bronfenbrenner’s model, to acknowledge that the Ugandan Department for International Development (DFID, 2004) also engaged in reducing gender inequality also worked directly in girls education to enrol and retain more females, disabled and orphaned children in Uganda (Aguti 2002). This was achieved through the provision of £8.5 billion from 2006/07 to
2015/16 raising the enrolment rate of girls from 39% in 1970 to nearly 49% by 2001. To facilitate access to education, the Ugandan Ministry of Education and Sports built more primary and secondary schools. Thus, by the end of 1999, 4,000 additional classrooms had been constructed and by the end of 2001, a total of 6,321 had been completed (an additional 2,321 classrooms in one year) (Ministry of Education and Sports 2001a).

The study acknowledges that the interplay of factors within the Exosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s model highlights how the DFID worked creatively with the Ugandan government and other providers, to seek imaginative and manageable approaches to inclusion and access to education for all. For Uganda the increased access saw enrolment figures after the launching of UPE shoot up from nearly 2.5 million in 1996 to nearly 6.8 million in 2000 (Ministry of Education and Sports 2001b: 1). This increase saw the end of a backlog of school age children who had not been accessing school but were now able to do so. Meanwhile more children of school age who might not have been able to afford education before UPE were now able register as pupils (Ministry of Education and Sports 2001b:3).

The study contends with the third goal of the MDG’s (2000) which promotes gender equality and empowering of women aimed at the target of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015. Uganda has aimed to achieve this goal through the USE (Universal Secondary Education) which began in 2007 (Langole 2006). UNESCO had the following indicators applied to monitor its growth in Uganda: ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education (UIS), ratio of literate women to men of 15- to 24-year-olds (UIS), share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector (ILO) and the
proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (IPU).

The study recognizes that a further function of UPE was to increase the likelihood of gender parity and women's empowerment. Nearly 50% of primary school enrolments were girls, up from 44% in 1990. However, many of the girls did not stay in school for many reasons, for example lack of interest, domestic responsibilities, early pregnancy and marriages (Kavuma 2009). Although barely 37% of girls in Uganda sat A-levels, the situation improved at University level, especially in public universities, where affirmative action gave girls some advantage for admissions over boys (Nannyonjo 2007). All these factors have played a positive role in determining the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into Higher Education.

However, the study notes that while the quantity of pupils attending school was impressive, its quality went down, since Kavuma (2009) argued that pupils complained that they had to study on empty stomachs because no meals were provided at school with the levels of literacy and numeracy being poor and the government insisting that all pupils be promoted to the next class even if there was failure in exams. Consequently the drop-out rates remained high with barely 20% of the pupils who started primary one staying until primary seven. The Ugandan education minister maintained that the children should go into school and then sort out the problems from there because there was the likelihood of UPE making Uganda a country where the majority of the educated could only do basic reading and writing (Kavuma 2009, Asanka and Takashi 2011).

2.10 RELATING BRONFENBRENNER’S MODEL TO THE KEY CONCEPTS OF THE STUDY

Chapter two of the study sets the scene for the exploration of key concepts found in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological cycle (see fig 2.5.1) which gives an in depth review of the
emerging themes from the conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2). The study contends that the environment incorporates the attitudes and ideologies of a child’s culture (Gabriel et al 2010), for instance, cultural norms, social customs and traditions, and laws should be included within the ecological layers (Berk, 2000). The study affirms that this environment should further integrate aspects of spirituality, ethnicity, and nationality whilst also involving overarching institutions such as central and regional governments, as well as civic policy.

The study acknowledges that most psychologists like Sigelman and Rider (2012) are of the view that within the first eight months of a child’s life, he or she would have the ability and potential to speak any language, therefore as a child develops, the customs and language of the environment where the child was raised would influence and shape the child to hold certain beliefs, attitudes and understandings reflected in his/her behaviour basically particular to the traditions and customs of the larger society, which in this case would be the Muslim female child within the Ugandan society. The study identifies these sub cultures to include:

2.10.1 RELIGIOUS FACTORS IN THE MESOSYSTEM

The study identifies the religious system of a nation to be embedded in the Exosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s model. The issue of women in Islam has been a subject rife with controversy, misinformation and misunderstanding (Badawi 1995). Chapter one established that Muslim women in Uganda lag behind in educational aspirations, while chapter two seeks to review relevant literature in order to establish factors that may have contributed to the underrepresentation of the Ugandan Muslim woman in the field of Higher Education. Related to Islam, the study seeks to explore whether this underrepresentation is significantly due to religious factors. The subject of Muslim
women’s’ rights had been the focus of worldwide attention due to various misconceptions (Mernissi 2003). Historically when the rest of the world, from Greece and Rome to India and China, considered women were no better than children or even slaves, with no rights whatsoever, Islam acknowledged women's equality with men in a great many respects (Ali and Leaman 2008, Hasan 2004, Barlas 2004). The study reflects how the Quran states:

"And among His signs is this: that He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest and peace of mind in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Certainly, herein indeed are signs for people who reflect." (Qur’an 30:21)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) further said:

"The most perfect in faith amongst believers is he who is best in manners and kindest to his wife." (Abu Dawud)

The study contends that Muslims believe that Adam and Eve were created from the same soul and so both were equally guilty of their sin and fell from grace, but Allah (God) forgave both (Hasan 2004). The study argues that many women in Islam have had high status; the first person to convert to Islam was Khadijah, the wife of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), whom he both loved and respected. His favourite wife after Khadijah's death was Aisha, who became renowned as a scholar and was one of the greatest sources of Hadith literature. Many of the female companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his wives accomplished great deeds and achieved fame throughout Islamic history as famous and influential scholars and jurists (Badawi 1995, Barlas 2004, Hasan 2004).

It is therefore a western assumption that Islam, argued Mernisi (2003), did not advocate the emancipation of women who had been reduced to obedient observers of the
dynamics of religion; Islam to the contrary as the study established, has given women the freedom to construct modern identity. It is a known fact that a number of Muslim countries have had women rulers and presidents and these include Turkey, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Uganda the focus of the study had a women vice president Specioza Wandira Kazibwe from 1994 to 2003 (Otiso 2006). The study acknowledges that in Moroccan traditional Muslim structures women were culturally marginalized in educational aspirations (Mernissi 2003). This study further affirms that this was a common cultural phenomenon in most Muslim worlds (Findlow 2004, Barlas 2004 and Rafiabaldi 2007) and despite the clear Quranic verse (Q4.34) stating that although Islam acknowledges the provision of maintenance for women by male relations, this should in no way deter her pursuit of knowledge. There are numerous prophetic teachings that encourage the pursuit of knowledge irrespective of gender thus dispelling the traditional cultural beliefs.

“Men are the protectors and maintainers of women because of what Allah has preferred one with over the other and because of what they spend to support them from their wealth.” (Qur’an ‘4: 34).

The study establishes that many scholars of Muslim theology had presented different views with regards to human rights. Khan (2001) for example suggests that contemporary scholars like Syed Abul Ala Maududi, Asghar Ali, Afif, Syed Amer, HasanTurabi, Khalid Yasin, AbdulHakim Quick and Bilal Phillips have discussed women in relation to their acquisition of knowledge, participation in the process of consultation and rights and obligations regarding social relations, building up the social life of the Muslim community and economic activities. When considering human rights the Qur’an states:

“And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to
what is equitable; but men have a degree (of responsibility) over them. And Allah is exalted in power, wise” (Qur’an 2:228)

However, Hasan (2004) contends that these verses clearly outline the roles of women in the society which include her rights to education, possession of wealth and engaging in community activities within respectable limits. The study affirms that many men in Muslim society have the responsibility to women which is reflected by their provision, protection and shelter. The study attests that this responsibility has to be undertaken by the father, uncles and brothers before marriage and is transferred to the husband after marriage hence if a woman becomes a widow or divorcee, this responsibility would be transferred back to her male blood relatives. The study confirms that this in Islamic essence does not make her any less of a person but gives value to her worth and status in the community especially with regard to honour and respect, since the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is reported to have said:

“The world and all things in it are precious, and the most precious thing in the world is a virtuous woman” (Ahmad and Muslim)

The study acknowledges the fact that since Islam enjoins men to be protectors and maintainers of women; it can be perceived and interpreted negatively to mean that women have no control of their lives. To the contrary as depicted above women share equal rights in all economic, social and political spheres of life The Quranic verse mentioned above elaborates the privilege and honour a Muslim woman is supposed to enjoy in Islam. Furthermore, Islam promises to reward mankind who nurtures and looks after women because it was customary in the patriarchal pre-Islamic Arabia to bury female children alive which was construed as gender based violence hence creating human rights implications for the study.

The study regarded the widely practiced female infanticide due to fear of shame and
poverty in pre-Islamic Arabia comparable to the abortion of female foetuses before birth in the contemporary world practiced in Asia and the Far East (Ali and Leaman 2008). Nonetheless since gender discrimination was not alien in Arabia, these cultural practices have today fostered practices like FGM (Female genital mutilation), early marriages, bride price, slavery and exclusion of the Ugandan female child from school. In most rural areas the Ugandan young females are encouraged to stay at home labouring at the farm and doing house chores while their brothers go to school (Ocitti 2011). However, Islam condemns this discriminatory behaviour and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is reported to have said:

“Whoever looks after two girls till they reach maturity, he and I will enter paradise together like these two fingers (and he held his two fore fingers together in illustration)” (Muslim and Tirmidhi)

Hence with regard to education, both women and men had the same rights and obligations and this was clearly stated by Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) when he said:

"Seeking knowledge is mandatory for every believer." (Ibn Majah)

The study further affirmed that Islam as a religion exhorted divine guidance, which could be used as a powerful tool in support of the acquisition of knowledge, Abdalati (1993), confirms that since Islam regarded woman spiritually and intellectually equal to man the women have to be encouraged to engage themselves in the cultivation of learning that would allow them to participate, if necessary in social uplift and other schemes of national reconstruction. As mentioned earlier, the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H)’s first wife Khadija was a powerful businesswoman and highly respected among the Arab community. This wouldn’t have been possible without the support and guidance of her husband, prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) who was reported to have said,
“The acquisition of knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim man and every Muslim woman” (Ibn Majah) and “All women and men alike should acquire education from the cradle to the grave”. (Sunan Abu Daud).

This implied both men and women irrespective of race, age and status hence, a woman was to be treated as God had endowed upon her, rightfully as an individual, with the right to own and dispose of her own property and earnings, and to enter into contracts, even after marriage. She had the right to be educated and to work outside the home if she so chose to. She had the right to inherit from her father, mother, and husband but nonetheless it would be useful to note a very interesting point in Islam, where unlike many other religions, a woman could be a leader and spiritually she could be an imam, or a leader of communal prayers, for a group of other women but not over men. The study acknowledges that a Muslim woman also had obligations since all the laws and regulations pertaining to prayer, fasting, charity, pilgrimage, and doing good deeds applied to her, albeit with minor differences having mainly to do with female physiology (Ali and Leaman 2008).

The study reflects on the words from the Qur’an and hadith (prophetic sayings) which possess far greater strength and incentive than any other declaration to stimulate men and women to acquire more and more knowledge, not for the sake of greater social, economic and political empowerment against the other sex, but to seek divine empowerment (Abdalati 1993, Badawi 1995, Aslan 2011). With regard to this, the study argued that sexual inequality was a prominent feature of both Western and Islamic societies, although the underlying concepts of female sexuality in Christian and Muslim traditions were very different and the way women were treated in Muslim societies was probably unique (Mernissi 2003).
The study accepts that the prospect of empowering women in Muslim societies was not self-evident because there was an assumption that many predominantly Muslim countries in North Africa and the Middle East had deteriorating human rights conditions especially in the early 1970’s (Afkhami and Friedl 1997). Most Muslim countries challenged the concept of Universal human rights as a western ploy since Islam had a functional concept that covered rights for Muslims and specifically Muslim women. With regard to human rights, the study acknowledges that several contemporary Muslim scholars have argued that just like most of the rights recognized in the natural law and other religious systems, Islam in particular, as elaborated by Hunter and Malik (2005), had a comprehensive system of social and economic justice, which was considered to be of paramount importance.

The study acknowledges that this system of justice saw the community bear the responsibility of providing for its more vulnerable members especially with regard to the elderly, women and children in the society. The study establishes that religion when perceived positively was a great enabler to Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education. Unfortunately though, many Ugandan rural communities perception of Islam was reflected negatively in the way they treated their female children. It was also not strange to see many of these families deprive their female children with basic education whilst the male children progressed. Despite Human rights arguments worldwide, some Muslim countries still use stereotypical sex role socialization to oppress women. Nevertheless the Qur’an emphasizes the good treatment of the women folk and equal opportunities to pursue an education as part and parcel of the religion of Islam. The fact that Muslim women seem to be affected more than the other groups remains a
perplexing question which the study will seek to address.

2.10.2 GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS: RURAL URBAN MIGRATION IN THE MESOSYSTEM

The study contends that the development of a child beyond the home is largely related to his geographical environment (Gabriel et al 2010), because although the child might not function directly in this ecological environment, all aspects of her environment would affect her development (Paquette & Ryan, 2001). Bronfenbrenner (2005) reflects how the ideal community would provide this and it would include parental job experience, the presence of parks in the community, accessible libraries, and other structures such as early learning centres and/or elementary schools. The accessibility and quality of these services are key determinants of healthy child development. In developed countries these facilities are catered for as part of the educational establishment, in developing nations like Uganda however, there would be one or two public libraries servicing the city. In order to nurture a child’s educational progress, the existence of a public library which would include a children’s story hour may have an impact on a child’s love of literature and story, while the child’s attendance at such events helps librarians demonstrate a need for these services.

The study equates the Mesosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s model to the neighbourhood which is an influential factor in the progress of Education. Similarly the rural/urban divide in Uganda has had an impact on the progress of the Ugandan Muslim female in Higher Education. Moreover whilst Uganda is in the process of rebuilding a nation that is democratically viable, the current state of the Ugandan society portrays a largely rural ethnic society experiencing the pull of urban centres where western influences bear on practically every aspect of people’s lives. The study affirms that this affects all areas of Ugandan traditions namely; religion, gender roles, courtship, marriage, work, education,
family life, ceremonies, arts and media. Other keys issues concerning migration include seeking refuge as in the case of refugees and internally displaced persons, and seeking employment. All these processes have a bearing on the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into higher education.

The study affirms that since Uganda obtained independence from Britain in 1962, the country has been ravaged by political turmoil of civil wars and the crisis of the HIV/AIDS endemic. Whilst Uganda was being rebuilt through the process of democratization, Otiso (2006) acknowledged that the largely rural ethnic groups are not only experiencing the pull of urban centres, western influence through the media was also responsible for changing their lives. In Uganda for example Rural Urban migration has led to the development of slum areas like Makerere Kivulu, Kiwunya and Katanga in Kampala. Incidentally most of these slums are located within the vicinity of Makerere University. What is most striking about them are not the terrible facts of extreme poverty with images of muddy houses, refuse and dumping sites that comprise the majority, but the sight of many orphaned children who can be seen playing, dancing and singing in the streets without any real future. Disease is rampant in the slum areas. Thus orphaned and abandoned children suffer because there are no orphanage centres to accommodate them in the region (Dodman et al 2012).

The study views the migration trends of rural to urban areas being undertaken by those who are not highly educated and are therefore socially unfit for the urban centres (Barlas and Lin 2010). Since the government lacks a strong law to stop them, their movements occur regularly and Kampala city being host to these migrants has Makerere University incidentally as one of the areas which have a high population. Historically evidence suggests that the major causes of rural urban migration were employment opportunities
in the industries that have attracted many people (especially the educated ones), who may be able to earn a living (Mutibwa 1992). Movement to rural areas is common when times of planting and harvesting temporarily require a larger workforce but land shortages in rural areas have also been responsible for pushing so many people to urban areas where they can rent and stay safe. This is particularly brought about by the poor land tenure system.

The study contends that due to political instabilities in rural areas, many people have moved to urban areas, because urban areas always have administrative points, and so they tend to be well guarded (Ssekamwa 1997). In other words there is more security in towns compared to rural areas. Kampala would generally be regarded safer than Butambala village. Thus people in rural areas tend to move to the city to be politically stable. Additionally, Muhwezi (2003) contends that the poor education systems found in rural areas tend to lack facilities and teachers. Those that are adequate do not train students to find jobs in their villages but train office job seekers. Since offices are in urban areas, people are consequently compelled to move to urban areas to find suitable work. Universities such as Makerere, the largest in Uganda is in an urban area, further encouraging rural-urban migration. There are also improved and efficient social benefits in urban areas, like transport, wider availability of essential commodities, medical facilities, and recreational grounds. Good hospitals are also found in the cities like Mulago National Hospital in Kampala (Barlas and Lin 2011).

Notwithstanding the appalling situation in the urban slum areas, the study substantiates to what the State Minister for Primary Education (2006-2011), Mr Kamanda Bataruingaya who alluded that due to increased poverty in the rural districts, most families chose to give their young daughters away for marriage thereby reducing the
number of girls who complete studies. Consequently, at the higher level, the government’s 1.5 point affirmative action had enrolled a greater number of girls in school. Although a section of the population was against this discriminative practice, women activists pushed for its reinforcement. The study reflects that the most outstanding impact of the geographical factors though is the struggle between the social classes of the poor and the rich and the rural and urban which Otiso (2006) suggests reflects the patriarchy social and inheritance systems which have hindered women’s education and prospects and has reduced their chances of learning and exposed them more to HIV/AIDS.

2.10.3 GENDER ISSUES IN THE MACROSYSYTEM

The study cites social conditions and culture in the Macro system layer of Bronfenbrenner’s theory as a system of overarching beliefs and values that may affect the relationships the Ugandan female child develops with other members of the community. This can be linked favourably to Mernissi’s (2003) arguments regarding social and cultural factors that have shaped many women’s decision to embark in Higher Education. Her arguments were common and similar in most Muslim countries. These include a natural progression from school for economic reasons: job, salary, status; independence; parental wishes; wanting to become better mothers and members of their own communities; a desire for education and personal development; following role models; and delaying marriage (Mernissi 2003, Madeleine 2009, Bunyi 2003, Wright et al 2000). McGivney (1993:16-36) also identified some of the cultural processes affecting women’s education, which may also be applied to women in Uganda.

2.10.3.1 SEX-ROLE SOCIALIZATION IN THE CHRONOSYSTEM

The study links Bronfenbrenner’s chronosystem to sex-role socialization factors which
Witt (1997) viewed as something children learnt at a very early age when they were socialized to take on certain roles that were socially accepted for males and females in their community. Through a selection of activities, opportunities, encouragements, discouragements, overt behaviours, covert suggestions, and various forms of guidance, children experienced the process of gender role socialization. As children moved through childhood into adolescence, they were exposed to many factors which influenced their attitudes and behaviours regarding their gender roles. These attitudes and behaviours were generally learned first in the home and are then reinforced by the child's peers, school experience, and television viewing.

The study establishes that traditionally in most African cultures contends Bunyi (2003), women have been subordinate to men, despite the substantial economic and social responsibilities that women in most African societies undertake. In Uganda for example, women’s fathers, brothers, and husbands have authority over them. It was a common custom to have women kneel on the ground when speaking to a man. This was the case even though women not only had significant domestic responsibilities but also contributed to the economy through agricultural work. Traditional polygamous marriage practices where there was division of property and wealth among the families also disadvantaged such women (Bunyi 2003, Aguti 2002, Kasozi 2002).

The study contends that families have the strongest influence on gender role development; parents in a family setting would in most cases pass on to their children, both overtly and covertly, gender socialization beliefs (Bunyi 2003). Ugandan societies have traditionally aspired to socialize their children into being functional members of society and as Otiso (2006) reflect, gender roles were structured in such a way as to prepare children for successful family and adult lives. Traditionally girls were taught
cooking, digging, basketry and pottery, while boys were trained as hunters, blacksmiths, diviners and rainmakers. Children learned their gender roles by working alongside their parents, girls by their mothers and sons by their fathers (Otiso 2006:96).

As girls and boys grew up they are moulded by different sets of social rules and expectations, therefore the study reflects on the gender role socialisation that would influence their behaviour and perceptions in life. The systematic subordination of some women was further illustrated with traditions and cultures that encouraged early marriage, bride price and dowry practices and ironically the economics of life style and status were all involved in this inequality. Kasozi (2002) argued that ‘The more educated the woman was the higher her bride price’ would be and this was particularly true in Western Uganda where the bride price was paid in cattle head. Surprisingly some parents were still often seen calculating the number of cattle to be issued as bride price that would basically be equivalent to the number of years the daughter spent in Higher Education. A woman with a master’s degree for example would fetch a higher bride price than one with a first degree or an ‘A’ level education (Tamale 2011).

2.10.4 THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN THE MESOSYSTEM

The study establishes that the surroundings within the mesosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s model (2005) help to integrate the child’s home environment with that of the extended family, relatives, neighbours and friends (Gabriel et al 2010). The family/home environment is most influential for children aged 0-8 years (Sigelman and Rider 2012). The family environment would include qualities such as family values, history, culture, religious beliefs, parenting styles, socio-economic status, and parental education level and attitudes. The child would therefore live in the environment of home and family, but at the same time exert an influence on the home due to the demands of growing up like
feeding, clothing, shelter and general welfare. Gabriel et al (2010) further substantiates how the people and structures which have an impact on the child are located within his/her environment. This system would include the relationships and interactions a child would have with his or her immediate surroundings, aspects of a child’s biology, genetics, and brain development including well-being, weight, and height. The events that affect a young child’s development the most are those in which the child is involved in a day to day basis and face-to-face, such as bonding and play. According to Bronfenbrenner (2005:6), these proximal processes of interaction are “the primary engines of development”.

The study further established that these factors can be found in the Mesosystem layer of Bronfenbrenner’s model (2005) which has a two-way interaction; hence the family, schools, peers, religious affiliation, workplace and neighbourhood had a causal relationship whereby each element influenced the other elements positively or negatively. Findlow (2004) cites that although mothers were encouraging their daughters to enroll in Higher Education in less developed countries, in Uganda for instance, once there, they had to be careful to conform to traditional lifestyle and be ready to drop out when the awaited suitor for marriage arrived. Family support and reassurance represented profound facilitators in encouraging Muslim women to pursue Higher Education.

The study reflects on numerous studies on gender and Higher Education that have shown the Ugandan woman as extremely disadvantaged (Kwesiga 2002, Muhwezi 2003, Kasente 2003). This inequality largely engendered by society’s partiality for the male child, had become widely acceptable since even in Uganda, “The social function of the male was judged to be higher than that of the female” (Kasozi, 2002:17). There was
an increasing awareness of the prevalent gender imbalances in the provision of education and the study clearly indicated that much work was needed in Islamic countries to support and facilitate women’s advancement in the workforce, and that this would have to be accomplished through initiatives that revolved around Higher Education for women. Thus it recognized a deep understanding of the cultural and traditional barriers was necessary to facilitate educational development for women in Uganda.

2.10.5 HEALTH ISSUES AND THE INFLUENCE OF HIV/AIDS AND ITS IMPACT MUSLIM WOMEN’S PROGRESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

One of the complex issues identified by the study which the model did not capture but nevertheless holds significant importance were health issues and terminal illnesses like HIV/AIDS. The study has embedded this serious endemic within the social conditions of the Exosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model. Since achieving independence from Britain in 1962, Otiso (2006) acknowledged that not only had Uganda has been ravaged by political turmoil she had also been grappling with health issues for a long time more especially the HIV/AIDS epidemic. One of the biggest challenges faced by Uganda was communicable diseases such as malaria, as one of the leading cause of death and illness in Uganda, with women and children being worst affected.

The study confirms that today, an estimated 1 million adults (57% of them women) and 187,000 children were also HIV/AIDS positive. HIV also fuelled the TB epidemic, 50% of HIV positive people had TB, and 30% of them would eventually die because of poor access to treatment. Rural areas had least access to basic health care, safe water and sanitation. This, alongside poor hygiene, created high rates of diarrheal disease and death in children. These figures demonstrated that both the rural and town areas were
affected. Due to regular movement of people in the town areas, including incidents of prostitution and drug trafficking, the situation in the towns and slum areas were the worst with a large percentage of infections reported daily (Tamale 2011, AMREF 2011).

The study affirms that the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Uganda (mid 1980s to the early 1990s) saw an increase in the number of orphans and child headed homes in Uganda. Many families lost bread winners and it was mostly the female children that had to sacrifice their education to cater for the needs of the remaining family members (Bunyi 2003). According to AMREF (Africa Medical Research Foundation 2011) in Uganda, each year there was an estimated 66,000 AIDS-related deaths. In 2006 alone there were 132,500 new infections, 20.6% of them among children because of mother-to-child transmission. 50% of Uganda’s estimated 2.4 million orphans had been orphaned by HIV/AIDS and although each year there were 70,000–110,000 malaria-related deaths. Malnutrition was the underlying cause of around 60% of child deaths. Only 42% of births were supervised by a health professional. To make matters worse the health service in Uganda was crippled by only having an estimated 2,209 doctors, 16,221 nurses and 1,702 laboratory technicians. Poverty and lack of skilled personnel has led to almost a third of health posts not being filled (AMREF 2011).

The study acknowledges that the joint efforts by the Ministry of Health, Uganda and AMREF have in recent years improved overall access to better health for the people. Currently, 72% of the population was able to access a health facility, an increase from 49% several years ago. Working with district health councils and health care institutions, AMREF was improving the knowledge and skills of local communities and health professionals through training, partnering and targeting community health workers, water committees and technicians, women’s groups and community leaders.
In addition to this, the study acknowledges how AMREF has promoted community-based care for orphans affected by HIV/AIDS in Luwero district. It has vaccinated children and provided clean water and sanitation in IDP (Internally Displaced camps) in Northern Uganda. Additionally AMREF has integrated HIV, TB and malaria services in rural districts. This has empowered young people in rural areas to demand their right to access health services. It has also been instrumental in reducing HIV among sex workers at slum areas and partnered with the Guardian newspaper and Barclays Bank, transforming people's lives in most of the poorest districts in Uganda.

2.10.6 GOVERNMENT POLICY AND FACILITATION
The study recognises the Macrosystem of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model as embedding the laws and political system of any country. In relation to this, the study focuses on the current system of government in Uganda which has been widely praised for introducing affirmative action policies in favour of marginalized groups in society, particularly women. As a result, women's rights for the first time were enshrined in the Ugandan constitution. Uganda's women's movement has grown dramatically into a vibrant political force throughout the country. Uganda is the first African country to have appointed a woman as vice president, speaker of parliament, several Ministers of state and members of parliament. The affirmative action policy has, for example, ensured that at least a third of legislative and civic positions were reserved for women (World People 2006).

The study establishes that by the 1990’s conditions in Muslim regions changed significantly since the general socio-economic development had helped many women to
become educated, financially independent and to reach positions of authority and responsibility (Hunter and Malik 2005). By 2009, Kavuma (2009) contends 30% of Uganda's 332 parliamentarians were women, an improvement from 18% in 1995. These increases were through governmental efforts including the creation of new districts. Each district had to have a female MP and one or two ministerial and parliamentary posts were taken up by Muslim women. The 2011-2016 parliament representation of Muslim women in Uganda was 9% (see fig 1.6.1).

The government of Uganda has furthermore attached great importance to the education sector and through the Ministry of Education and Sports fostered universal and equitable access to quality basic education in both primary and secondary school. In addition the Ugandan government introduced the practice of affirmative action at University level in 1991. This allowed an extra 1.5 points for girls on the top of their score. This measure increased the enrolment of girls at Makerere University by 35% over the last ten years. However, dropout rates for girls at primary school level remained at 39% compared with 33% for boys at the same level (Education Sector Investment Plan 2002).

The study establishes that two decades ago when the government introduced the 1.5 bonus points scheme for female students at Makerere University to increase the number of female undergraduate entrants into University, they did not foresee the problem of having boys marginalized since the target for increasing the female student population has already been achieved (see Table 1.10.1). The government of Uganda has gone further to ensure equitable representation of women in parliament. Article 78(1) of the 1995 Constitution prescribed the composition of Parliament should have one woman representative for every district. The current 8th Parliament (2006-2011) of Uganda comprises of 79 District Woman Representatives with the current deputy speaker, Rt.
Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga who is a woman (Ssenkabirwa 2012).

The study identified other factors that have influenced the representation of women in Higher Education in Uganda which were mainly facilitated by the government policy that initiated the 1.5 point system for females to boost entry into tertiary Institutions. This policy had been in practice since 1990, and was initiated through the activism efforts of the Uganda Ministry of Gender and the Department of Women and Gender Studies, at Makerere University. Bunyi (2003:3) suggests that although Uganda implemented the system referred to as ‘awarding bonus points’ to facilitate female enrolment into tertiary institutions, it was unfortunately limited by other negative influences, such as inadequate numbers of qualified female candidates, insufficient places in TE institutions and women ‘unfriendly’ TE environments. There were also insufficient female role models for the girls to emulate in their communities.

A Monitor report cited by Ssenkabirwa (2012) states that:

“Girls have continued to be disadvantaged compared to the boys in all aspects of education access, participation and performance at both primary and secondary school levels, except at pre-primary level where there is gender equality in access” (Monitor Newspaper 16th January 2012).

The study affirms that according to the Ministry of Education the number of boys joining tertiary institutions last year (2011) stood at 100,831 while girls were only 78,738 indicating a gap of 22,093 hence the political commitment to bridge the gender gap in education had failed to translate into budget allocations and with no records or information management systems to track the progress it was difficult to trace the impact of interventions that would favourably encourage Muslim females to progress further into higher education (Ssenkabirwa 2012).
2.11 EDUCATIONAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE PROGRESS OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

2.11.1 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

The study distinguishes educational factors within the Exosystem of the model to be those that connect the Microsystem (family, classroom and peers) to the school board, neighbourhoods and media, whilst the Macrosystem which includes the laws of the land are what govern the educational system. Through the Ugandan Government’s efforts various achievements from the Ministry of Education and Sports Guidance and Counselling have been reported that may be useful in ensuring that girls are retained in schools and include; inclusion of guidance and counselling programmes on the general school timetable, staff training at national and regional levels on Guidance and Counselling, including HIV/AIDS, monitoring and support supervision of Guidance and Counselling at school level, publication of Guidelines on Guidance and Counselling programme for post primary institutions and information dissemination to the schools (The Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 2010).

The study acknowledges that through the Ministry of Education and Sports the government of Uganda has addressed the Guidance needs which are related to difficulty in study and academic skills, time management, decision making, subject choices and leadership skills (Journal of Guidance and Counselling 2010). Furthermore counselling is needed to help students cope and make appropriate decisions to manage any difficult circumstances they may be facing which may include interpersonal relationships with peers, adults within the family, and adults outside the family such as teachers and administrators. The study confirms that counselling sessions with female students assist with identity development, self-appraisal and dealing with internal conflicts that regard
the individual’s actions, decisions and values (Ssenkumba 2010).

2.11.2 WIDENING PARTICIPATION INTO HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

The study placed widening participation into higher education an important value enabling women achieve their educational objectives into the chronosystem layer of Bronfenbrenner’s theory (2005). In simple terms, widening participation refers to actively promoting opportunities for those under-represented in Higher Education and working toward raising aspirations, attainment and awareness amongst those groups in order to encourage their admission to, and engagement with university courses and programmes. Widening Participation in Higher Education was a major component of government education policy in the United Kingdom and Uganda. In both countries it consisted of an attempt to increase not only the numbers of young people entering Higher Education, but also the proportion from so-called "under-represented groups" (those from lower income families, people with disabilities and some ethnic minorities) (David 2010). With Uganda’s UPE (Universal Primary Education) and USE (Universal Secondary Education) this has effectively narrowed the gap between male and female representation in Higher education.

The study presented a strong and coherent rationale for improving learning for diverse students from a range of socio-economic, ethnic/racial and gender backgrounds within Higher Education and for adults across the life course (David et al 2009). Uganda also draws from this and has widened access to Higher Education to those previously underrepresented groups and secondly safeguards that students were able to successfully engage and participate in Higher Education once they gained access. This implied that what they gained access to would be both valid and relevant to them as individual learners. Widening participation in Higher Education in Uganda is in agreement with
David’s (2009)’s views and hence establishes that the following issues need to be looked at:

- the changing Ugandan policy contexts of post-compulsory education;
- how socio-economically disadvantaged students (race and gender) fare through schools and into post-compulsory education in Uganda;
- the kinds of academic and vocational courses, including Maths, undertaken in Ugandan schools;
- the changing forms of institutional and pedagogic practices within Higher Education in Uganda;
- How Ugandan adults view the role of Higher Education in their lives.

The study reflects that widening participation into Higher Education and guidance for young people on how to progress into Higher Education was often of variable quality and not provided in face-to-face situations. Thus poor advice and guidance often led to potential students making the wrong choices about which subjects to study, making unrealistic applications or not applying at all to institutions of further learning. School performance, was regarded as a strong predictor of entry to Higher Education and was influenced by a number of factors. It was established that early contact with universities could help overcome some young people’s reservations about Higher Education.

The study established that it was therefore important for the funding council of Uganda preferably the Ministry of Education and Sports to research the participation of underrepresented groups, and develop and promote the use of measures which best captured participation rates, such as pupil data linked with Higher Education records. The study suggested that institutions of learning should enforce gendered, classed and raced discourses in Higher Education, rather than diminish social inequalities since it might otherwise alienate those that widening participation initiatives sought to attract (Burke 2002). Considered a social and economic necessity, widening participation into Higher Education would be a waste of talent if people with the ability to benefit from
Higher Education were not given the opportunity to do so. Similarly Uganda needed a combined effort from the different stakeholders of the early years, throughout compulsory education and into adult life. Through this joint venture woman’s full potential as part of the educated citizen can be unlocked (Government White paper 2003).

2.11.3 FAWE’S ROLE IN WIDENING PARTICIPATION INTO HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

The study places the forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) at the exosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s theory (2005) since it is a membership organization that brings together African women ministers in charge of national education systems, women vice chancellors of African universities and other senior women policy makers. The study affirms the importance of FAWE (Forum for the Advancement of Women’s Education) Uganda Chapter in the advancement of Muslim women’s education in Uganda. FAWEU, which was registered as an NGO in Uganda in 1997 with the help of the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, Kampala, including men and women who support girls’ education in Africa, moved from advocacy to practice in the field when it was realized that to achieve gender parity goals education needed to be addressed from a gender perspective. The continental headquarters of FAWE is in Nairobi, Kenya, where it was registered as a pan-African NGO in 1993 (FAWE 2005). Currently, FAWE has 31 national chapters including the Uganda Chapter. The study suggests that advocacy work done by women’s organizations has increased awareness among education policy makers, practitioners and stakeholders with regard to issues affecting girls’ education in Africa (Macha et al 2011, Wood, 2008 and Morley et al 2005).
Therefore FAWE’s current strategies focus gender responsive models to transform schooling processes and ensure there is better retention and performance of girls in schools. However the Ministry of Education and Sports has also adopted these models with regard to educational quality issues (FAWE 2005). Thus changing national and international demands moved FAWE to influencing policies and plans so that Universal Primary education at a basic level, adopted a gender based approach. Tembon and Lucia (2008) suggested that several dimensions of girl’s education needed to be addressed simultaneously to make a lasting impact. The gender gap in access is still a challenge in many countries coupled by that of equity and quality hence the development of good practices and models that if adopted would make noteworthy advances in gender equity and educational quality over the next decade in Africa (Smyth and Rao 2005).

The study acknowledges that FAWE Uganda's mission was to bridge gender and other disparities affecting girls' education in Uganda through tangible interventions thus FAWE had designed local innovations to enhance girls' education. One that had been operational in Makerere University until 2006 was the Carnegie Female Scholarship (New York) initiative that sponsored girls from needy families throughout their undergraduate degree courses. Through home-grown initiatives, FAWE Uganda had sought to bridge gaps that negatively impact on girls' education in Uganda, such as rural, urban and gender gaps. FAWE initiated a scholarship program for needy but bright girls from disadvantaged regions to include orphans and handicapped girls who are assisted through high school and a few through universities. FAWE Uganda has also initiated a role model project to motivate, encourage and mentor girls to excellence (FAWE 2005).
2.12 RELATING THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE UNDERREPRESENTATION OF THE UGANDAN WOMAN IN THE FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION WITH BRONFENBRENNER’S ECOLOGICAL MODEL

All the factors in the conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2) have been arguably presented and using these indicators the research has linked their impact on women’s Higher Education and has specifically focused on Muslim women’s representation in University in Uganda. As the critics of Bronfenbrenner’s theory contend the study has found it difficult to capture the myriad of influences that the different social systems in the environment have towards the progression of Muslim women’s education in Uganda.

The different social stimuli have therefore been broken down and reflected using a case study of Makerere University, which is currently the oldest and largest government educational Institution in Uganda. Female Muslim respondents were identified within the educational institution and those who had graduated within the last 20 years and were currently in professional fields or government influential posts. It was necessary to identify graduates of Makerere University who would be able to provide a full-bodied and informative documentation from the other representatives in government institutions. The literature review identified several contributing factors to the representation of women in Higher Education which has been summarized in a conceptual framework as illustrated in figure fig 2.5.2.

Basic elements, variables and relationships that affect women’s education in general were identified and most are directly linked or interrelated. The dependent variable, which in this case was the educated or uneducated women, was influenced by various independent variables; these can be categorized into Human Rights, Environmental, Social, Economic, Political, Historical and Religious factors. Underpinning the thesis is
a notion of Human Rights. All the factors have two way arrows indicating a causal effect similar to Bronfenbrenner’s Mesosystem that highlights the interactional effect the different factors have towards each other and similarly the practical responses that relate to the underrepresentation of Muslim women in Higher Education in Uganda.

The conceptual framework highlights how the progress of Muslim women may have possibly been affected by a range of interconnected factors and agencies. The study seeks to investigate this further from the women’s perspectives in order to bring to light issues that may have been barriers or enablers towards her pursuit of Higher Education. The study would also identify Muslim women’s achievements which were abundant but were often unacknowledged and undervalued. The study would further seek to celebrate Muslim women’s accomplishments in Higher Education and also highlight all their achievements whether big or small. The study identified most of the barriers women face in trying to accomplish this feat. The study listened and documented the untold stories of Muslim women’s journeys towards the attainment of Higher Education in Uganda.

The Literature review has clearly not provided a strong insight into the reasons for Muslim being under represented more than other groups of women and this is why an empirical study was important so as to make an original contribution as to why Muslim women were lagging behind in the field of Higher Education. All the factors outlined in the Literature review focus on the key areas that have been developed in the conceptual framework that sets out to approve or disapprove the major concerns that need to be addressed in establishing the reasons why the Ugandan Muslim woman has not been able to grasp the opportunities availed to further her progress in Higher Education. The study sought to establish whether the key issues identified in Bronfenbrenner’s
ecological model and also highlighted in the conceptual framework that include: Human Rights issues, Social Cultural factors, Economic factors, Historical factors, Government policies/political factors and educational factors (positive discrimination towards female education) (see fig 2.5.2) were barriers or enablers to the Ugandan Muslim woman’s pursuit of Higher Education.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The study’s main focus was on Muslim women’s representation in Higher Education in Uganda using a case study of Makerere University, Kampala. The study follows a mixed methods approach which integrates quantitative and qualitative research within a single project. This research combines the use of a questionnaire (BOS online questionnaire) with semi-structured interviews since both the qualitative and quantitative data derived are equally informative to the study (Bryman 2008). In recent studies mixed methods researchers frequently address meanings based on both interviews and questionnaires. Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2004) argue that both quantitative and qualitative researches are important and useful. ‘Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification, in the collection and analysis of data’ (Bryman and Bell 2007:402).

The researcher identified women at Makerere University, Uganda, who were asked to ascertain the barriers and enablers that have affected Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education. This chapter addresses the research objectives and key research questions. The chapter also looked at the data analysis, the ethical issues raised, the validity and reliability of the study and the time period. Finally, the chapter discusses how the findings from the study helped establish the reliability of the instruments and identification of the factors that emerged frequently during the actual data collection.

The study reflects a feminist stance which the researcher thought would be significant because the research would “document women’s lives and activities which were previously seen as marginal and subsidiary to men” (Bryman 2008:422). Feminism is both a ‘theory and practice’ while feminist research is the commitment of producing
useful knowledge through social and individual change that will make a difference to women’s lives (Letherby 2003:4). Throughout the study, the researcher would as Bryman (2008:422) further cites from Reinharz (1992:52), “Understand women from their perspective and not from the tendency that “trivializes females”, activities and thoughts, or interprets them from the standpoint of men in the society of the male researcher”, Reinharz (1992) made several claims with regards to Feminist research; most importantly Feminism is a perspective, not a research method, it uses multiplicity of research methods, it involves an on-going criticism of non-feminist scholarship that is guided by feminist theory and may be trans-disciplinary.

The study above all, by adopting Feminist research aims to create social change and represent human diversity. In order to understand women from their own context, the Feminist aspect of the research included the researcher as a person who developed special relations with the people studied (in interactive research). The researcher further observed that, “Ethnography with the emphasis on experiences and words, voices and the lives of the participants has been viewed by many feminist researchers as well suited to the goals of feminism” Skeggs (2001:430). The study thus interviewed only Muslim women to voice out their views, attitudes and opinions.

3.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

3.2.1 THE MAIN OBJECTIVE

The study set out to investigate the factors responsible for the underrepresentation of Muslim Women in the field of Higher Education in Uganda. More specifically the study investigated the enablers and barriers to Muslim women who would like to attain Higher Education with specific emphasis on postgraduate study. The study borrowed from Bronfenbrenner’s ecological cycle (2005) to explore the factors that may have

113
influence on Muslim women’s under representation using the five environmental layers of the Ecosystem (see fig 2.5.1). The limitations on women’s access to Higher Education in Uganda were further investigated using themes developed from the Literature Review and the conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2). The identified themes that influenced the progress of Muslim women into Higher Education included Human Rights issues, Educational factors, Economic factors, Socio-economic factors, Socio-cultural factors, Traditional, Religious and Historical factors, Government policies and political factors.

The study also identified what Muslim women felt would be helpful to create supportive environments for attaining Higher Education in Uganda. Using Makerere University as a site case study the research investigated the following questions:
1. What were the limitations to Muslim Women’s access to Higher Education in Uganda?
2. What factors had the strongest influence on the level of Education of Muslim women in Uganda?
3. What are the enabling factors that lead some Muslim women to achieve a Higher Education?
4. What are the strategies that some Muslim women used to achieve Higher Education?
5. What do Muslim women in Higher Education suggest to improve female participation in the future?

3.3 MIXED METHODS RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

The objectives of mixed methods research were not to replace qualitative or quantitative approaches but “rather to draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both in single research studies and across studies” (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson 2004:15). In mixed methods research a large point in the middle area is
covered which includes qualitative and quantitative divisions. Mixed methods research can therefore be categorically defined as the “new third chair”, with qualitative research on one side and quantitative research on the other. Consequently mixed methods have helped this study acknowledge and develop techniques that are closer to what most researchers actually use in practice which in most cases apply both quantitative and qualitative data sources. As a third research paradigm, mixed methods research bridges the gap between quantitative and qualitative research (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2004a). The study used the sequential mixed design whereby one phase occurred after the other i.e. QUAN R (BOS online survey), QUAN R (Analysis), QUAL R (Group interviews), QUAL R (In depth interviews).

The study took the explanatory sequential design summarised in the following diagram:

**Figure 3.3.1 Explanatory Sequential Design**

![Explanatory Sequential Design Diagram]

Figure 3.3.1 is the proposed two-phase sequential explanatory study design whose first phase used quantitative (QUAN) data collected via the BOS online survey then analyzed to inform the second phase. The second phase had qualitative (QUAL) data collected via group and in-depth interviews and analyzed simultaneously with both types of data being interpreted together. QUAN refers to Quantitative, QUAL refers to Qualitative and R indicates projects that are conducted sequentially and QUAN R qual
indicates a quantitatively oriented project followed by a qualitative project (Adapted from http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6947/12/85).

The mixed methods research notation system adapted by the study was developed by Morse (1991) and is still used in mixed methods research. The findings from the first phase lead to the development of the second phase and consequently the researcher draws final conclusions based on the data from both phases. The research questions and data collection and analysis for the second phase evolved from the first phase thus the second phase of the study was further carried out to explain or confirm the findings from the first phase (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003). The quantitative approach of the study included questions about attitude in the online BOS questionnaire because it was the baseline that would give further understanding through interviews to the meanings derived from the questionnaire.

A general summary of the qualitative research design used illustrates the feminist qualitative perspective because it was a research by a female and all the respondents were Muslim females. Details of the research design included the area, size and sampling strategy of the study. The data collection tools included the on-line questionnaire, group and face to face in depth interviews. The overall intention of the design was to converge the data collected and have one source of data explain another.

The study contends that in order to tackle the question of Muslim women’s representation in higher education in Uganda, the mixed methods research was the most applicable stance the researcher could apply since it needed to borrow from both quantitative and qualitative approaches. However with regard to the study, the goal of the mixed methods approach was to address a research question in which a more
complete answer to a question could be developed using both the quantitative and qualitative methods where both the culture and context were considered to strengthen the data whilst minimizing its weaknesses.

Creswell (2012) argued that by using both the methods the assumption is made that neither qualitative or quantitative research adequately addresses the problems presented rather the use of both would be appropriate as a continuum with qualitative research anchored at one extreme and quantitative research at the other, while the mixed methods research covers the large set of points in the middle area. In single research studies like that of the case of Makerere University, the study merged the two types of data collected to have one build on the other whilst giving priority to the qualitative aspect using the group and in depth interviews. The study was therefore able to integrate mixed methods research using a feminist approach as the third research paradigm which would be able to bridge and address the objectives of the research that sought to investigate the factors responsible for the under representation of the Ugandan Muslim woman in the field of higher education.

Although the study had stronger components of qualitative research, data was collected using a mixed methods approach that included the BOS online questionnaires and group and in-depth interviews. Other documents that were quantified such as census data (Strauss and Corbin 2008) were also used. Although qualitative research describes events and persons scientifically without the use of numerical data, in order to investigate the broader scene of women’s representation in Higher Education in Uganda, numerical quantitative data collected from various units was analysed. Statistics representing Muslim Women in the field of Higher Education were obtained
from the Academic Registrar’s office covering a period of ten years (1999-2009) see tables 1.10.1, 1.10.2, 1.10.3, 1.10.5 and 1.10.6.

The Makerere University nominal rolls reflected figures of female student enrolment in all the faculties over the past ten years. The data collected included descriptive components of gender, age, religion, marital status and ethnic background. For a more specific quantification, data was retrieved from the Human Resources department of Makerere University detailing the breakdown of students and staff according to gender and more specifically religion.

Nonetheless, the study subscribed mainly to the interpretivist paradigm where qualitative methods particularly the group and face-to-face in-depth interviews were the definitive approaches in obtaining the study data (Bryman 2008). The researcher emphasized the qualitative stance in an attempt to “examine situations through the eyes of participants rather than the researcher” (Cohen et al 2007:21) and to gain a deeper understanding of the women’s experiences and more specifically how the Muslim women viewed particular situations that affected their progress into Higher Education. Unlike quantitative research, the feminist qualitative research undertaken in the study was dependent on capturing the reasons behind the various aspects of behavior and subsequently investigating the reasons behind the Muslim women’s under representation in higher education in Uganda as opposed to what, where, and when of quantitative research (Bell 2005).

The qualitative approach in the study offered the researcher opportunity for conducting exploratory and descriptive research whilst using the context and setting (Makerere University) to search for a deeper understanding of the women being studied. Hence, the need was for a smaller but focused sample (Muslim women at Makerere University)
rather than a large random sample (Marshall and Rossman 1999, Miles and Huberman 2002, Cohen et al 2011). Using Makerere University as a case study, the researcher merged the quantitative and qualitative data sources including the BOS online survey, semi structured in-depth interviews and group interviews using the explanatory sequential design (see fig 3.3.1). Makerere University was chosen as the case study because it is the largest national University that hosts students from all the country’s districts and it would be able to provide a representative sample of the Muslim women in Uganda.

3.4 USING MIXED METHODS WITHIN A FEMINIST PARADIGM

The complexity of the problems being addressed by the study required the use of multiple methods. Initially, the survey BOS (Bristol Online Survey) questionnaire data (see appendix 3) was merged and compared, followed by the group interviews and finally the one to one in depth interviews (see appendix 4) as a follow on to explain the quantitative results. The Bristol Online Surveys (BOS) was an easy-to-use service that was accessed on the internet that allowed the researcher to develop, deploy, and analyse the surveys via the Web. The BOS (Bristol Online Survey) had no complicated set-up or technical knowledge required and has been used by over 300 organisations and approximately 130 universities plus by other public bodies and companies for national surveys like Careers in Research Online Survey (CROS), Athena Survey of Science Engineering and Technology (ASSET) the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) (http://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/support/about).

The study acknowledges that “If society is to embrace and to value all of its members, it must break the silence of women, ethnic minorities and others in the margins of society,
and individuals must find an authentic voice of their own” (Bartanen 1995:1). Although there are multiple feminist theories (Rosser and Miller 2000), they all share the common assumption that place and power are critical in understanding human culture (Yoder and Kahn, 1992). Contrary to the assumptions underlying logical positivism, by analysing the concept of place, feminist theories focus on the interrelated and contextual basis of knowledge (Fivush 2002). This basis of knowledge can be obtained from both quantitative and qualitative sources which are embedded in the way in which social activity is structured and emerges from social interactions similar to those in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological cycle (2005). The study considers the knowledge in terms of who knows, in what situations, and for what purposes. Ideally from the feminist perspective, because the knowledge cannot be detached from social-cultural structures, the observer can never be completely unbiased. Hence the researcher would be observing from a specific place or perspective which would be the feminist standpoint theory, which is defined historically, culturally, individually and situationally similar to the factors developed in the conceptual framework fig 2.5.2.

The study identifies the concept of voice and silence as emerging from the individual within the function of their historical and cultural place and their individual history of specific interactions with specific factors as portrayed within Bronfenbrenner’s ecological cycle (2005) (see fig 2.5.1) and the conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2). Within the mixed methods approach, the voices are best captured using both the questionnaire and in depth interviews. The ways in which individuals develop voice or silence would have important implications for the development of their life experiences in the study. The experiences that were voiced provide a sense of validation; since they were accepted as real and the individual’s perspective on the experience was viewed as appropriate.
On the other hand, for those experiences that were silenced, they may have led to a sense of despair; whereby they were not heard or the individual’s perspective on the experience was not accepted as appropriate. The respondents of the study relate to the feminist concept of power, having their voices emerging over time within specific relationships adapted from Bronfenbrenner ecological cycle (2005) giving room to the women’s voices to relate their stories and experiences of their journeys into higher education.

Equally important to the study the researcher agrees with Leavy and Hesse-Biber’s (2008) view indicating that it would be of great significance for the research questions to allow for non-exploitative relationships between the researcher and the researched whereby information would be extracted and something provided in return. To allow female voices to develop freely, Wickramasinghe (2011) is of the view that one way questioning would taint the research as a result of respondents’ answers being influenced by the qualitative part of the research. Moreover another fear was that the interviewer-interviewee relationship would not balance because the researcher would reserve all the rights to ask the questions and thus placing the interviewees in a compliant or inferior position where they would not be able to effectively voice their opinions. This was addressed by the quantitative aspect of the study where the respondents could choose to be anonymous unless they were interested in carrying out the qualitative in depth interviews. The respondents who went on to give in depth interviews were given room to express their opinions and concerns with regards to the topic freely. Questions were open ended with prompts and cues that gave scope for their personal reflections. This would limit the power element of the structured interviews which would ordinarily be directed to information sought from the perspective of the researcher.
Nevertheless Bryman (2001:326), argued that despite it appearing “indefensible to ‘use’ other women”, feminist research was known to establish a high level of rapport between the interviewer and interviewee, therefore, there was no particular structure in feminist research because everyone felt equal and could participate fully in the interviews (Letherby 2003). This was reflected in the in depth and the group interviews in this study whereby the respondents were given equal opportunity to voice their contributions to the topic of discussion. The conversation was well rotated around the participants during the group interviews and respondents in the one to one face to face interviews were given ample time to respond.

Moreover as Bryman (2001:325) further observed that “unstructured and semi-structured interviewing had become extremely prominent methods of data gathering within a feminist research framework” this facilitated the realization of many feminist research objectives. Furthermore, Wickramasinghe (2011) suggested that the feminist critique in structured interviewing enabled the researcher to extract information from the subject while giving nothing in return. Therefore, although rapport was considered useful, it was extremely important that the researcher guard against familiarity to avoid biasness.

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research was a case study of Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, using a mixed methods approach that echoed the feminist qualitative perspective. In order to investigate the causes and appropriate responses of Muslim women’s representation in Higher Education, a number of cultural and social issues had to be analyzed using the case study approach. Bell (2005:10) argued, “The case study approach can be particularly appropriate for individual researchers because it provides an opportunity for
one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth”. Yin (1994:137) added that “the more a study contains specific propositions, the more it will stay within reasonable limits”, meaning that as long as the area of study is defined within specific boundaries then it would be easier to research.

Best and Kahn (2006:259) described a case study as a way of organizing social data for viewing social reality. Makerere University would be examined as a social unit of a whole. Yin (2003) was of the view that case studies were the preferred strategy for the when, how and why questions being posed. Similarly, the researcher in this case would have little control over events and would mainly focus on the contemporary phenomenon within the real life context of Makerere University. Using Makerere University as a case study, would according to Yin (1998) probe deeply and analyse interactions between the factors that explain present status or that influence change or growth. These different factors would be analysed to determine which ones had a greater influence on the patterns of African women’s participation in Higher Education.

Best and Kahn (2006:261) also suggested, “that although the case study was a useful method of organizing research observations, certain precautions should be considered, and the researcher must be thoroughly familiar with existing academic knowledge of the field of inquiry and therefore skilful in separating the significant variables from those that are irrelevant. Selective reporting may result in misrepresentation because there could be a tendency to select variables because of their impressive nature rather than for their crucial significance”.

Despite the disadvantages pointed out by Wickramasinghe (2011) and Skeggs (1997) who considered feminist research as exploitative, lacking transparency, manipulative and generally not being communicative to the marginalized Muslim women, the
researcher felt that the feminist stance would be the most appropriate in this case study. Feminist research as identified above was a relatively new research area that would be able to provide motivation and space for marginalized women to express their views and experiences as a voice. Makerere University would be able to provide the societal structures of class and gender found in higher institutions of learning where Education and media would relate to women’s subjective responses that could contribute to the construction of feminist theories. Their experiences would be documented so that their lives would be understood from their own context (Letherby 2003), which Leavy (2007) further contends viewed feminist research as centred on recognizing women’s sense of self-worth by giving them an opportunity to be valued as knowledgeable and interesting human beings.

The study recognises that although Feminist research gained interest and importance when women were given the opportunity to disclose instances of abuse like domestic violence, child abuse and sexual harassment, the concept could be applied for all issues surrounding women and it would act as a “mouth piece against injustices” (Bryman 2008: 423). In this study, the Ugandan Muslim woman would be able to clearly voice out her experiences with regards to the barriers and enablers that have affected her progress into Higher Education. In view of the above arguments, feminist research was the most appropriate perspective to adopt for the study, as Muslim women identified within Makerere University had a lot to contribute toward the research. These women through in depth interviews strongly articulated their views with regard to the research question that sought to address the current underrepresentation of Muslim women in Higher Education and offer suggestions and opportunities for positive change.
Table 3.5.1: Data collected for the Case study, Makerere University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>To be Accessed From</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Documents and reports</td>
<td>Registration and graduation records</td>
<td>Makerere University registration records, nominal roll, graduation booklets, faculty records, Ministry or Education and Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial online pilot survey questionnaire issued</td>
<td>Issued to mailing lists with respondents from Europe, Africa, Asia and America 300 responses received to date. Students at the University mosque after Friday prayers, female halls of residence, hostels, M.U.M.S.A</td>
<td>Online pilot survey questionnaire website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial participant form issued</td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial participant form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two pronged interview</td>
<td>Respondents fill in initial questionnaire followed by semi structured in depth interview with opportunity to make additional comments as part of respondents feedback</td>
<td>Opportunity and self-selected respondents from Makerere University. Snowball sampling for administrative staff, academic staff, professional and political Figures. The political Figures were graduates of Makerere University but were currently occupying governmental offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Interviews</td>
<td>3 Groups of eight females</td>
<td>Makerere University students obtained through opportunity sampling from the hostels, mosque and halls of residence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study proposed four criteria for judging the soundness of the qualitative part of the mixed methods research. Within case study research which have been supported by other researches afterward; Guba and Lincoln (1994) propose that they include credibility (establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research), Transferability (degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings), Dependability (can the same results be obtained if done twice) and Conformability (degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others) (Huberman and Miles 2002, Bryman 2008, Cohen et al 2011). Although Yin
(1998) discussed six types of data that case study researchers must be well informed of and would probably be useful for any study, the researcher has singled out four that were most useful for this research as illustrated in Table 3.5.1.

3.6 SAMPLING STRATEGY

The study asserts that the sample for the inquiry be representative of the group that the research findings are to be based on (Connaway and Powell 2010). The researcher used opportunity and self-selected sampling to select the different respondents within Makerere University. Opportunity sampling consists of taking the sample from people who are available at the time the study is being carried out that fit the criteria of the research. The researcher was able to do this on Fridays after the communal prayers where a large number of Makerere University Muslim female students could be targeted. Although it is a popular sampling technique and saves time and money, it also has a number of weaknesses. However, opportunity sampling can produce a biased sample as it is easy for the researcher to target participants from a particular social or cultural group (Bryman 2008, Bell 2005, Cohen et al 2005, Miles and Huberman 2002).

The study acknowledges that this sample would not be representative of the target population so in order to avoid this, the researcher ensured that those identified at the mosque represented a cross section of the community. This she was able to scrutinise from the initial participant form where the respondents indicated their ethnicity and background. A further problem with opportunity sampling is that participants may decline to take part and the sampling technique may turn into a self-selected sample (Bryman 2008, Cohen et al 2005).

The study established that self-selected sampling also known as volunteer sampling consists of participants becoming part of a study because they volunteer when asked or
in response to an advert, in this case the advert was the use of the poster and the on-line questionnaire. Connaway and Powell (2010) further contend that the respondents would essentially select themselves for the study by submitting information and in this case, it was done using the on-line questionnaire survey adapted from the Boston Online Survey where they volunteered to take part in further interviews. The researcher was able to attract participants who saw the poster (see Appendix 8), and took part in the online questionnaire (see Appendix 3) and further volunteered to do an in depth interview. This technique, like opportunity sampling, is useful as it is quick and relatively easy to do and can also reach a wide variety of participants. However, the type of participants who volunteer may not be representative of the target population for a number of reasons. Some may feel coerced to take part in the study and others may just be motivated students.

The study recognises that in simple random sampling, there would be no opportunity for “human bias to manifest itself” (Bryman 2001:89) and the process would be done without the initial knowledge of the Researcher or topic, but each unit of the population would have an equal opportunity of being included in the sample. Simple random sampling would probably have been the most appropriate method to identify students, but the researcher recognized that since the target population were Muslim students it would be favourable to use both opportunity sampling and self-selected sampling. This would be the most effective means of obtaining information through the posters (see Appendix 7) and the BOS online survey questionnaire that was posted on the Makerere University website (see Appendix 3).

The researcher further used Snowball sampling, which is a type of convenience sampling where participants refer the researcher to other participants who may be useful
to the research. This type of convenience sampling was handy for the research because as a member of staff of Makerere University, the sample would be readily available due to accessibility. Snowball sampling enabled the researcher to make initial contact with a small group of people at Makerere University who are relevant to the research topic and who would be able to help her establish contact with others.

The problem with Snowball sampling as Bryman (2001:99) argued was that it was unlikely to be representative of the population but however when used within a qualitative research as was used in the study of Uganda, Snowball sampling had a much better “fit” to the theoretical sampling strategy of qualitative research (Bryman 2001). Furthermore, through Snowball sampling, the researcher was able to focus upon and reflect on relationships between people through tracing connections. Although the scope was limited to a case study of Makerere University, Snowball sampling was useful in identifying the female politicians who were willing to act as respondents to the interviews and their input as policy makers and implementers was invaluable to the suggested recommendations for a positive representation of Muslim females in Higher Education.

Through Snowball sampling, the researcher got useful contact information for the members of Parliament. The Academic Registrar of Makerere University wrote an introductory letter to Parliament and thereafter, each female Member of Parliament that was interviewed was able to suggest another one who would be willing to give more information. Among those interviewed was a Minister of State for Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Presidential Adviser on Muslim Affairs, the Member of Parliament Representative for Persons with Disability and the Honourable Member of Parliament for Mpigi district. The Muslim women professionals who were graduates of
Makerere University were also identified through Snowball sampling and one respondent was able to recommend another until a total of six respondents were identified and these included a lawyer, a teacher, an accountant, an administrator, a deputy Registrar and a Librarian (See Appendix 6).

The researcher was able to select ten Muslim female staff both Academic and administrative, and 10 Muslim female professionals, heads of government politicians like Ministers and Parliament representatives. This type of opportunistic sampling selected participants because they were typical or particularly interesting. “Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to select those participants who would provide the richest information, those who are most interesting, and those who manifest the characteristics of most interest to the researcher” (Best and Kahn 2006:19). As a member of the Academic registrar’s department of Makerere University, the researcher was able access contact information for staff members willing to do interviews and these were able to suggest other staff. This was conducted ethically with confidentiality and dignity of the respondents being maintained throughout the research. The respondents were assured of anonymity (see the discussion of Ethical issues later in the chapter).

Being a Makerere University member of staff, this opportunistic purposeful selection was highly advantageous in that the respondents personally knew the researcher. This helped them to actually open up more at the interviews due to the level of trust between them. However, there was a constant danger of the researcher influencing an interview to take a particular direction; whilst not being able to identify personal prejudices (Cohen and Manion 1989). The Researcher was able to identify sources of bias and apply techniques to reduce them (Cohen et al 2000, Plummer 1983). A good example
would be to avoid leading questions that may sway the respondent toward the researcher’s views. E.g. Wasn’t it difficult growing up in the village where they did not value female education? This question already has a bias for respondents who grew up in the village not being able to easily access further education. Instead of asking leading questions, the researcher used something more objective e.g.; Tell me how it was growing up as a student in the village. Here the respondent would be able to take on any view they liked when responding to the question unlike the first one that limited thoughts. Although the research process benefited greatly by having the researcher’s participation, it was also wise to avoid the ‘head in sand’ attitude (Patai 1994:62) and this was checked by the researcher being non-judgemental during the interviews and simultaneously not ignoring issues as they came up and also through the nature of the questions asked, which were open ended, giving room to the respondents to give their views in depth (See Appendix 4).

3.7 SAMPLE SIZE

The study affirms that the sample size is usually dependent on a number of considerations, time and cost which the researcher reflected in Table 3.7.1. Bryman (2001:95) argued that, “it is the absolute size of a sample that is important and not its relative size”. Although the case study was of Makerere University, the identification of respondents was not limited within the walls of the University. It was essential for the study to get views of graduates of Makerere University who held senior professional and political posts. The Academic Registrar wrote an introductory letter that the researcher was able to use to access the Ugandan Parliament and from there she was sign posted to the Member of Parliament of Mpigi district who introduced her to the Member of Parliament for people with disabilities who in turn directed her to the
Presidential advisor on Muslim affairs and Minister for State for Gender, Labour and Social Development.

Muslim female undergraduate and postgraduate students were initially self-selected from the halls of residence and through the online questionnaire. Later respondents were purposively selected from the feedback received from the online questionnaire conducted within Makerere University. The sample comprised of 60 respondents in total, 40 Muslim female students (selected from different year groups with 20 of these being undergraduate and 20 postgraduate), 10 Muslim women academicians and administrators, and 10 Muslim female professionals including those in government positions and politicians (see fig 3.7.1).

This sample was selected because it represented a cross section of the University community. All the respondents were either current students of the University, representing the different academic years, postgraduates, recent graduates or old graduates who were now professionals and had moved into other fields. The researcher included respondents from within and outside Makerere University because the conceptual framework established that other respondents who could provide key information like government officials necessitated inclusion. Although they were not part of the case study area they were graduates of Makerere University hence they could provide their own first hand experiences in addition to whatever strategies the government had planned or implemented that could help address the situation. The academic and administrative staffs of Makerere University were also part of the sample because they represented the case study area. The low number of academic and administrative staff selected was a representative sample of the Muslim women in these offices who were very few that they could be literally counted on the fingertips.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Total No</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sampling Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students from Makerere University</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>BOS online survey (open ended questionnaire) Posters around halls of residents</td>
<td>Initial Opportunity sampling respondents were self-selected that is those who were willing to conduct interviews sent contacts by email after completing the BOS online survey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 20 undergraduate</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Initial recruiting questionnaire/participant consent form 3 group interviews of 8 students each 20 follow up in depth 2 pronged interviews</td>
<td>Initial Opportunity sampling and self-selection then a selection was made. Purposeful and Snowball sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 postgraduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 6 Academic staff members</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Initial recruiting questionnaire/participant consent form In depth 2 pronged interviews</td>
<td>Purposeful and Snowball sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Administrative staff members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates of Makerere University who are currently Muslim females’ professionals and those in high government positions including ministers, members of parliament and local council leaders.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Initial recruiting questionnaire/participant consent form In depth 2 pronged interviews of identified Muslim female professionals, government leaders’ members of Parliament and local council leaders.</td>
<td>Purposeful and Snowball sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total in depth</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Questionnaire</td>
<td>165</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although Cohen et al (2005) suggested that the sample has to be kept at a manageable level because samples of thirty or more were usually considered large samples and those with fewer than thirty, small samples. The researcher used sixty interview...
respondents for her research. The large figure was arrived at because it represented a cross section of the University community both academic and administrative and three group interviews that comprised of current undergraduate and postgraduate students. The alumni and or old graduates who were now working as professionals or politicians in the field were also part of the study because their reflections were helpful in suggesting strategies to improve the current situation (see table 3.7.1).

The study acknowledges that whilst it is true that samples that are larger than necessary can produce problems; because large samples may incur higher costs and can result in an ethical concern due to large a number of subjects, the large sample was justified because of proximity of the respondents’ addresses and the ease at which the researcher was able to identify other respondents using snow ball sampling. The researcher was able to manage the high costs and time because she was able to manage her time and allocate interviews to people who were within the same area on the same day that helped to save time and money.

The study established that the common problems faced within the research included rescheduling of interviews because of busy Parliamentary members, transportation was also expensive and there were safety issues involved because the researcher found herself using motorcycles for transport within town due to high levels of traffic. Other concerns that arose were family commitments and the long distances covered in some instances to get to the respondents who would not be available to conduct interviews at the case study site. Some of the respondents interviewed for the study did not benefit the research and created administrative and logistical problems because they were too far away (those in parliament) and when the researcher arrived, some were not able to give her audience until a later time.
3.8 MIXED METHODS DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

3.8.1 ON-LINE QUESTIONNAIRES

The study contends that with the increasing use of the Internet, online questionnaires have become a popular method of collecting information thus online questionnaires affect the quality of the data that is gathered (Surhone et al 2010). Questionnaires are considered vital for the researcher because not only do they draw accurate information from respondents; they give structure to interviews; provide a standard form on which facts, comments and attitudes can be recorded; and facilitate data processing (Brace 2008). The study’s first on line questionnaire was piloted using the survey monkey website and the second used the BOS on line website. The BOS survey questionnaire could accommodate more questions and comments than the survey monkey one (see appendix 1 and 3). Although both surveys were web based and easy to use, the survey monkey questionnaire had a limited number of questions that could be asked (10) but it could be easily created to extrapolate basic and useful information (Plowright 2011). The BOS (Bristol Online Survey) on the other hand was an easy to use on line survey tool that allowed developing, launching and analysing web-based surveys. However, the BOS application was written by the University of Bristol and used by a large number of Higher Education institutions throughout the UK, including the University of Leicester (BOS User guide 2006, Thomas 2009).

Both questionnaire studies survey’s reliability was tested with Muslim women who had internet access from Uganda and other parts of the world. Additionally Higher Educational institutions had used them widely both in the UK and Africa and with positive results (Plowright 2011, Surhone et al 2010 and Thomas 2009). The pilot study used the on-line survey monkey questionnaire that was able to gather 300 responses from the U.K, America, Asia and Africa but whose responses could not be
used as a data source due to design technicalities nevertheless they were useful in designing the BOS (Bristol On line survey). The pilot questionnaire was simple and was mainly gathering basic research variables (see appendix 1).

There were quite a number of factors considered when designing the online questionnaire of the study and these included: available question formats, administration, quality and ethical issues. The main BOS questionnaire was created with lessons learnt from the pilot study and it was technically tailored to target Makerere University students and hoped to gather 200 to 300 respondents. With permission from the graduate school of Makerere University, the survey website was uploaded onto the students University accounts. The on line questionnaire had a section for students who were interested in providing more information to meet up with the researcher for in depth interviews. Those who were responsive left their e-mails and phone contacts and this enabled the researcher get in touch with them for further in depth interviews (see Appendix 3).

3.8.2 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Following the pilot survey, the researcher was able to prioritize the data that was needed for the study which included basic information such as the age, marital status, ethnicity, education levels and so forth of the respondents. The questions had to be in the simplest terms and with minimum vocabulary to facilitate understanding. It also constituted “smart branching” whereby if the response to a certain question was “yes”, then the questionnaire would automatically request for more information. Open-ended questions that allowed the respondents to answer in their own words was also used hence textboxes were provided with the question prompt in order for respondents to type in their answer. Open-ended questions sought a free response aimed to determine
what the focus of the respondent’s mind was. These were good for ascertaining attitude or feelings, likes and dislikes, memory recall, opinions, or additional comments. A brief “thank you” note was included at the end of the questionnaire (Brace 2008).

The study recognised that it would be unwise for the questionnaire survey length to be too long so that it exceeded a couple of minutes to answer, since questionnaires should generally, have multiple choice questions that take one minute or one short answer question which was equivalent to three multiple choice questions (Brace 2008). Prototyping was also done where a sample of the questionnaire was distributed to at least five people, mainly colleagues prior to its launch on the web. Upon their completion of the questionnaire, feedback from the participants was obtained and information relating to whether they understood the main point of the questionnaire was gathered. It was also important to distinguish if participants had had any difficulty with understanding any of the questions and the feedback from the respondents was utilized to make the necessary changes to the questionnaire (Bradburn et al 2004, Presser et al 2004, Groves et al 2007).

The BOS survey developed through the Student Development Zone was known as the Bristol Online survey. The Bristol Online Surveys (BOS) was an easy-to-use service that had allowed both education and social scientist researchers to develop, deploy, and analyse surveys via the Web. No complicated set-up or technical knowledge was required. The researcher was able to implement it linked to the Makerere University website because the targeted respondents were all Ugandan and specifically Makerere University female students. The website processed 165 responses over a period of 5 months (July 2011-November 2011). The advantage the Researcher had was that she was on site and was able to advertise the project to the students.
3.8.3 ADMINISTRATION OF ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRES

Once the questionnaire of the study was designed, it had to be administered to the appropriate sample population for data collection. In this case, the target population was Makerere University female staff and students. To attract the appropriate study target audience, questionnaires often required advertisement. The researcher used two methods to attract participants; sending reminders through mass emails and using social networks like face book and twitter. With these efforts, the researcher was able to receive 165 responses for the BOS Online survey (see Appendix 4).

3.8.3.1 QUALITY OF ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRES

The study acknowledged that in order to establish the online questionnaire quality, its reliability needed to be measured by conducting a pilot survey through analysing the value of the data obtained and participant satisfaction (Bradburn et al 2004). The Questionnaires were short and concise by removing redundant and irrelevant questions, which in most cases added frustration to the participants, and not value to the research. Finally, by placing the questions in a logical sequence, the BOS (Bristol online survey) gave participants a better direction as they filled out the questionnaire. The survey avoided moving randomly between subjects since this would have confused the participants (Peterson 2000, Online Questionnaire Design Guide 2007).

3.8.3.2 ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRES

The study outlined some of the advantages of online questionnaires. Apart from having a greater flexibility in displaying questions, the online questionnaire of the study had attractive additional features like graphics and fonts where the questions could be displayed with a variety of methods like: Check boxes, Pull-down menus, Pop-up menus, Help screens and Graphics (Bradburn et al 2004 and Peterson 2000). Bradburn
et al (2004) contends that this method also allowed a quick response from subjects and was cheaper to administer, since there were no costs associated with purchasing paper or other materials for printing. Brace (2008) affirmed that Internet based research reduced the cost of postage, paper, printing, keying data, processing data and interview costs. Data was collected in a central base hence the time taken to distribute, gather and process data was substantially reduced (Cohen et al 2007).

Although Internet based research was useful in obtaining greater generalizability with a wide and diverse population that could be easily accessed due to the world wide coverage; it was also convenient for the study because the researcher could reach difficult populations under the cover of anonymity and non-traceability. Since most of the responses, came from volunteer participation, there were greater chances for authenticity in the responses obtained. The respondents of the study could complete the questionnaires from home at a time suitable for themselves so that it was an extremely flexible activity since they could complete it over time and not in one sitting. Cohen et al (2007) went on to state that, online questionnaires reduced research effects and had fewer missing entries with less human errors experienced while entering or processing data. It was therefore much easier to correct errors on an online questionnaire, than on printed questionnaires.

**3.8.3.3 DISADVANTAGES OF ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRES**

The study established that online questionnaires had a few disadvantages as outlined by Peterson (2000); It was quite easy to confuse respondents due to the structure of the online questions, since the items were placed close together and this proximity made them appear similar. Secondly, participants would find it easier to only respond to figures or items that were simple and regular and could be easily perceived and remembered than
complex items. Thirdly, not everyone has access to the Internet, so the response rate was slow and this was observed after the researcher began receiving responses. At the pilot questionnaire (see appendix 1) most of those who responded were from the U.K, Europe and Africa. The responses from Africa were from women working at the Universities, Public offices and big private companies. The 300 responses were gathered from the pilot were over two years because the questionnaire was launched in 2009. These responses were also gathered due to effort by the researcher in constantly e-mailing reminders to respondents on the mailing list and requesting them to forward them to others.

Although the BOS online questionnaire the study used targeted the Makerere University population, and it would have been easier to receive responses (since it was attached to the University website and most students had access to computers), it only received 165 responses despite the fact that it was launched in June 2011 and deactivated in November 2011 (see appendix 4). The researcher also had to make an active campaign to get responses by including it on the posters displayed all over the campus and the female halls of residence (see appendix 7). Another great disadvantage faced was that most people were not very receptive to completing questionnaires on line hence very few completed and submitted them. Studies indicated that the demography that respond to online questionnaire invitations were generally biased to younger people who were computer literate and gadget lovers (Groves et al 2004). This though did not deter the efforts of the researcher because all the respondents, whether young or old were staff, graduates or current students of Makerere University and they were familiar with the everyday use of computers.
The study’s response rate for online questionnaires was frequently quite low as gathered above but Bosnjak and Tuten (2001), argued there was a danger that responses would continue to drop due to over-surveying of web-users. He went further to illustrate the three factors that determined the successfulness of an online questionnaire and the likelihood of achieving decent levels of response. Respondent ability, respondent motivation and the task difficulty/questionnaire design (Bradburn et al 2004, Presser et al 2004, Groves et al 2007).

3.9 USING THE LIKERT SCALE WITHIN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Since an investigation of attitude is a prominent area in this research, a Likert scale was beneficial in the online questionnaire. A Likert scale is a multiple item indicator or measure of a set of attitudes relating to a particular field or area and in this case, it would be the attitudes towards women’s representation in Higher Education in Uganda. Likert scale is a psychometric scale commonly used in questionnaires. When responding to a Likert questionnaire item, respondents would specify their level of agreement to a statement. The scale was named after its inventor, psychologist Rensis Likert (Bryman 2008). The goal of the Likert scale in this case would be to measure the intensity of the feelings about the factors influencing Muslim women’s representation in Higher Education. In this format, each respondent was asked to indicate his or her level of agreement in a 5-point scale going from ‘very positive’ to ‘very negative’. The middle point ‘neither positive nor negative’ indicating neutrality on the issue (see appendix 3).

Each respondents reply to each item was assessed online using the real time summary report that gave the results in percentages (Bryman 2008). Since the scale measures intensity, the scoring is carried out so that a high level of intensity of feelings with each
indicator receives a high score (e.g. on the 5 point scale, a score of 5 for very strong positive feelings about an issue and a score of 1 for very negative feelings about an issue). In constructing a Likert scale for this study, the researcher had to ensure that the items were statements and not questions and that the items had to all relate to the same subject, e.g. Higher Education and finally each of the items had to be interrelated. A Likert scale would also be useful in measuring reliability through consistency and this could be established through asking various groups from the same community (Makerere University) to fill in the on line questionnaire and finally establishing whether there is a common pattern of occurrence on the issue.

3.10 SEMI-STRUCTURED INDEPTH INTERVIEWS

The most appropriate method of data collection for this study was the semi-structured interviews. As Cohen et al (2000: 267) state: “Interviews enable participants to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view”. Interviews enable participants’ values, preferences, attitudes and beliefs to be considered. They may be used alone, or as in this case, to validate other methods and to “go deeper into the motivations of respondents and their reasons for responding as they do” (Cohen et al 2000:268).

An in-depth open-ended semi structured interview guide using prompts was able to cater for all the purposively selected respondents. Semi-structured interviews were useful as a way of gathering rich, detailed information that could be administered in a one-to-one or group situation (Legard et al. 2003). “The purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in or on someone else’s mind and not to put things in someone’s mind but to access the perspective of the person being interviewed”. Best and Kahn

Hence it was important that the interviewer structured the questions in such a way so that as much information as possible could be gathered. The researcher was able to include the following questions during the group and one to one in depth interviews (see Appendix 4). The interview schedule was tested with a pilot in depth interview guide that posed questions around the following areas: the religious, cultural and ethnic background of the respondent, the educational experiences of the respondent, the identified factors that were barriers or enablers to the respondents’ progress into Higher Education and finally suggestions or recommendations. Although the interview guide had 25 sample questions, an average of 10 questions were asked per respondent depending on the background of the interviewee (see Appendix 4). The questions asked depended on the response of the interviewee and the direction it took. Since the study was a feminist qualitative paradigm that was recording women’s experiences the researcher was able to take a relaxed subjective approach in asking relevant questions.

3.11 GROUP INTERVIEWS

The researcher was able to conduct three sessions of group interviews with 8 students each from 40 randomly selected Muslim students at the Makerere University mosque. They included, Muslim female students accommodated at the University halls of residence, those at private hostels and those who reside at home. The number of interview groups depended on the complexity of the research, and the expected range was usually 9 to 52 (Bryman 2001). Due to the specific nature of the research questions, the researcher was able to accommodate three (3) formal group interview sessions; two comprising of Makerere University undergraduate and postgraduate students and one of recently completed ‘A’ level students who were applying to join Makerere University.
As most of the students were already above 18 years of age, parental consent did not have to be obtained. Morgan (1998) suggested that the typical group size should be six to ten members. The larger the number in the group interview increases the inability to control them especially those who do not appear on the day. A smaller group was therefore recommended because the participants were likely to have a lot to say on the topic. Since the researcher’s topic involved personal accounts of their experiences in Higher Education, the group interview numbers were limited to eight.

Although the researcher planned to use informal groups from the University staff, it was not possible because of the different work schedules each member of staff had. Similarly, the academic staffs were also not available at the same time. The need for several group interviews stemmed from the fact that one group was not enough to suffice the needs of the researcher (Bryman 2001). The group interviews were able to address the research objectives whose aim was to identify the barriers and enablers to Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education in Uganda. Group interviews were an effective research tool because they offered opportunities for direct contact with a diverse group of respondents through interaction, openness and formation of opinions that are compatible with the qualitative research paradigm (Cohen et al 2007). Later the researcher made follow up in depth interviews with students who had demonstrated interest and knowledge on the topic. The researcher was able to gather basic information from the group interviews which she used later to gain in-depth material from the interviews.

The research established that the group interviews had five advantages over individual interviews: synergism (where a wide bank of data emerges through group interaction and Snowballing (when the statements of one respondent initiated a chain reaction of
additional comments. Stimulation (when the group discussion generated excitement about a topic), security (when the group provided comfort and encouraged candid responses and spontaneity (when participants were not required to answer every question, their responses are more spontaneous and genuine) (Clough and Nutbrown 2002:79). During the group interviews, the researcher had to steer the discussion with prompts and cues, to encourage participation. Connaway and Powell (2010) cite group interviews as popular with companies seeking employees but they can also be adapted to suit qualitative data collection methods. A group interview, sometimes known as a panel interview, is different from a one-on-one interview because a whole group of people conducts it. Connaway and Powell (2010) suggest that information acquired from group interviews aids the researcher to understand perceptions and attitudes of the target population since the groups may not be fully representative of the total population, which in this case was Makerere University representing Uganda.

The researcher acknowledged that a group of candidates needed to be interviewed at the same time by the main interviewer in one sitting and beforehand the participants would be given an outline of the proposed interview, which the researcher accommodated within the participant consent form with a brief guide of the nature of questions that they would be asked (see Appendix 5). While conducting the group interviews, the researcher realised that the interview data could easily become biased and misleading if the people being interviewed were aware of the perspective of the interviewer.” Unfortunately too often interviewees would provide information based on what they think the researcher wants to hear” (Kahn and Best 2006:341, Creswell 2007, 2008, Hestle 2006, Brown and Race 2002).
Moreover the researcher was always alert and ready for anything because although the researcher would steer the group, the interviews were interactive so attention needed to be paid to all participants. The researcher had to be courteous and give equal attention to all the participants, she needed to listen for key issues coming up and always backed the interviews with a digital audio recorder so that nothing was missed. The researcher realised that some of the participants overshadowed others by talking over them or trying to be the loudest. Furthermore the researcher noticed that some of the participants were shy and withdrawn lacked confidence to speak and needed to be drawn out of their shell. Quieter people were included with cues and prompts.

Since the aim of the group interviews was to obtain a balanced view of opinions, the researcher had to ensure all respondents had more or less equal say otherwise the data had the danger of being representative of one or two people’s views instead of the majority which would definitely affect the quality of the study. The researcher tried to be balanced and included participants who had not said much and asked their opinion. This was a great way of showing the researcher as considerate and a real team player. This also built confidence because the respondents felt she was willing to listen to them (Kahn and Best 2006:341, Creswell 2007, 2008, Hestle 2006, Brown and Race 2002).

The researcher was an active participant than merely an observer, she had to appear confident and reassuring to avoid coming across as aggressive. The researcher was careful to avoid dominating the conversation and made sure that other participants did not interrupt the respondents speaking. The researcher took all criticism on board and gave constructive feedback. Praise and acknowledgement of valuable contributions from the participants was given. The researcher praised the respondents for their good ideas because it was a good way to reflect friendliness while being a little authoritative.
at the same time and ensured that she smiled although it was at times nerve-wracking but it was important not to appear morose because this would not have encouraged the interviewees to respond. The researcher avoided obvious power conflicts so that she would not appear as uncooperative and unprofessional. The interviewer had to stay cool and stress free. The discussions had rich contributions that raised crucial issues that needed further discussion (Kahn and Best 2006: 341, Creswell 2007, 2008, Hestle 2006, Brown and Race 2002).

To avoid dominating the discussion the researcher posed questions first, and then allowed the respondents to each give their own view. The researcher had to be open to repetition of major points among the respondents. The researcher had to maintain positive body language throughout whilst being accommodative and warm in approach so that respondents felt welcome to speak their mind without fear of being put off. Body language was something that always needed to be carefully observed so that the researcher was able to send the right non-verbal message that could gather the most information from the respondents (Kahn and Best 2006: 341, Creswell 2007, 2008, Hestle 2006, Brown and Race 2002).

The interviewer prepared meaningful questions to ask that had room to accommodate feedback from the respondents (see Appendix 4). The researcher was also careful to guide the interview with cues and prompts so that the key issues were addressed at each point using some questions from the interview schedule. Eye contact was made with everyone at some point and the pitch was directed to the respondent who contributed to the discussion. The researcher made sure that the focus/attention was on the speaker and that each respondent was given a chance to speak and the attention was not deferred to someone else when it was one’s chance to speak. At the end of the exercise, the
researcher would say goodbye and a warm thank you to the interviewees before they left and as good courtesy sent a follow-up letter to say thank you interviewees who went out of their way to meet her like the Cabinet Minister and Members of Parliament (Hestle 2006, Brown and Race 2002).

The group interviews of the study were a mixture of undergraduate and postgraduate students. Since the group interviews were done at the MUMSA office, which was kindly lent to the researcher by the University Imam (spiritual leader) there were a lot of disturbances and interruptions. The main disadvantage with this was that students and other staff would frequently visit the office with different issues and at some point; the researcher had to lock the office doors for two hours.

3.12 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

The study acknowledges that in mixed methods research, abductive reasoning can be understood as a process that values both deductive and inductive approaches but relies principally on the expertise, experience, and intuition of researchers (Ivankova 2013). Both inductive (qualitative) and deductive (quantitative) reasoning are used and the respondents input is analysed from an objective or subjective point of view depending on whether they are engaged in a qualitative or quantitative aspect of the study. Here values play a very important role in determining what mixed methods researchers study, how the study is designed and how the data is analysed. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) suggest that pragmatists view reality from two perspectives, one which is consistent with positivist and post positivist views (observable and measurable) and the second view which gives room for more than one truth therefore there are several explanations of reality.
The study therefore needed to choose the best explanation within the value system that sought to investigate the barriers and enablers affecting Muslim women’s representation in the field of higher education in Uganda. An adaptation of Bronfenbrenner ecological cycle (2005) recognized that the cause and effect relationships exist but are changing and are difficult to identify. The study sought to establish the internal validity and credibility about reality that is limited to the time and context of the study, hence the transferability of results from one context to another (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

The study laid emphasis on subjectivity because within the voices of feminist research lies a feminist consciousness that opens up intellectual and emotional space for all women to articulate their relations to one another and to the wider society. Hesse-Biber (2007:3) argued that, “The origins of feminist researches epistemological and methodological focus draws on these insights and struggles, feminist empiricism, standpoint theories, post-modernism and transitional perspectives all recognize the importance of women’s lived experiences with the goal of unearthing subjugated knowledge” Thus feminist research challenges knowledge that excludes while seeming to include, and asks new questions that place women’s lives and those of “other” marginalized groups at the centre of social inquiry. The researcher becomes both the insider and outsider taking a multitude of different standpoints and negotiating the identities simultaneously.

The study suggested that the feminist approach needs to take into account the complex interactions of the wide range of factors that include different subject positioning of the students and the fact that the students were not just passive recipients but active participants in constructing their own identities through the relation of their experiences (Reinharz 1992). These situational factors portray a cultural representation of
femininity that was diverse and different with each respondent. The researcher therefore used respondent validation, which was also known as member validation. This was a process whereby a researcher provided the people on whom the research was conducted an account of the findings. This corroboration would then enable the respondent to confirm the information collected as her own contribution. This was a powerful tool for qualitative researchers as it ensured that there was good correspondence between the findings, perspectives and experiences of their research participants. This was done through telephone conversations and e-mail.

The study carried out respondent validation in two ways; Bryman and Bell (2007) observe that one way validation could be done, would be by giving each research participant an account of what was said or observed at the interview. Secondly the researcher could feed back to a group of people or an organization their impressions and findings in relation to the group or organization. This was done for a few of the respondents who took part in the group or face to face in depth interviews through e-mail correspondence.

The study acknowledges that respondent validation was always faced with practical difficulties that Bryman and Bell (2007) pointed out. One could be that some respondents may exhibit defensive reactions to the interview analysis and even censor the information collected if they felt it was too revealing of their identities and secondly, it would be very difficult to validate a researcher’s analysis because most of the data collected would be inferences. Despite this, it was understood that “respondent validation can provide a means of confirming the validity of individual accounts and therefore redress the power imbalance between the researcher and researched by providing the participants with a degree of authority in relation to the writing of the
final research account” (Bryman et al 2007: 412). By the time the researcher was writing this account none of the above difficulties had been faced, to the contrary most of the participants were very cooperative and helpful to the research.

The research acknowledged that interviewing known respondents had its positive points because trust was already established and more information could be gathered. Further to this, Best and Kahn (2006: 262) observed that subjective bias “may lead the researcher to establish certainty about the validity of the conclusions that may be wrongly attributed to factors that were merely associated rather than cause and effect related”. To avoid this triangulation proved important because similar issues kept arising from the pilot study questionnaire, the pilot in depth interviews, the BOS survey questionnaire, the group interviews and the follow on in-depth interviews.

Triangulation was able to support findings from one data collection instrument with that of another. Critics of the case study approach pointed out that, “it was difficult for researchers to cross-check information and that generalization were not always possible” (Bell 2005: 11). Denscombe (1998:36-7), on the other hand argued that, “the extent to which findings from the case study can be generalized to other examples in the class depends on how far the study example is similar to others of its type”. Through this method, the study on Makerere University was able to demonstrate the impact of gender on the attainment of Higher Education in Uganda. Therefore addressing the question of how far the women had been marginalized in the field and specifically the Muslim women.

3.13 TRIANGULATION IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

The research used triangulation because the combination of several methods of data collection was useful in this study as a means of constructing validity (trustworthiness).
Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989) identified the purposes of mixed methods research as triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion based on their reviews of mixed methods studies. Triangulation of qualitative and quantitative methods is considered a forerunner to mixed methods as it is known today (Creswell, 2011). Triangulation involves the use of qualitative and quantitative methods in an effort to reach convergence of findings. Complementarity refers to the use of qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the overlapping and different aspects of a phenomenon in order to obtain a more meaningful understanding of the subject.

The development of Triangulation involves using one method after the other so that the first method guides the second in terms of decisions made about sampling, measurement, and implementation. Initiation occurs in mixed methods research when inconsistencies are discovered; regularities and discrepancies in qualitative and quantitative findings are compared and analysed for new perspectives and insights that can yield new questions. Expansion occurs as qualitative and quantitative components are included in a study to increase its scope and coverage (Greene et al 1989).

The researcher was able to collect and analyses persuasively and rigorously both quantitative and qualitative data (based on the BOS online survey) and linked it to the group interviews and the face to face in depth interviews whereby the two forms of data were concurrently combined or merged to build on the other sequentially, or by embedding one within the other (see fig 3.3.1). The study which investigates the under representation of the Ugandan Woman in the field of higher education gives priority to voices of Muslim women collected from the in depth interviews within the qualitative aspect of the research, that is built from the quantitative data within the questionnaire (see appendix 3). The study uses these procedures in a single study of Makerere
University with the Qualitative methods being more significant than the quantitative methods. This is represented by a continuum of sequential timing that ranges from complete interaction of quantitative and qualitative methods to complete independence. The study points out that the effectiveness of triangulation is on the premise that the weaknesses in each single method will be compensated by the counter balancing strengths of another (Miles and Huberman 2002). The way in which research participants were treated and the care with which research attempted to represent the lived experience of research participants entailed the use of several data collection methods as feminist research tools that could best answer particular research questions and in ways consistent with broad feminist goals and ideology (Strauss and Corbin 2008). The effectiveness of triangulation in this study was the in depth interviews, which were able to support the BOS online questionnaires (see appendix 3) thus the weaknesses in one method, could be compensated by the counterbalancing strengths of another. Through triangulation, the weakness in one method was avoided by using a second method that was strong in the area that the first was weak. For example, when interviewing people a general weakness was the trust that the respondents are telling the truth. In this instance, the responses on the on line questionnaire would be crosschecked by their responses in the interview.

3.14 MIXED METHODS DATA ANALYSIS

The study adopted the mixed methods data analyses whose approach involves QUAN (quantitative) and QUAL (qualitative) data analyses that are “combined, connected, or integrated in research studies” (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p. 263). There are numerous classifications of data analysis strategies (Caracelli and Greene, 1993; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007). The study used the sequential mixed data analysis which was conducted with first the QUAN then the QUAL phases of study that are in
chronological order. For example, QUAN R QUAL analysis indicates that the QUAL analysis emerges from the QUAN analysis from the study of Muslim women’s representation in higher education in Uganda. Initially the BOS online questionnaire (QUAN) was analysed (see appendix 3) and later followed by the group interviews (QUAL) and finally the in depth face to face interviews also QUAL (see fig 3.3.1) in which one set of data yields a set of categories that is used when analysing the second set of data (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009).

The study established that the simplest qualitizing technique was one that involved identifying groups of values within the distribution of values on numeric data (the BOS online survey see appendix 3) and having these groups of numeric data examined for meaning with narrative categories created based on the meaning of these groups (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009). Keeping this in mind, the study suggests two basic approaches to analysing interview and group data, ethnographic summary and content analysis (Conway and Powell 2010). Whereas the content analysis produces numerical descriptions through tallying and observing the number of reoccurring themes, ethnography in the study would involve establishing rapport with the respondents, recording interviews that were in depth and finally transcribing them into meaningful data.

The researcher affirms that whereas analysis reduced data to a story that ethnographers could tell, it was the interpretation done by the researcher that would tell readers what the story means. Thus the researcher should be able to bring order to the piles of data accumulated by summarising the data collected from the study and use it to discover themes and patterns that would finally link the findings to the research questions (Schensul and Le Compte 1999). The Qualitative aspect of the data analysis of this
research involved organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in short making sense of data in terms of the participants definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen et al. 2007).

3.14.1 CODING INTO THEMES FROM QUAN AND QUAL DATA

The study adapted the use of a mixed methods process which involved summarizing, synthesizing, and sorting many observations made from the data therefore “Coding becomes the fundamental means of developing the analysis” (Charmaz, 1983:112). The Researcher used codes to pull together and categorize a series of otherwise discrete events, statements, and observations that were identified in the data collected from the on line questionnaire and interviews using Makerere University as the case study. The researcher used manual coding based on the Dedoose diagram (see fig 3.14.2) which illustrates how mixed method data can be linked together. The left column, the flow from ‘Fieldwork’ to ‘Generate New Themes,’ summarizes much of what takes place in qualitative research.

The quantitative aspect of the research used the BOS online questionnaire (see appendix 3) which was analysed using a real-time summary report which provided the basic statistical analysis represented in graphs and percentages. The diagram serves as a mechanism for moving back and forth between the two types of data and allows easy access to the best evidence for particular research questions; sometimes qualitative, sometimes quantitative, and sometimes both. Once these data are created and all the connections established, there are a variety of mechanisms that can be used to tie qualitative and quantitative data together that allows for their simultaneous analysis. For example, what is learned from a purely qualitative approach can then divided up based on the characteristics of a research participants or settings. Such division can expose
differences in the patterns within the qualitative data as a function of the descriptive characteristic.

For example the BOS (Bristol Online Survey) suggests that a large percentage of the online survey respondents were from the Baganda tribe, who reside mainly in central Uganda, which is where Makerere University is located physically. This is supported by the fact that most of the group and in depth interview respondents were also from central Uganda and hence a large number were from the Baganda tribe. Geographical location as a theme can be established here which links to other factors like marital status, number of children, employment, religion and educational background.

**Fig 3.14. 2: Diagram to summarise the coding techniques used for the study**

![Diagram](http://userguide.dedoose.com/Dedoose%20User%20Guide.pdf)

Whilst analysing the barriers and enablers in the BOS online survey the Likert scale was used to code the themes into very positive, positive, neutral, negative and very negative. This seems quite a simple concept, yet without well planned research data; these more complex and important themes cannot be seen or understood. Moreover, manipulating these kinds of data can be very difficult, which is why the diagram was
designed to help researchers easily integrate the data so that patterns can be quickly identified, and so it is easy to dig beneath the surface of the patterns to understand the ‘how’ and ‘why’ that explains the ‘what’ and ‘how many’ within research questions.

The qualitative aspect of the research was able to identify three phases of data collection and analysis (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight 2001: 211). Open coding see the left column of the diagram (fig 3.14.2) is where transcripts were reviewed to identify provisional concepts that were then modified and added to, that lead to the redirection of the sampling strategy (see fig 3.7.1) and improvements in the interview techniques (see appendix 4). The categories were then devised that could be applied to another round of data to see if they fit. Axial coding seeks connections between the categories identified and theoretical coding, involves the development of the feminist paradigm (Bryman and Burgess 1994).

The researcher used three stages of analysis, while still in the field, as soon as the study was complete but was still in the field and finally after some time at a distance from the field. The researcher then moved to the identification of passages of text from the transcripts of interviews (or other meaningful phenomena) and applying of labels to them. At its simplest, this labelling or coding process enabled the researcher to quickly retrieve and collect all the text and data that was associated with some thematic idea so that they could be examined together and the different cases be compared in that respect. This would mean identifying the underlying uniformities from the set of ideas, inductive and deductive thinking and checking of propositions against collaborative behaviour and attitudes (Charmaz 2006).

The analysis of the study was carried out in relation to the research topic, that is, the under representation of the Ugandan Muslim woman in the field of Higher Education.
The categorization of data followed the themes presented from the conceptual framework of the literature review (see fig 2.5.2) and also adapted from Bronfenbrenner ecological cycle (2005) (see fig 2.5.1). For example, all data relating to the Socio-economic status or cultural practices were placed in categories as outlined in the mind map. Through this, proper comparisons could be made and the relationships between the dependent variable who is the Ugandan Muslim female with the factors outlined in the conceptual framework in fig 2.5.2 are examined.

The study suggests that the data from the group interviews would only be considered “Valid and reliable if they were used carefully for a problem that was suitable for a group inquiry” (Connaway and Powell 2010:176). If the researcher deviated from the established procedures outlined in the analysis and the research questions were not related to the interview methods they would become invalid. For the group interviews, the researcher had to be more careful because as Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001:210) cite William’s (1994) view on analysing interviews, “The analysis of data collected from focus group interviews can be long winded and difficult. The data is not “cold” It has been collected within a certain interactive context or a variety of different ones and must be analysed with that in mind. Care should be taken so that comments are not lifted or quoted outside that context or out of sequence. Statements arrived at under such conditions could be premature and misleading because the same participants in another forum may come to different conclusions”.

3.15 ETHICAL ISSUES

The study complied with the University of Leicester ethical approval process. The study included on line questionnaires and in depth interviews, and for both the confidentiality of the respondents was highly respected. Using the BERA (British Educational
Research Association) revised ethical guidelines (2004:5); the research was conducted with respect for: the person, knowledge, democratic values, the quality of Educational research and Academic freedom. The researcher set responsibility guidelines to the participants, and primarily voluntary informed consent was obtained so that the respondents were able to exercise the power of choice without any duress.

3.15.1 AVAILABILITY OF / ACCESS TO SITES FOR RESEARCH

As a member of staff of Makerere University, the researcher was able to obtain permission from both the University of Leicester and Makerere University to access information from the University and other relevant institutions. The Researcher also sought permission for a cover letter from the Makerere University, School of graduate studies that was distributed to the sample population to enable interviews to be conducted. To access the government public buildings the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the School of Graduate studies explaining to the respondents the purpose and nature of the research and the ethical issues that surround them. To obtain access to the Parliament, the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Academic Registrar of Makerere University.

The researcher was always in possession of an identification card from both Makerere University as a staff member and the University of Leicester as a student least some members of the public were suspicious of the researcher’s motives. The researcher endeavoured to explain clearly to the participants what the whole research process would entail and that it was solely for academic purposes and that the information would be used for that purpose only. The University Imam and the secretary to MUMSA (Makerere University Muslim Students Association were both very cooperative and helpful to the study because the researcher was given access to one of
the study rooms to conduct the group interviews and at times the room would be shut for hours while the interviews went on. This positive attitude toward the research study was what assisted the researcher in making substantial progress in the collection and analysis of the project. The researcher was able to access most of the sites without any problems. The nature of the topic was also helpful because most of the respondents felt they had some information to give. Some of the respondents requested a copy of the project on its completion because they felt it was relevant to their present and future development.

3.15.2 INITIAL PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

The study acknowledged that in order to recruit members for the interviews, the participants had to have a general idea of the trends that related to the research objectives, therefore a simple initial participant consent form was designed to help obtain background information that could be used further in the research (see Appendix 5). The form included basic background information about the student. The questions were simple and straightforward and included the course studied, schools attended, home district, ethnicity, geographical location including the rural or urban set up. There was an option for name but the participants could choose not to include it.

The respondent handed out several of the initial participant forms to students who had attended the Friday prayers outside the University mosque. Respondents were kindly asked to fill them if they were interested in taking part in interviews. Some gave instant positive feedback and interviews were done on the same day whilst others made appointments for other days. The forms received were grouped and categorised according to course levels. Participants who had expressed interest within the
participant form that they were interested in taking part in the group interview were contacted personally and follow on interviews were done (See Appendix 5).

3.15.3 ETHICS IN ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRES

The study established that ethical issues needed to be considered when gathering data from a target audience whether physically or through the internet. The researcher kept the following in mind while considering the rights and interests of the participants; the participant was not obliged to answer any of the questions, the Incentives to take a survey were sparingly used, there was the option of anonymity and confidentiality was strictly observed at all times. For cases of identification, requirements on follow up questionnaires, the researcher chose to identify students by course and age rather than names (Brace 2008, Peterson 2000, Online Questionnaire Design Guide 2007, National Research Council of Canada 2007, Couper et al 1998).

The BOS questionnaire had the option of “neither negative nor positive”, an option that denotes neutrality so the participant feels they have the opportunity to plead ignorance or neutrality so that inaccurate data was not provided. The questions were worded clearly so as not to trick the participant, make them feel comfortable and know exactly what they were responding to. A brief introduction was given at the beginning of the questionnaire informing respondents why the questionnaire was taking place and what the information would be used for. The online questionnaire gave the respondents the option of whether to take part or not in an in depth interview and their contact information was requested. Their consent to participation was clearly stated and respondents were given the opportunity to refuse to take part. Information was handled with a high level of confidentiality. The researcher got to know the respondents only after getting in touch with them using the given contacts (Brace 2008, Peterson 2000,

3.15.4 ETHICS FOR THE IN DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The study ensured that the participants understood the process in which they were to be engaged in, including why their participation was necessary, how it would be used and how and to whom it would be reported to. The researcher had to seek consent from the Ethical approval committee by submitting an Ethical approval checklist form. It was only after approval by the School of Education, University of Leicester, Ethics committee that the researcher was able to conduct a pilot study and subsequently the main fieldwork. When the participants were contacted for the group or face to face in depth interviews, they were given clear explanations regarding the purpose and relevance of the research, and their attention was drawn to the confidentiality and anonymity aspect of the research. They were informed of why and how they were chosen for the interview and the approximate time needed for the interviews (see Appendix 5).

An agreement was be made on how their responses and comments would be recorded using a digital voice recorder. The researcher also ensured that the rights, interests and dignity of the participants and related persons was respected and adhered to at all times with regard to the relevant law. The respondents were given voluntary informed consent forms that they signed before the interviews and were made fully aware of their rights to privacy, disclosure, and health and the flexibility of being able to withdraw from the exercise without any coercion or deception. The participants were also assured of protection from possible harm with adherence to the principles of academic independence, without conflict of interest (Brace 2008, Peterson 2000).
The researcher made it clear to the participants of their right to withdraw from the research for any or no reason, and at any time within reasonable limits. The participants were reassured that there would not be coerced or persuaded to re-engage in the research. The research did not need this parental approval because all the respondents were above 18 and considered adults so they were able to sign the participant consent forms. In the event of a detriment arising from participation in the research, it was made known to the participants and privacy was always be maintained unless the participants willingly waived that right (BERA Revised Ethical guidelines 2004:7). The researcher made sure the environment was comfortable during the interviews and provided refreshments like sweets, chocolates, biscuits and juice to aid the participants during the interviews and more so to encourage attendance. Positive body language was used and attention was given to the group discussants to encourage active participation and at times, an object was passed around to ensure that everyone had a chance to contribute towards the group discussion (Brown and Race 2002).

Chapter three summarises the mixed methods research that adopted the feminist qualitative stance using Muslim women’s voices at Makerere University to address the research questions. The chapter highlights the research objectives, the mixed methods research design, the data collection instruments used, the sampling strategy, the sample size, the use of mixed methods within a feminist paradigm, issues of Validity and Reliability in mixed methods research, triangulation in mixed methods research, the sequential mixed methods data analysis adapted and finally ethical issues raised from the research. The Research Methodology was able to effectively respond to the fundamental educational issues surrounding Muslim women in Uganda.
CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the findings of the study which used the mixed methods research based on the feminist empirical view that adapted Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model (2005) consequently developing a conceptual framework that outlined the complex socio-ecological spheres of influence on Muslim women’s access to Higher Education in Uganda. Although the study used two main mixed methods approaches as data collection tools; the BOS (Bristol Online Survey) questionnaire and 40 in depth interviews that included 3 group interviews this chapter will analyse the main findings from the BOS (Bristol Online Survey) related to those that were built on by the in depth interviews. Chapter 5 will give further in depth analysis of the research to highlight the main factors termed as enablers and barriers using a feminist approach to examine the factors that influenced the Ugandan Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education.

4.2 FINDINGS FROM THE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

The Bristol Online questionnaire adapted by the study was launched in June 9th 2011. Initially responses were received from Ugandan participants through e-mail and face book correspondence. With permission from the academic Registrar, Makerere University, the on line questionnaire was launched on the Makerere University website urging students to take part. 165 responses were received during the period of five months (July-November 2011). A real-time summary report was generated which provided the basic statistical analysis which was represented in graphs and percentages (See Appendix 3).

The online questionnaire had respondents’ complete basic questions that were relevant to the research. The 165 respondents gave details of their marital status, age, number of
offspring, ethnicity, home district, primary and secondary educational background, profession, and key factors from the conceptual framework that may have influenced their educational progress, their barriers to educational progress, how they overcame these barriers and finally the main enablers that facilitated their educational progress.

The survey questionnaire of the study was also able to identify the main barriers that affected Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education and these included lack of financial resources, young mothers, type of schools attended (boarding or day), poor government services, large polygamous families, dependence on agriculture, poor employment facilities, poor skills training, absence or lack of raw models in education.

Additionally the survey questionnaire was able to pin point the main facilitators to the progress in Higher Education and these included family support, strong religious faith, discipline and determination. Motivation from school head teachers and teachers, the free primary and secondary education available, government sponsorships and bursaries, the 1.5 additional points for females and the current NRM (National Resistance Movement) that liberalize the economy and encouraged female participation in all sectors of the government. These factors were similar to those embedded within Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) ecological cycle that analysed the interplay of connected factors that influenced Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education (see fig 2.5.1).

4.2.1 MARITAL STATUS

Results emerging from the Bristol online survey of the study indicated that a large percentage of the respondents were married women (56%), single women were significantly fewer (34%). Very few were divorced or cohabiting. The age with the largest number of respondents was 26-35, which explained why a large number of them
were married. The study relates marital status to other issues affecting Muslim women’s progress into higher education that were identified within the in depth interviews.

4.2.2 FAMILY AND CHILDREN

The study further established that a large number of the respondents who were single had no children (42.0%) and many admitted at the in depth interviews that they were not married and one actually retorted that “*studying and having a family could not go hand in hand*” (B.A Social Sciences, yr. 2, age 22). Those who had children had between one and four children in number. This reflected the declining rates of reproduction with age. The ‘older generation on the other hand had between five and eight children’ (Post graduate student and Secretary, Makerere University, age 40). Very few of the respondents had more than eight (8) children (1.7%) and these as established from the interviews, joined University at a late age when they already had their families.

4.2.3 ETHNICITY

The survey within the study was able to attract a diversity of respondents from central, eastern and western districts of Uganda. The Majority of the respondents were from the central districts of Kampala, Butambala, Masaka, Mukono, Mpiji and Wakiso and these housed mainly the Baganda tribe. Others were from the East including Butalega, Jinja, Iganga, Mbale that housed the Basoga, Banyore and Bagisu. The western districts of Mbarara, Kasese, Fort Portal, Bushenyi and Kabale housed the Bakiga, Banyakole and Batooro tribes. From the northern districts of Arua and Gulu were the Lugbara, Acholi and Nubian tribes.
4.2.4 UNIVERSITY ENTRY

The study affirms that currently Makerere University partakes three avenues of entry, the direct entry by ‘A’ level, the diploma holders’ scheme and the mature age entry exams for 25 year olds and over (Makerere University fact book 2011). The on line questionnaire established that the most popular avenue of University entry was through Secondary school or 6th form (‘A’ levels or Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education). From the on line questionnaire response, the largest group of Muslim females (66.7%) obtained admission through the direct route; that was after ‘A’ levels or GCSE (equivalent to the General Certificate of Secondary Education of UK). Other respondents enrolled through the mature age scheme whereby students above the age of 25 would gain admission on passing the entrance exams. The third avenue students’ accessed admission into Makerere University was through a diploma qualification at the time of application.

There were an equal percentage of respondents from the mature age and the diploma scheme (16.7%) whose students were at the University during the period of study. This also explained the fact why a large number of respondents were middle aged (since the mature age exams only accepted over 25’s and the students who applied using diplomas were mature and had been working for a while but decided to pursue further degrees at University). The interviews also established the fact that many Muslim females had joined the labour force for a number of years before seeking admission into University.

4.2.5 FACULTY REPRESENTATION

Makerere University’s decision to merge the different faculties and institutes bore fruit in 2010 when the University established 8 colleges and two schools: the 8 colleges included the College of Agricultural and environmental Sciences, College of Business and Management Science, College of Computing and Information Sciences, College of
Education and External studies, College of Engineering Design, Art and Technology, College of Health Sciences, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the College of Natural Sciences. The two schools were that of Law and Veterinary medicine (Makerere University fact book 2011).

Nevertheless, with regard to faculty representation, the online survey had the greatest number of responses from the College of Computing and Information Sciences (25%). This probably was a reflection of the ease in accessing computers that were readily available at the College hence the prompt response to the questionnaire. This was followed closely by the College of Education and external studies who were mainly long distance students who would occasionally come to the University for face-to-face sessions. Whilst conducting the fieldwork, long distance students were on the campus site for a contact session; this probably explains their (20%) response to the questionnaire. The College of Business and Management studies (12%) and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (16%) had a lower response rate to the questionnaire. The survey clearly indicated that it required a female response that’s why faculties that had a high population of females were able to respond favourably to the questionnaire. This was a clear indication that a large number of females were admitted to these courses i.e. Computing and Information Science and Education.

The least responses were received from the science-based courses and these included College of Health Science (2%), College of Natural Sciences (4%) and the School of Veterinary Medicine (1%). With the establishment of the Colleges, the science based courses were moved from the main campus site to other areas around Kampala, that’s the probably the reason why the fewest responses came from the sciences. The other explanation could be the fact that there were fewer females admitted in the science-
based courses (Fig 1.2). Additionally, it was established that most of the postgraduate respondents had actually done their first degree at Makerere University and some were currently professionals in teaching, Law, Accountancy and Entrepreneurship.

4.2.6 RURAL/ URBAN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLING

The study establishes that Makerere University is located in an urban area and the Academic Registrar’s records indicate that a majority of students who gained direct admission to University were those from schools located in urban areas. The top 10 School admissions in 2009/2010 were all Urban located schools (Makerere University fact book 2011:6). A large percentage of respondents had their primary schooling in Government Urban schools, which could have contributed to their success in pursuing secondary education. Surprisingly, most of the respondents did not progress to an Urban Secondary school (33.3%); a large percentage went to a private school in an urban area (48%). This could probably be explained by the fact that there were fewer government secondary schools in the urban areas.

4.2.7 INFLUENCE OF HIV/AIDS ON EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

The survey questionnaire of the study established that the largest number of respondents 44.1% presented a very negative response on the effect of HIV/AIDS and other terminal illnesses to their educational progress, this was followed with 33.3% negative, those who felt it was neither negative nor positive were 20.3% and 2.3% said it had a positive influence.

Some of the responses on the survey indicated that as a result of the death of parents due to HIV/AIDS, school fees became a problem because of the loss of breadwinners and some had to drop out of school until later (see appendix 3).
4.3 MEASUREMENT OF ATTITUDES ON THE LIKERT SCALE OF THE BOS ON-LINE QUESTIONNAIRE ON FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

The study implements the Bristol on line survey (BOS) within which a simple Likert scale of ‘very positive’ to ‘very negative’ was used to measure the attitudes of the students towards the various key factors that were identified from the Literature review, Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model (2005) and the conceptual framework developed.

Table 4.3.1: Findings from the Likert scale of the BOS Questionnaire on factors that influenced educational progress of the Ugandan Muslim woman to Higher Education. (Reference Appendix 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key factors identified that influence educational progress</th>
<th>Very positive</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Neither positive nor negative</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Very negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Family background</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Religion</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Culture and Tradition</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Marital Status</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Children and family responsibilities</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Economic Status</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Geographical location</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Civil War</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Government affirmative action policies</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The emerging themes could now be used to measure the respondents’ attitudes towards factors that may have influenced Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education. The goal of the Likert scale was to measure the intensity of the feelings towards the factors influencing Muslim women’s representation in Higher Education. In this format, each
respondent was asked to indicate his or her level of agreement in a 5-point scale ranging from ‘very positive’ to ‘very negative’. The middle point ‘neither positive nor negative’ indicating neutrality on the issue (see Appendix 3).

Table 4.3.1 of the study summarises the findings of the Likert scale which analysed the BOS survey respondents’ attitudes towards various key factors that were found to have been enablers or barriers towards the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into Higher Education. The key factors identified from the conceptual framework included family background, religion, culture and tradition, marital status, children and family responsibilities, the economic status, geographical location, HIV/AIDS, the Civil war, Government policies and affirmative action policies.

### 4.3.2 INFLUENCE OF FAMILY BACKGROUND ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

With regard to the influence of family (see table 4.3.1), the study establishes that none of the responses were very negative and this reflects that overall family had a more positive inclination towards educational progress than that which was negative. A few of the reasons cited on the questionnaire included:

“My mother was the first Sheikat (Islamic studies teacher) in Tooro District. She valued Education and wanted us to have the best of both Islamic and secular education.” (Practicing Solicitor and graduate of Makerere University, age 60)

Another response was “My Mum wasn’t educated so she pushed so much for me to be educated” (Makerere University Clerical official, age 42) and

“I was inspired by my educated mother” (Information Technology, yr. 1, age 19)

### 4.3.3 INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

The findings from the study which are supported by table 4.3.1 indicate that religion was not a barrier to Muslim women’s education; to the contrary it was seen as an
enabler. The fact that most families chose not to encourage their daughters to progress further into education was a misconceived notion blaming religion whose perceptions differed from family to family. These were some of the responses on the BOS online questionnaire (see appendix 3).

“Islam tells us to teach both female and male hence no discrimination”
(Information Technology student, yr. 2, age 21)

“A large part of my secular education was with non-Muslim students but due to the strictness of my beliefs, I was able to avoid taking part in some evil activities.”
(Economic Development, yr. 3, age 23)

“The 5 daily prayers gave me discipline, commitment and inspired me to work harder”
(Makerere University Secretary, age 43)

“I attended a Muslim faith based school for my ‘A’ levels and its strict nature regarding dressing and behaviour helped me attain discipline that made me work hard until I got government sponsorship to University”
(Masters student, yr. 1, age 25)

Islam as a religion was mainly seen as an enabler to educational achievements. A large percentage 50% cited a positive influence.

4.3.4 INFLUENCE OF CULTURE AND TRADITION ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS
Concerning the influence of culture; the study acknowledges that in most cases it was the deep rooted beliefs and traditions that promoted a patriarchal society that encouraged male children to get an education whilst their sisters remained at home. Table 4.3.1 reflects the subtle effect culture and tradition had on the progress of females into Higher Education. Although many of the respondents may have not felt its direct influence, the figures show that there were still families in Uganda who had strong cultural values and some of the responses cited established that culturally most
communities viewed educating a girl as a waste of time especially to institutions of Higher Education. These are some of the responses on the BOS online questionnaire.

“It was seen as a waste of time for a girl to advance in education. Most were expected to get married and have families. Accepted levels where '0' level education” (B.A with Education, yr. 3, age 25)

“My culture and tradition has no influence in religion if any at all.” (Bachelor of Information and Technology student, yr. 2, age 21).

“My Mother was determined that her children should have a right to education.” (Professional Solicitor and graduate of Makerere University, age 60)

4.3.5 INFLUENCE OF MARITAL STATUS ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

Through table 4.3.1, the study further reflects that the marital status of the respondents was not a major issue with regards to their progress into Higher Education. Some of the responses on the questionnaire included:

“The environment I grew up in had a lot to do with my achievements rather than marital status.” (B.A Secretarial studies, yr. 2, Makerere University Secretary, age 22).

The 20% who felt that it had a positive response were able to comment favourably;

“My husband supported me to advance with a Master’s programme. Although I had house help, he supervised and looked after the children while I studied in the evenings” (Makerere University Administrator, age 48).

“I got married and completed my studies; he was very supportive throughout my first degree” (Clerical Official at Makerere University, age 42).

Others felt that it had a very negative impact and one respondent had to actually drop out of University until her children grew. She commented that;

“My marital status had a negative influence from the pressure I got in subsidising my work time, college time and family time”. (Assistant Lecturer, Makerere University, age 33).

“My parents insisted that I complete my studies before marriage and I am glad I did because now I am married and pursuing my postgraduate and can see it has some hindrances.” (Masters Student, yr. 2, age 32).
4.3.6 CHILDREN AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ITS INFLUENCE ON EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

The study establishes that a large number of the respondents were single and had no children but according to table 4.3.1, the presence of extended family and house help amongst most of the married respondents reflected a neutral stand when it came to the issue of children; many felt that having children did not in any way influence their educational progress.

“It was difficult to balance studies and child care, since I was expecting when I was doing my diploma studies, my husband's support made it more manageable.” (Makerere University Clerical official, age 42).

“To some extent but having house-helps made it easier. My house help is a relative and she has helped raise three of my children so it became easy to balance studies with the family.” (Postgraduate student, yr. 2, age 33).

“I live with extended family so it was easier for me because they helped look after the children. They also cooked, cleaned and helped take care of the house when I was too busy” (M.A Gender studies, yr. 2, age 34).

“I had to ask for a dead year to wait for my twins to grow, I failed to balance studies with the children. My husband was not very supportive.”(Assistant Lecturer, age 33)

“I sent the younger children to my mum, their Grand mum during examination period or whenever I had assignment deadlines” (Postgraduate student, MSc Information science and Librarian, age 37).

From the above comments, it was clear from the study that in Uganda unlike the western countries of Europe and in particular, the UK, having children was not a hindrance to educational progress because there was a lot of family and extended family support at all times.
4.3.7 INFLUENCE OF THE ECONOMIC STATUS ON THE PROGRESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The research contends that the economic status of the family made an impact on the Muslim woman’s progress to Higher Education. Table 4.3.1 suggests that for families with a good economic status (standard of living) there was positive influence towards educational advancement. On the other hands those who grew up in families whose financial state was not sound, had to struggle through education. Those who had felt there was no impact may have had support from other sources as reflected in some of the comments posted:

“Due to lack of money, this motivated my mum to prioritize my education and this motivated me to work hard and ensure that I attain the best grades.” (M.A, yr. 1 student, age 35).

“I come from a middle class family of professionals so school fees was never a problem. My parents encouraged me to study and were willing to sponsor my education even up to PhD level”. (M.A, yr. 1 student, age 25).

“I had to drop out of school after secondary because of fees, work, save and educate myself at University level because my parents were too poor and relied on mainly agriculture” (Makerere University Administrator, age 50).

4.3.8 INFLUENCE OF GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION (RURAL/URBAN SET UP) ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

Table 4.3.1 of the study indicates that respondents who grew up in urban areas had a positive advantage in accessing quality education over those in the rural areas. Concerning this factor some of the respondents comments included:

“Practical activities of my early life inspired me to be innovative and this is one of the reasons that I enjoy growing fruit trees wherever I go or work. An example is Bugolobi parish in Kampala where I planted over 100 pawpaw trees for the urban community and as a result, every week, each household in the village gets two paw paws free of charge”. (Government official, Aged 60)

“The setup of a school influenced my progress in having an impression that I was going to a well-cared for school”. (M.A Student, yr. 2, Age 32)

“The urban primary school gave the best foundation because most of the teachers were highly skilled.” (M.A Student, yr. 1, Age 35).
“The rural school I was in had no facilities and teachers were not motivated so it performed poorly.” (University Administrator, Age 50).

4.3.9 INFLUENCE OF GOVERNMENT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICIES (1.5 ADDITIONAL POINTS GIVEN TO FEMALE STUDENTS JOINING UNIVERSITY AFTER ‘A LEVELS)

The study establishes that the strategy developed in 1990 by the Ugandan government was a tool to ensure increased enrolment of female students into public Universities. Most of the students who joined University after 1990 had been privileged to enjoy this facility. Table 1.10.1 (see chapter 1) and table 4.3.1 illustrates that many agreed it was a very good and positive intervention strategy that had enabled many female students access the courses they wanted to do at the University. Additionally it also enabled students who would have otherwise been on private sponsorship gain entrance to University on a government bursary. Ultimately, it had given female students a better chance at competing for University places.

“The 1.5 helped me get a place at the University, without it I may have gone to a tertiary college.” (Bachelor of Arts with Education, year 3, aged 25)

“Without the 1.5 points I would have had to repeat in order to get government sponsorship at University. It made a huge difference and even though I got a B.A flat course, at least I don’t have to pay fees which were a huge relief to my parents.” (B.A Arts, year 1, aged 19)

“I was given a course I wasn’t interested in but because my father couldn’t afford fees as a private student I took the course I qualified in as a Government student due to the 1.5 additional points.” (Assistant Lecturer, age 33).

Those respondents of the study who felt that the 1.5 points had no impact to their progress in Higher Education had this to say:

“It didn't impact on my entry since I had been given a flat course, so I had to join a as private University for a better course” (Bachelor of Social Science, yr. 2 student, aged 22)

“It did not help me much because I was given a flat course that I had to pay for anyway.” (Bachelor of Information Technology, yr. 2, aged 21)
The respondents who felt that the 1.5 points had a very negative impact on their educational progress remarked on the survey:

“I was given a course I wasn’t interested in but because my father couldn’t afford fees as a private student I took the course I qualified in as a Government student due to the 1.5 additional points” (Assistant Lecturer, aged 33).

The study took all these comments on board and was able to carry out further investigations as reflected in chapter 5 on the influence of the 1.5 points on Muslim women’s progress into further education.

4.4 MAIN BARRIERS OUTLINED ON THE BOS ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Some of the responses cited on the BOS online questionnaire of the study that reflected the barriers faced by the Ugandan Muslim women’s progress into higher education included: financial resources, death of parents, teenage pregnancies, attitudes of parents, lack of role models to emulate, poor government services, polygamy and large extended families, HIV/AIDS, dependence on agriculture as a source of livelihood, poor employment opportunities and lack of skills (see appendix 3). These factors will be further analysed in Chapter 5 in relation to the feminist perspective that adapted Bronfenbrenner’s theory to establish the main factors that were enablers and barriers to the progress of the Ugandan Muslim woman in the field of higher education.

4.5 MAIN ENABLERS OUTLINED ON THE BOS ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

The online questionnaire of the study captured some of the enablers that had influenced the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into further education. These included strong religious faith and practice, supporting family especially parents, conducive environment for study, Government affirmative action policies, Female liberation movements like FAWE (Uganda), motivation from schools, the location of
the school and its facilitation, introduction of UPE and USE, scholarships like Carnegie, Government sponsorships and the 1.5 additional points for female students (see appendix 3). The main issues raised from the Muslim women’s voices within questionnaire of the study were built from the BOS online survey and were reflected further in chapter 5 using the feminist perspective that applied Bronfenbrenner’s theory to investigate the factors responsible for the under representation of the Ugandan Muslim woman in the field of higher education.
CHAPTER FIVE
IN DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN FACTORS OF THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five will give a deeper reflection of the feminist qualitative perspective applied that adapted Bronfenbrenner’s theory to build on the findings of the BOS online questionnaire to summarise the enablers and barriers to the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into higher education. The study identified four major themes established from the exploratory sequential design (see fig 3.3.1) that first analysed the quantitative data collected by the BOS (Bristol Online Survey) which formed a base on which the in depth interviews built qualitative data that was analysed manually using the Dedoose concept (see fig 3.14.2) then both were interpreted together. The researcher was able to move back and forth between the two types of data to establish themes and connections as illustrated by fig 2.5.1 and fig 2.5.2, hence a simultaneous analysis was observed that reflected the feminist perspective that tied the quantitative with the qualitative data of the mixed methods research which adapted Bronfenbrenner’s theory (see fig 6.2.1). The study identified four main themes as enablers and barriers to the progress of Muslim women in higher education and these were Historical, Economic, Social-Cultural and Government (Political) or Educational factors.

5.2 HISTORICAL FACTORS AND THE INFLUENCE OF IMMIGRATION AND IMPORTED CULTURE FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA ON MUSLIM WOMEN’S EDUCATION

The study acknowledges that although the use of Bronfenbrenner’s model ignored cultural implications, the Chronosystem that dealt with changes influenced by time could be related to historical factors within the study. The study established that with
the abolition of slave trade and the expansion of merchant trade, many people from the Middle East settled in Africa, intermarried and produced what was called the mixed race fondly known as “Bachotara” in Uganda. Along with the economic boost came the imported culture. Many mixed race families denied their sons and daughters a secular education. They had the cultural conviction that Religious education was paramount and everything else came second (Government official, age 60). This was accompanied with the attitude that promoted early marriages among females some at the age of 16 and below which was identified by the online questionnaire.

One respondent had this to say:

“I remember growing up among boys, raised by my grandmother since my dad died when I was young and I didn’t know my mother. My grandmother, as was with our culture (Yemeni Arab) insisted that my brothers go to school although they were not interested. I had the interest but she wouldn’t have it. I had to drop out and do a secretarial course and later a tailoring course. After that I was married off at age 16. It was only after marriage that I was able to do a degree and this was because my husband was educated and appreciated the importance of studying. My two daughters who are both graduates are now in their late twenties and I don’t pressure them to get married. I’ve told them to take their time and build their careers first and settle down when ready.....which is another big problem in my culture because Arabs don’t keep daughters in the home for long and they are now being queried.....we too are asked when we will marry our daughters off......I guess with the influence of culture you can’t really win!”(Postgraduate student and part time Administrator, age 68)

The study recognized that the mixed race culture also served to influence the ideologies of the area where the immigrants settled to do business. Towns like Jinja, Mbale, Soroti, Arua, Kasese and Kampala flourished in merchandise business (see Map 1.7.1). Most families gave little encouragement for their daughters to go to school and similarly most of the sons dropped out of school to help run the family businesses. Some respondents of the mixed race culture were victims of this religious/cultural heritage and though they accomplished the basic religious educational training or “madrasah” and
completed the Qur’an, they did not go further in higher secular Education (Postgraduate student and administrator, aged 68).

The study establishes that the effect of culture and tradition was not pronounced and though many respondents had experienced gender bias while growing up, it was an accepted norm that was not strange since the male children most Ugandan families were given preference over the female ones when it came to paying school fees. One respondent who came from an agricultural background posted this comment:

“Most people in my village and district were uneducated. Nature provided for their needs so they saw no need of studying as many could dig their land and get plenty of food after harvest” (Makerere University Administrator, age 50)

“My father made sure we all studied especially his daughters. His own father did not allow him to progress further than primary school because of the family business. His sisters were married off at a tender age and he vowed that he would educate all his children because he felt cheated.” (Postgraduate student and graduate assistant, age 27)

“My late grandmother (God bless her soul) always told me, no matter how many degrees you get a women ends up in the kitchen and her first responsibility should be to her children and husband” (Makerere University Secretary, aged 55)

Another respondent recalls:

“My dad died when I was very young and my mum (God bless her soul) raised the 11 of us singlehandedly, I had eight brothers and two sisters. The eldest sister had been married at a young age and my younger sister was too lazy. I found myself working hard to support the family. My mum woke me up very early to make samosas (pastry savouries) and sell them before trekking the 3-mile walk to school. My brothers were not pushed as hard as I was and later I understood that mum was preparing me for hurdles that I would face later in life. At the moment I can proudly state I am a mother of 10 children, 8 of whom are first degree graduates, two have their masters and one is currently doing her Ph. D” (Diploma graduate, age 65)
The study affirms that the respondents who came from a culturally mixed heritage attributed their parents’ lax attitude towards education to culture reflected by respondents who came from an Asian and Arab traditional background that felt that women should only be given basic education to enable them run their domestic homes.

5.2.1 HISTORICAL FACTORS: CIVIC-STRIFE AND UNREST AND THE WAR IN NORTHERN UGANDA AS BARRIERS AND ENABLERS

The study establishes that political factors were influential to the development of the female child yet Bronfenbrenner’s model (2005) did not specifically highlight their impact despite having them embedded within the historical factors that fall under the Macrosystem of the ecological model. Although the conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2) identifies wars under historical factors, this can also be linked to political factors concerning the civil wars. The study affirms that the war situation in Uganda has been worse than in most African countries because for almost two decades since 1971, Uganda has experienced a period of tremendous political and social instability and drastic economic decline. The earlier political wars in Uganda that saw the country being governed by different heads of State and the recent Lord’s Resistance Army under the rebel leader Joseph Kony have wreaked havoc and instability in Northern Uganda since 1986. The Political conditions also saw a mass exodus of people into countries neighbouring Uganda and abroad. Emigration to other countries (Somalis into Europe and America, Ugandans into Kenya and Tanzania), resulted into the settlement of immigrants in Europe and America where they obtained citizenship, and were able to build cultural communities. While others were able to return to Uganda and were given back their properties after many years due to the peace and stability of the new Ugandan Government reforms of trade and industry, most settled in the UK and became successful entrepreneurs (Gettleman and Schmitt 2009).
One of the respondents recalls how a soldier was killed outside their home and his family sought vengeance and killed their neighbour with all his children mistakenly thinking that they were responsible for his death. When they realised that their family had been the target the whole family had to migrate to Tanzania for a whole year and only came back when their father had to report on duty as the transport officer at Makerere University. Due to this disturbance, their progress into Higher Education was negatively affected. The respondent recalls that:

“This was one of the most difficult periods of our lives. My father wanted to leave us to study in Tanzania but my younger brothers insisted on coming back to Uganda because they couldn’t cope with the different education system.....you see....in Uganda we learn in English language but Tanzania uses Kiswahili as a medium of communication. English is taught as a subject in secondary school. The boys found it so hard to cope...so mum had to reluctantly come back with the rest of us.” (Makerere University Administrator aged 55)

The study acknowledges that after the over throw of Idi Amin Dada in 1979, most Muslim families had to go to exile because of their association with the president. Some ended up in the neighbouring countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi and even as far as the UK. This disruption had either positive or negative effects on the different families. Some ended up with a better and more accessible educational opportunity (those who fled to the UK) and others had to struggle to survive and rebuild their lives from scratch in different countries (Government official, aged 45). Furthermore the study establishes that one of the mixed race respondents (Persian/Ugandan) who had to move with her grandmother to Mombasa, a town off the coast of Kenya, had to stop schooling for a while because her grandmother was not sure when they would relocate to Uganda again. She attended Madrassah School for two years, until they went back to Uganda where she resumed schooling up to her ‘O’ levels. She then got married shortly after and that marked the end of her pursuit of Higher Education (Makerere University Administrator, age 50).
The study confirms that although the political atmosphere has stabilized in most of Uganda, the rebel activities of the Lord’s Resistance army (LRA) led by Joseph Kony in Northern Uganda since 1986 have destabilized the people in the war zone area. As a result, many families ended up in IDP (Internally Displaced Person) camps. Very few ventured to have a normal life and though camp schools had been opened, very few families took their children to school. One of the Acholi ethnic respondents had been a victim of civil strife due to her ethnicity, and despite this she experiences several advantages and disadvantages in her path to higher knowledge. She recalls this:

“Growing up in a war zone was not easy.....some girls my age were abducted by the LRA (Lord’s Resistance army) led by Joseph Kony. Some were released traumatized but some we never saw again. It was very unsafe for young girls in the North.....the fact that I was a Muslim wearing the scarf made it worse because I was easily noticed.....it was just by the grace of Allah that I survived and I was able to continue with my studies and get an opportunity to go to University.......many others my age ended up being married, those abducted by the rebels were either married by the soldiers or killed!” (Bachelor of Laws, Law development centre, aged 23)

The respondent recalled how her parents who were peasant farmers had been killed in the bush war. She was lucky to have elder siblings who took on the responsibility of her welfare and education. She came from Gulu district that was considered a deprived area. Though her performance was exceptional for her area, the only reason why she managed to get a University bursary was through the District quota system whereby a percentage of students had to be selected from each of the 95 districts.

One respondent migrated to Kenya to live with relatives until the situation settled. This was beneficial to her because she managed to complete both her ‘O’ and ‘A’ levels in a stable environment that saw her achieve excellent results and enrol at Makerere University as a law student. Others had to drop out of school and resume after the war, this created gaps in their educational progress, and they ended up spending more years at school due to civil unrest. Most of the younger undergraduate students were too
young to recall what happened during the civil war era. Some villages were completed unaffected while others suffered several raids that saw young women and girls being raped (Government official, age 45).

The study establishes that with the civil strife many female children had an interrupted education, because more females left school because of fear and insecurity. It was a known fact that whenever a government was toppled in Uganda, the soldiers would take advantage of the women and girls and as a result, many were raped, maimed or kidnapped. Parents were reluctant to take their female children to boarding school and as a result, many were forced to drop out and take short certificate courses or were married off early (Government Official, aged 45). Surprisingly quite a number of respondents cited a positive outcome of the war:

“My family had to migrate to neighbouring Kenya for a while until the situation stabilized. In Kenya I was able to study in a stable environment; I performed exceptionally well and gained admission into Makerere University thereafter” (University Secretary, aged 40)

The study acknowledges that her educational experience in Kenya was what provided the stability that enabled her excel in her studies and gain access to Makerere University as a Computer Scientist. Both the questionnaire and interview data reflect on the effect of the civil war in Uganda (1979-1986) which had a huge impact on the respondents who were at a school going age. The following excerpts prove it:

“Due to insecurity we would keep out of school for days hence impacting negatively on the progress.” (Government Official, age 45)

“Loss of property and family members affected my education. Fewer funds could be raised and further sub divided to carter for orphans.” (Government official, age 40)

“The influence of the war was not much in my district. It had no influence on my educational progress.” (Internal Auditor, age 38)
Most of the younger respondents 25 years and below did not experience the war because Uganda was on the road to recovery by then. The Civil War years saw the toppling of several Government leaders: Kabaka Mwanga, Obote I and II, Yusuf Lule, Binaisa, Idi Amin (1971-1979) and Obote II (1979-1986) (Government Official, aged 60). Therefore a majority of the respondents who were at school age during the civil war years (1970-1986) were affected by the war. Those who were at boarding school had to be protected by soldiers during term time. At times when there was an attack, they had to travel long distances in search of safety.

5.2.2 HISTORICAL FACTORS: EXPULSION OF ASIANS (INDIANS) FROM UGANDA (1972) AS A BARRIER

The study establishes the impact of the Asians entrepreneurs on the economic development of Uganda since historically Muslims in Uganda were the most business oriented. Under the leadership of President Amin Dada (1971-1979), the expulsion of Asians in 1971/1972 saw more business opportunities open up for Ugandans since shops and business ventures that had been left behind by the Asians were handed over to uneducated Ugandans. The expulsion of Asians from Uganda led to further decline to the economy of the Government. Most of these were skilled professionals and had opened up merchant stores all over Uganda. One respondent reflected:

“I remember when I was growing up the whole street had shops owned by Asians, we could get almost everything we wanted in terms of food stuffs and clothing. The year they left and the shops were managed by the Ugandans who took over, they were almost empty, I guess they didn’t have the knowledge and expertise to keep the shops well stocked like the Asians” (Makerere University Administrator, age 55)

Some were able to thrive and progress with the business while others mismanaged the businesses and this led to their downfall (Government official, aged 60). One respondent recalls the situation in Uganda after the expulsion of the Asians:
“Since I studied in an Asian school, after the Asians were expelled from Uganda the quality of teaching and that of the school deteriorated and education stagnated because most of the teachers then were Asian. Books, stationary, desks, chairs and even black boards disappeared from the schools...... they were practically ransacked. Although I did my ‘O’ levels, I had to look for the certificate from the Ministry of Education. After that I did not study for a year and taught myself typing....” (Makerere University, Secretary, age 55)

The study acknowledges that the forced exile of Asian families from Uganda in the early 70’s contributed to the degradation of Education in Uganda. Many Asian founded schools were left to the management of the local government indigents. As would be expected none were kept to the expected standards. Many became overcrowded which lowered the education standards and led to many families neglecting their children’s education, more so the females. With the seemingly over populated schools and class rooms, parents felt it was useless to send their daughters to school and many opted to have them take short certificate courses like secretarial studies, dress making, hair dressing or cookery in preparation for early marriage (Secretary, aged 55).

5.3 ECONOMIC FACTORS

5.3.1 THE EFFECT OF SES (SOCIAL ECONOMIC STATUS) ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

The study asserts that the economic status of the family was considerably influential to the respondents’ progress to Higher Education. The following are some of the excerpts transcribed:

“I come from a Muslim family of the lake Sheikh Mwalimu Hassan Kamihandakituku .The family has very hard working and friendly members who follow Islamic principles. Moreover, since Muslims do not drink intoxicants this makes members very active and each minute of their life is put to useful use compared to other religions were alcohol is not prohibited. As a result, the majority of family members are rich and funds for school fees can easily be raised”. (Solicitor, age 60)
“Money has always been a problem. It was a struggle for me to get to University because my family was Polygamous. Having elder brothers and sisters helped because they would contribute towards my fees and I was able to complete the degree in BCOM.” (Accountant, age 30)

One respondent on the survey claimed that due to lack of financial resources because of a parent’s death and being raised by a step mum whose hostility may not allow her to progress far into Higher Education. Closely related to the economy was the dependence on Agriculture in Uganda coupled with poor skills training hence poor employment opportunities resulting in lack of money for school fees. Similarly, most of the respondents interviewed whether undergraduate, postgraduate or those students awaiting admission into Makerere University raised the issue of Economic instability due to poor socio-economic family backgrounds. A large number interviewed had to struggle due to lack of school fees and other scholastic materials and this had a negative impact on her progress into Higher Education. One of the respondents recalls going to school without breakfast or transport money. She had these comments to make;

“I used to stay the whole day at school hungry, walk back home in the afternoon but would only eat a meal after fetching water and doing house chores. By the time I settled down to sleep, it would be too dark to do my homework and I would be exhausted from all the walking done. This happened throughout my schooling.” (Makerere University Administrator, age 50)

The study identifies with the loss of family breadwinners, dependence on agriculture as a livelihood, large extended families due to the polygamous nature being some of the reasons fronted for poor performance and progress into Higher Education. Older siblings in families had to take on the burden of education younger siblings due to large families that could not be supported by the main breadwinners. One respondent had this to say;
“I was blessed because I was never sent home for school fees. My father was a business man and was able to sustain me throughout school. He also encouraged me to study until postgraduate level. He is still funding my education to date....” (Master of Arts in Economics, yr. 1, age 25).

The economic status was a great influence to the progress of Muslim women to Higher Education. Respondents who came from families that were professionals or those that were working class from financially sound backgrounds were able to comfortably maintain their children in school.

5.3.2 ECONOMIC STATUS: POVERTY AND LOW LIVING STANDARDS

The study establishes that despite its abundant natural resources, Uganda became one of the underprivileged countries in the world during the turbulent years of Idi Amin (1971-79) and Obote II (1980-85). In 1987, the new government, led by President Museveni, embarked on an economic recovery program aimed at reducing poverty by restoring fiscal discipline and monetary stability and rehabilitating infrastructure (economic, social and institutional). The recovery program encompassed civil service reform, revised investment and incentive structures, and made a rapid move to a market-determined exchange rate (Xiaoyang 2004, Graph 1, p 9).

“Due to lack of money, this motivated my mum to prioritise my education and this motivated me to work hard and ensure that I attain the best grades.” (M.A, yr. 1 student, age 35).

“I come from a middle class family of professionals so school fees was never a problem. My parents encouraged me to study and were willing to sponsor my education even up to PhD level”. (M.A, yr. 1 student, age 25).

“I had to drop out of school after secondary because of fees, work, save and educate myself at University level because my parents were too poor and relied on mainly agriculture” (Makerere University Administrator, age 50).

This study recognises that for families with a good economic status there was positive influence towards educational advancement. On the other hands those who grew up in
families whose financial state was not sound, had to struggle through education. Those
who had felt there was no impact may have had support from other sources as reflected
in some of the comments posted:

5.3.3 ECONOMIC FACTORS: MATERIALISM AND PEER PRESSURE
The study identified materialism was an emerging sub theme under Economic factors.
Most of the female students at University felt pressured to dress and look good by their
fellow peers. One student had this to say;

“Many of the new students ended up getting men friends because of social
pressure, some were even prominent Figures in government like Ministers, Members of Parliament and other professionals. It is a common sight to see
expensive government vehicles parked outside the female halls of residence
almost every evening....... It is really sad because most of the students who had
such partners would drop out of University due to poor performance, elope, get
unwanted pregnancies or contract STI like gonorrhoea, Chlamydia, Syphilis or
the dreaded HIV/AIDS”. (Bachelor in Development Economics, yr. 3, aged 23)

The young students felt that they needed to dress fashionably and expensively, eat well,
own the latest and most expensive phones, furnish their rooms with all the new
technology and gadgets and drive expensive cars. Those who came from poorer
backgrounds resorted to having boy and older men friends to sustain their image. The
study established that most of them did not complete their education because some
ended up with “sugar daddies” or men who were old enough to be their fathers because
of socio-economic pressures amongst peers in Institutions of higher learning.

5.3.4 ECONOMIC FACTORS: SOCIAL PRESSURES AND COMPETITIVE JOB MARKETS
The study recognised that most of the current students were keen to attain a Higher
Education at postgraduate level but were hindered by financial constraints. Many were
motivated to attain Higher Education because the job market demanded highly skilled
or qualified labour. Jobs were being threatened due to the high number of qualified
graduates thus some of the respondents cited discrimination with regard to dress during job interviews. One respondent recalled that:

“My sister graduated with a very good Bachelor of Commerce degree and she had the accounting option. She was invited for an interview at the former Green land bank. The panel were greatly impressed with her knowledge and skills but had to fail her in the interview because of her hijab (Islamic adornment)….according to them they felt that the dressing would reflect a negative public image and affect the customer relations” (Postgraduate student and graduate assistant, aged 27)

In most cases, Muslims who appeared adorned in hijab (Islamic covering and headgear) did not make it past the job interviews and ended up missing work opportunities. The study affirms that even those Muslim women who were highly qualified would miss out on lucrative jobs because they were identified as Muslim a woman (Bronfenbrenner’s exosystem) which was a factor that was equally emphasized by researchers like Mernissi (2003).

5.3.5 ECONOMIC FACTORS: DEPENDENCE ON AGRICULTURE AS AN ECONOMIC BARRIER

The study identifies that the economic system within the Exosystem layer of Bronfenbrenner’s model was one that highly influenced the child’s progress into Higher Education. A majority of the respondents interviewed came from agricultural backgrounds that grew food for subsistence like the Baganda, others were cattle keepers like the Banyakole and Batooro. One respondent currently working as a deputy registrar at Makerere University retorted;

“I really didn’t want to end up like my sisters, who grew up digging for a livelihood and got married and are still digging until today.......oh No.....I wanted something better for myself and I am glad I went through University. I still dig on my plot of land but this is occasionally and at my own leisure as a hobby.....not because I need to make a living out of it. Don’t get me wrong though, digging is a pleasurable and fulfilling activity especially when you get
to harvest and eat what you have grown.....I grow my own bananas, greens, beans and maize.” (Administrator, age 50).

The respondent recalls her parents selling off all their harvest to raise fees for her tuition and still the amount was not enough to cater for her needs. With agricultural activities being the main income earners of some of these families, many had to sell crops and cattle to raise fees for their children. She recalls the fact that she did not want to end up digging for the rest of her life as one of the greatest motivators that saw her struggle to progress into Higher Education.

5.4 SOCIAL-CULTURAL FACTORS: RELIGION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The pivotal theme of the study as reflected by the in depth interviews were Social cultural factors where other sub themes evolved like religion, gender, marriage, family and children, Polygamy and HIV/AIDS which were analysed as both barriers and enablers.

5.4.1 SOCIAL CULTURAL FACTORS: RELIGION AS A BARRIER

The study identified respondents who experienced religious discrimination and acknowledged that the segregation they experienced at educational institutions was not due to the religion per say but was reflected by the way they were treated when they chose to practice their faith. Those who cited religion as a barrier reflected on their experiences of segregation at the University especially during examination periods. Examination invigilators were usually reluctant to admit students adorned in hijab (Islamic wear) to examination rooms on the pretext that they may be hiding examination information in their clothing. Unfortunately, complaints to authorities were not acted upon and many Muslim female students found it was easier not to wear the
Several respondents admitted that they felt their lives were easier if they were not identified as Muslims. One student had this to say:

“Some students ended up even changing their names or shortening them so that it was not easy to identify them. During exam period we would attend the examination sessions without our veils on.” (Bachelor of Information Student, yr. 2, age 22)

“The religious segregation was so tangible that some Muslim students even shortened their names from Muhammad to “Eddy”, Mastulah to “Mercy” and Mariam to “Mary” so that they were not easily identified as Muslim. Others did not respond to greetings of “Assalaam alaikum” least they were heard and identified as Muslims..... this is really sad because some of them came from known practicing families” (Information Science Student, yr. 1, age 20)

The study established that most the graduate students had similar complaints stating that either they were the only Muslim in their class or they were a handful of students that made fighting for their religious rights quite difficult. Although some faculties boasted of having a large number of Muslim students (Social Sciences and Education), very few wanted to acknowledge this because they did not want to be discriminated against. Very few females adorned the Islamic wear popularly known as hijab to avoid standing out in crowds least they suffered religious stigmatization.

5.4.2 SOCIAL-CULTURAL FACTORS: RELIGION AS AN ENABLER

The respondents of the study perceived Islam differently. Many felt that its influence was mainly cultural. One respondent who was a student (Law yr. 3, age 25) had parents who valued both the secular and Islamic education so she grew up attending both. She would go to secular education during the day and would attend Madrassah (Qur’an school) for two hours every evening. An administrative assistant and secretary were also part of the pilot survey and their view was that since their parents were moderate Muslims who did not put much emphasis on religion. One had this to say:
“My parents thought it was enough that we could be identified as Muslims, they never insisted that we attend madrassah (Qur’an school) so we grew up knowing just the basics but didn’t get to know our religion deeply, but we did know that Islam did encourage men and women to get educated” (Makerere University Administrator, aged 48).

The study thus acknowledges that although religion is the main pivot of the research the developments from the in depth interviews reflected the opposite in fact many of the respondents did not present religion as a factor but as an identity. The study further acknowledged that some of the respondents viewed religions as an enabler and since most were purposively selected from Muslim backgrounds many came from religiously grounded families that practiced the basic tenets of Islam like prayer, fasting and charity.

The study established that a majority of the respondents interviewed did not think or feel that their religion was oppressive; to the contrary, many who attended Madrassah (Qur’an school) were able to narrate verses from the Holy Qur’an and sayings of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that were supportive towards educational progress for both male and females in Islam. Several respondents of the study were of the view that their strong faith in Islam influenced by Qur’anic teachings especially from the Qur’an and the Prophetic sayings of Muhammad (Peace be upon him), extorts all men and women to read and seek knowledge. One respondent actually read out the verse:

“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Read! In the name of your Lord Who has created (all that exists). He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught (the writing) by the pen. He has taught men that which he knew not” (Qur’an 96:1-5)

The study was able to support this view with a prophetic narration that states:
The study acknowledges that these verses and narrations were powerful tools that could be used to justify the compulsory acquisition of knowledge for both men and women in Islam. One respondent of the study attributes her excellent performance at undergraduate level to the Islamic University in Uganda in Mbale (Eastern Uganda) where she attained a Bachelor of Development studies degree. She was able to state this about the University:

“The Islamic University in Uganda is based in Mbale, eastern Uganda and it upholds strict Islamic shariah (law) in behaviour, dress code and fulfilling the five pillars of Islam. All Muslim students were expected to pray and fast in Ramadhan. The non-Muslims did not have to practice the tenants of Islam but they were expected to dress and behave in an Islamic manner” (M.A yr. 1 student, age 25).

The respondent of the study was currently doing her M.A in Rural development at Makerere University. She attributes her success and discipline to the Islamic environment at the Islamic University in Uganda. She was able to learn and practice her religion in a supportive environment that was ironically not the case at her home. She considers her family liberal Muslims, keen on education but not on religion.

5.4.3 SOCIAL CULTURAL FACTORS: GENDER ISSUES IN A PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY

The study reviewed literature that acknowledged similar factors to those documented in the in depth interviews that shaped the decision of Muslim women in embarking in Higher Education and these included natural progression from school, economic reasons, independence, parental wishes, wanting to become better mothers and members of their own community, personal development, following role models and delaying marriage. (Mernissi 2003, Madeleine 2009, Bunyi 2003, Wright et al 2000).
The study established that the traditional Ugandan like most other cultures (Asian/Arab) did not give females a chance to progress further into Higher Education. One mixed race respondent (Persian/Ugandan) who grew up with male cousins recalled how they were able to study to higher levels if they wished.

“My brothers chose to drop out of school but they also had the opportunity to go back when they wished......I on the other hand had to get married at 16 because my grandma believed that I had enough religious knowledge to help me be a house wife and mother” (Postgraduate student and part time administrator, aged 68).

The study affirms that though many males chose to drop out, the option to continue education was always available for them. This privilege was not available to girls and most opted for marriage at an early age because clearly secular education was a right for the male members of the family.

5.4.4 SOCIAL-CULTURAL FACTORS: MARRIAGE OF FEMALES AT A YOUNG AGE

The study recognizes that the marital status of the respondents was a contributory factor to their educational achievement. Islam lays emphasis on a dutiful wife’s first responsibility being toward her husband and children. Despite this, it was not seen as a hindrance towards educational progress. This was mainly due to the social support system that the extended family members provided. The largest percentage felt that it had no influence whatsoever on their educational progress. In fact, one respondent of the study commented that she would not have progressed far with her studies if she had not married. Her husband was supportive and encouraged her to complete her first degree. Whether his motives were to help her or help himself she was not sure, since soon after she completed her course she got a very good job and was able to contribute towards the household expenses (M.A Gender studies, yr. 2, aged 34). This was later established in the in depth interviews when many admitted that they got married whilst in their early twenties because as one respondent put it;
“Getting to the age of 30 without a marriage partner was considered a taboo in my community….most parents would start worrying when their daughters got to that age …..the relatives would also show concern till one felt they were outcasts in the community!!” (B.A Education student, year 3, Age 25)

A respondent of the study who got married at the age of sixteen while in Senior 3 attributes her predicament to culture that encouraged young girls to get married so that they were not “spoilt” or succumb to peer pressures that saw many young girls drop out of school due to teenage pregnancies. Currently a Level 2 Librarian at Busitema University, she strove to carry on with her education despite having 6 children in the process. She continued whilst married and completed both her ‘O’ and ‘A’ levels. She managed to gain admission into Makerere University to do a B.A degree in Social Sciences as a private student but had to drop out due to lack of tuition fees. She later struggled to enrol for the Certificate in Library and Information Science at Makerere University, and then progressed to a Diploma after which she was employed as an Assistant Librarian at the Main Library. This job saw her through her Bachelor’s degree in Library and Information Science and she was currently registering for a Master’s degree in the same field. She attributes her drive and ambition to the fact that she wanted better for her own children. She knew she had to perform so that she could provide better for her own children. She had this to say:

“I am currently supporting my eldest son through University and his younger siblings are at secondary and primary school. My maternal family supported me through this journey. They would at times meet to conduct fundraising for my University tuition fees. My husband has never been supportive and decided to take on a second wife……..while I was struggling with my education. This did not affect my vision, but encouraged me to work harder and achieve better for myself and my children” (Makerere University Library Administrator, age 38).

The study further reflects on the experiences of one of the mixed race respondents (Yemeni/Ugandan) who got married at an early age; both she and her husband had
dropped out of Primary school. They both appreciated secular education and to date had ensured that eight of their ten children (six girls and four boys) had graduated with University degrees. Her brothers on the other hand were given the choice to pursue further education that they did not take and the highest level they attained was ‘A’ level education. She had this to say:

“\textit{My mum wanted me to study but when a marriage proposal was brought when I was 16 years of age she had to give in due to the social pressure from her relatives. Why do you want her to study? Let her get married......of what benefit will it bring if she continues to study? She will get spoilt at home ......and so on and so forth.....my mum actually had no choice but to agree to the marriage especially since the proposal came from a son of one of the renowned Arab merchants.....}” (Diploma graduate, age 65).

Despite the fact that there was a notable increase in the age of graduate women, the study established that a number of the women in Uganda similar to those in UK believed that a degree would lead to marriage to an educated husband, who would appreciate a wife, with intellectual ability that can support her home and career. The study contends that since the Muslim girls out-performed the boys at all levels of education, parents were worried with the prospect of locating graduate husbands with stable employment for their daughters who would welcome a wife with equal or higher qualifications (Ahmad 2008). In Uganda parents were more concerned about getting men with stable jobs and the financial capability of looking after their daughters more than the academic qualification. So it was not strange to see Muslim female graduates married to business men who were less qualified and educated (Ezati 2002, Kwesiga 2002).

The study acknowledges that educating the Muslim females in Uganda was encouraged with the awareness that some parents felt that if their daughters worked it would be a form of insurance in the event of marriage breakdown or financial loss. So despite the
fact that Muslim families who didn’t educate their daughters were on one hand viewed as backward and old fashioned by the wider Muslim community those who did were blamed for discouraging early marriage for their daughters since they were thought to age beyond the point that they would make suitable wives (Ahmad 2008, Kwesiga 2002).

5.4.5 SOCIAL-CULTURAL FACTORS: FAMILY AND CHILDREN ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

The study affirms that Islam as a religion regards children as a blessing and encourages procreation: The main purpose of marriage according to the Qur’an and practices of the pious prophets that were sent to mankind (Peace be Upon them) was to reproduce and fill the earth so that they could worship the Lord in large numbers. The Qur’an states:

"O people, keep your duty to your Lord, who created you from a single soul and created its spouse of the same (kind), and spread from these two many men and women." (Qur’an 4: 1)

Most of the respondents interviewed for the study came from large families so the issue of having children was perceived positively. With regard to the issue of having many children, most of the respondents had a generally positive attitude and others did not feel the impact at all. The study established that this was due to the communal support one had due to the presence of extended family, relatives, neighbours and friends. The study argues that this is unlike the west; acquiring house help would be very expensive, to the contrary in Uganda this was an extremely cheap venture. The study identified that the fact that there were many young female relatives in the village who could not pursue further education; many parents felt it were preferable to send them to the Urban areas to work as house help and support the family in the process. Nonetheless one respondent’s experience, who had twins, was extremely negative; since she could not manage balancing both family and studies. She had this comment
Apart from the odd case mentioned above, most of the respondents of the study who couldn’t get family support in looking after their children would get hired help from the village and in most cases, these “maids” would do all the housework in addition to taking care of the children. The study established that this kind of support was extremely cheap and those young Muslim females obtained from the villages (who were probably not in school) were usually grateful to have a chance to have their children move into the cities to work as housemaids due to their contribution in terms of monetary incentives.

5.4.6 SOCIAL-CULTURAL FACTORS: FAMILY SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT AS AN ENABLER

The study further established that respondents with good family support were seen to progress higher into education, because positive attitudes among parents, siblings and spouses were all-important enablers towards educational achievement. One respondent had support from her mum who believed in educating girls and she felt she had to disprove the traditional beliefs that stated that a girl could not progress into Higher Education and remain modest and God fearing at the same time. One respondent posted this comment on the survey;

“My Mother believed in me ...She provided a conducive environment; she was hard working and encouraged us to study, my own determination and self-confidence and above all, God's mercies and willingness to give me the ability...” (M.A Gender studies, year 1, aged 24).

The study acknowledged that the most common theme cited by respondents was gratitude to family members because most who overcome educational barriers recognized family support as one of their greatest facilitators. As one respondent is
reported to have said, she would not have gone to University if the father had not visited Makerere University and saw girls studying there and therefore making the decision that he wanted his daughter there. He went against the clan’s expectations and sent his daughter to first junior, then senior girls’ secondary school (Bachelor of Laws, Development centre, aged 23). In relation to this one of the respondents had this to add;

“I attribute my education to the support I received from my mum who believed in educating a girl. My mum believed in me and she ensured that I had a conducive environment to study. She made sure she paid my fees on time, bought me books and any requirements the school needed and gave me enough private time to study. She is great and my biggest role model” (Master of Arts in Economics, year 1, aged 25)

The study recognizes that family background and attitudes towards education seemingly had a great impact since families that valued education were at the forefront of pushing their children to achieve. Individual families differed but it was apparent that most of the Muslim female students who had completed University or were currently at University had a lot of family support in terms of moral, physical, spiritual and financial support (fees and scholastic materials).

5.4.7 SOCIAL-CULTURAL FACTORS: POLYGAMY AND EXTENDED FAMILY AS A BARRIER

The study acknowledged that closely related to the economic status of the family, another common emerging issue was polygamy and extended family. A large number of the respondents of the study came from large families and this made it difficult to progress further into Higher Education. Those large polygamous families that owned businesses had to spread the income across a large number of children who were at a school going age. With the exception of those who came from wealthy families and those who had older educated and professional siblings, the rest had to struggle through
high school due to monetary reasons (lack of scholastic support) (Part time lecturer, age 36).

The study reflects on the experience of one of the respondents who had a total of 15 brothers and 9 sisters from her polygamous family. Before his death, her father ensured that his daughters received the minimal primary education. Anything beyond that was considered a privilege as such of the nine girls only two received an ‘O’ level education. Most of her brothers went on to polytechnics and obtained diplomas, with the exception of two who had University degrees (Postgraduate student and part time administrator, age 68).

The study acknowledges that the large polygamous and extended families made balancing family needs difficult, a number of respondents confessed that they were not given maximum support both financially and morally due to the nature of their family being extended or polygamous. Generally, a little income had to be spread to cover a large number of people in the households. Polygamy has both religious and cultural connotations, religious in the sense that Islam advocates for it under several situations like barrenness, illness, financial capability and physical ability. The study established the verse in the Qur’an that vies for polygamy to read:

"And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then (marry) only one or what your right hands possess; this is more proper, that you may not deviate from the right course. "
(Qur’an: Chapter Nisa 4:3)

The study contends that ideally, the verse gives a clear explanation to justify polygamy which was meant to counter a social evil that was prevalent in the community that left many women and children unsupported because they had lost breadwinners due to wars and diseases. In this case, it was to take care of the vulnerable women in the society
who had been divorced, widowed or orphaned. Furthermore the study establishes that the only condition attached to practicing polygamy was being able to deal justly between the maximum of four wives. The “just” in this case being the division of wealth, provisions and time. Love was not easy to divide so it would not be questioned in this case (Ghaffar 2004). Culturally on the other hand polygamy was practiced by all religious and traditional denominations in Uganda and in this case, there was no given formula. Many traditionalists would take on as many wives as possible and reproduce as many children as they could. Villages and homesteads in rural Uganda grew up from cultural polygamous marriages. A respondent reflects:

“My home village in Kabale, western Uganda is practically made up of the descendants of my great grandfather the late Kanyoma who became a Muslim and through him and my grandfather, the village of Mparo was born. I have over 60 Uncles and Aunts, we are over 200 cousins and we now have children that make up a whole village. The beauty of Islam in this instance encouraged procreation and that’s what our religion encourages us to do so that we are proud of the numbers” (M.B.A yr. 1, student, age 28)

Another respondent did not have anything positive to say about polygamy:

“My father has three wives and I grew up in an environment that had a lot of politics. I never got to ask my father directly for anything, I had to go through his wives and this was unfortunate because none of them had my interests at heart. My mum died when I was young. Payment of fees was a problem and I remember being sent home several times due to non-payment of fees…..if my older siblings hadn’t helped out I wouldn’t have completed my education” (M.A Sociology, yr. 1, age 23)

The study contends that many of the polygamous households where the fathers had more than one wife had frequent family squabbles with marital rivalry being common amongst stepmothers and stepchildren. This sometimes not only affected educational progress because of financial constraints but also the bickering amongst family members usually caused break down of family relations. Respondents of the study who were raised with step mothers found life very difficult. One recalls:
“I was raised with a step mother and life was not easy at all.......she made my father dislike me so much because of stories she made up of me and he even threatened to stop paying my school fees at secondary school......it was only when other relatives intervened that he agreed to continue paying my fees. Luckily I got government sponsorship at University and I moved out of home.....I have never gone back since......and I think my step mum is happy now....... with me out of the way.....that’s life!!!” (B.A Arts student, yr.1, age 19)

One respondent confessed that the only reason why she dropped out of school was because her step mum convinced her father that she was not serious with schooling and he stopped paying school fees for her. Her half brothers and sisters on the other hand remained in school and some even graduated from college. The group interviewees agreed to this:

“We come from a culturally polygamous society. Even before Islam came to Uganda, our ancestors practiced polygamy. Those who were Saza chiefs (colonial village heads) during the colonial period had up to ten wives at a go and they were all living in one homestead. Islam limited the number to four which is what is acceptable in the religion and this can only happen if the husband is able to cater for the material needs of each family and allocate each family with appropriate and equal time, which is what the verse in chapter 4 of the Qur’an says...”

When asked what does the verse say? The respondents were happy to clarify:

“Oh I can recite it for you its verse 3, “...marry other women of your choice, two or three, or four, but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with them, then only one or (the slaves) that your right hands possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice...”” (Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences, yr. 2, age 22).

The study identified that the main problem towards polygamy was voiced through a concerned respondent who said that most of the men who do marry more than one are unable to support their wives due to expenses; this was unlike earlier times when things were cheaper. The study affirms that the family squabbles between co wives and step children made it even more difficult. The study acknowledges that cultural issues of polygamy were widespread among all the ethnic groups in Uganda therefore it was
considered one of the biggest barriers to the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into higher education.

5.4.8. SOCIAL CULTURAL FACTORS: HEALTH ISSUES: HIV/AIDS ENDEMIC IN UGANDA AS A BARRIER

The study establishes that HIV/AIDS is one of the biggest endemics that have impacted the world today, and is rapidly spreading in sub-Saharan Africa, Uganda being inclusive. Since her first official announcement of the outbreak in 1989 when the famous local singer Philly Lutaaya went public with it, the impact of HIV/AIDS in Uganda has continued to grow and could therefore be embedded in Bronfenbrenner’s mesosystem with its chronosystem covering its effects over a period of time. The study establishes that an estimated 24.5 million adults and children were living with HIV/AIDS by the year 2005 and an estimated 2 million people died from AIDS in that year alone and left behind approximately 12 million African children orphans.

The study establishes that a comparison between Kenya and Uganda saw that the highest infection rate amongst the youth (15-49 years) was in Uganda (6.7%); Kenya (6.1%) and Tanzania (6.5%) (Sulayman 2011). The study further reveals that the effect of the AIDS pandemic in Uganda has been very severe, with almost every household losing income earners and that most respondents had been affected by the epidemic and some of them had to even drop out of school to care for dying relatives. Most households become child headed with grieving orphans left behind to survive without parental care.

The study establishes that Makerere University like all other tertiary institutions in Uganda had to tackle HIV/AIDS since most of the infected people 15-49 years were youth in educational institutions or were in the prime of their working lives. This has
had a significant break in the economic growth and development and hence the country’s ability to cope with the epidemic. Orphans had to be taken on board by paternal and maternal relatives and as one respondent who graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce degree, reflects:

“When both my parents passed on due to HIV/AIDS we thought it was the end of the world. How were we going to survive? This wouldn’t have been possible without our maternal relatives; my uncles took the six of us and shared the responsibility of raising and educating us. My elder sister works at the Prime Minister’s office and she has managed to get us all jobs at the public sector. If we hadn’t gone further into Higher Education none of this would have been possible. We are very grateful to our maternal Uncles.” (M.B.A student, Barclays bank clerk, age 29).

The study echoes the report of the group interviewees based on a recent UNAIDS report (2010); where Uganda had been recognized as an exemplary model for Africa in the Fight against HIV and AIDS. The first AIDS cases were reported in 1982 and under the guidance of President Museveni’s strong government leadership, broad-based partnerships and effective public education campaigns there was a substantial decline in the number of people living with HIV and AIDS in the 1990s.

5.5 GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND EDUCATIONAL FACTORS AS BARRIERS TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

5.5.1 POLITICAL FACTORS

The study acknowledges that enshrined in Bronfenbrenner’s exosystem, many of the respondents were of the view that the political atmosphere of Uganda mainly affected the respondents who were above 30 years of age. Uganda has recently had a stable government under the leadership of Yoweri Kaguta Museveni who came into power on January 26th 1986. The government was currently under a multiparty system with general elections taking place every 5 years. The affirmative action for women policy has seen the number of women parliamentarians increase with each of the 79 districts
having a woman representative. Out of the 332 parliament members, 95 are women and
out of these 95 only 15 are Muslims. That means women are approximately 30% as
compared to the men. Of these 30%, 4% are Muslim women (Government official, age
40). She had these comments to make:

“The education system took a while to stabilize in Uganda. The current
president Museveni had been in power for 25 years, though considered
dictatorial, many government schools had been rebuilt, and private ones
established. The National University, Makerere University has been expanded
and other government campuses had been opened at Kyambogo, Mbarara, Gulu
and Busetema. This had also encouraged the set-up of Private Universities like
the Islamic University in Uganda, Kampala International University, Nkumba
University, Nkozi University, Kampala University (Gaba), Mukono University,
St. Lawrence Citizens and others. With the increase in the number of privately
funded Universities so had the number of female graduates and significantly
also among the Muslim women”. (Government Official, age 40)

One respondent was of the view that;

“Despite the poor human rights records during the period 1971 - 1979, the
Government encouraged women to participate in many activities such as joining
different sections of police plus other sectors, which were previously a preserve
for men only. This could have set a trend for women to have that courage to
tread where others had feared to dare in the past” Additionally, “The NRM
(National Resistance Movement) Government put into place policies that
encouraged woman to work and study at the same time, the liberalized economy
and recognition of women's efforts contributed to women's ego, hence the
opportunity to study to such a high level”. (Government official, age 45)

5.5.2 UNIVERSITY AND INSTITUTIONAL STRIKES

The study identified another emerging concern among the respondents which was the
occasional strikes undertaken by either the academic or the administrative staff of
Makerere University. These strikes were not only detrimental to the students who had to
miss their studies, but also to the lecturers. Whenever the University called off the
strike, the academic staff had to work extra hard to catch up with the missed schedules.

One Assistant lecturer whose husband never supported her work had to take care of the
children and the housework in addition to her University work whenever there was a strike. She had these comments:

“Being a female Muslim and the only one in my department; my husband never understands the extra hours I have to work to catch up with the lost time. Unfortunately whenever the University closes due to a strike there is also a strike at my home!” (Assistant lecturer, aged 33)

The administrative staff of Makerere University supported the strike that ended on the 26th of September, 2011. Services had been paralysed for over three weeks at the institution. The University had to enforce an immediate closure in case the students joined the strike, to avoid bloodshed due to the breakout of riots that would entail involvement of the Ugandan police. Several similar incidents happened in the past where students who demonstrated lost their lives, due to either stampedes or rubber bullets shot by the armed police. Incidentally, the primary teachers and the doctor’s strike due to poor salaries and working conditions also accompanied the strike at Makerere University. One former student had these comments to make;

“I experienced three strikes during the course of my studies….it’s really sad one of my colleagues who I had studied with for my ‘A’ levels died in a stampede after police fired rubber bullets and everyone was running for their lives. He just fell down and the rush that happened as a result of it killed him.....poor Ahmed.....he was just in his first year as a Social Scientist student....”

When the researcher asked her the cause of the strike, she added

“The students were protesting a fees hike.....but he died in vain coz the fees were increased anyway!” (Postgraduate student and graduate Assistant aged 27)

Many of the respondents of the study cited the problem of inadequate or lack of career and guidance support at school and University. Many of the Muslim female students ended up taking courses they did not have much interest in and this was due to affordability. The flat courses in University were generally cheaper to undertake than the professional courses. They would usually take up the course that Makerere
University had enrolled them for usually by the JAB (Joint admission board). Others ended up taking particular courses because they had obtained government sponsorship for them and they could not change over to courses of their choice because either they were having a higher cut off point or they were more expensive as private courses.

The study confirms how a young lecturer at the School of Computing and Information Science had wanted to do a degree in Medicine and her father was willing to sponsor her privately but due to extensive financial responsibilities, (she came from a polygamous home where the father had several wives and almost fifty children) that her father had, she knew he would not be able to support her. She had this to say:

“I don’t regret my decision because I knew daddy wouldn’t be able to pay for a degree in medicine then. I am also happy with my career as an Assistant Lecturer, hopefully I will climb up the academic ladder and end up being a senior lecturer at some point.......looking at the way our current government is paying our doctors......It was a better path to take in terms of income earned and job satisfaction....we also get to have holidays when the University closes” (Assistant Lecturer, age 33)

She therefore opted to taking the course that she had obtained government sponsorship for which in this case was Bachelor of Science with Computer Science. She qualified to do medicine as a private student but ended up taking the course because of affordability. This was not her career choice but she chose to take this path and was currently a lecturer at the College of Information Technology. She loved her new profession and she believes that it was chance that got her there but chose to persevere and pursue a Masters in Information Technology, passed highly, and was later retained as an Assistant lecturer at the College of Computing and Information Technology.

5.5.3 GOVERNMENT POLICIES AS BARRIERS TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

The study established that most of the respondents felt that it was the government’s lack of initiatives and the delivery of poor government services that discouraged Muslim
women from working towards attaining Higher Education. One respondent made the following comment with this regard;

“The government of Uganda has not invested enough toward good quality education. The economic budget to support this sector is always lacking that’s why very few teachers are motivated hence they tend to discourage students in the process…” (Government Official, age 40)

This was because they felt that they were discriminatory and limited so they weren’t worth going for. Although initiatives like those of the Universal Primary and Secondary education had begun, there was little success registered in terms of quality education because the government still lacked the financial capability of ensuring that proper teaching and learning was delivered and with the bulk of the children already in the system, it was becoming more and more difficult to maintain. Teachers were still lacking in numbers in the rural schools and the ratio of children to a teacher was still very high.

5.5.4 EDUCATIONAL FACTORS AS ENABLERS TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS
5.5.4.1 HIGH SELF-ESTEEM

The study established that high self-esteem was one of their greatest pillars in educational advancement similarly the respondents who felt good and contented with themselves, would tend to strive harder so as to perform better in school. These young women could easily fight off the advances of the opposite sex and go through school avoiding teenage pregnancy. Young women who had a lower self-esteem were easily influenced to look for boyfriends or even older male friends to provide financial and emotional security. There was a popular coinage for young women at University.

The study acknowledges that according to the group discussants it was called the 8 C’s which were things young women at University strove for; the group interview
respondents all chorused when the researcher asked what the 8 C’s stood for; “They are Chips, Chicken, Coke, Cars, Cell Phones, Computers, Cash and Clothes” (Group Interview). This term was coined because these were the basic things young women at the campus craved for and many would go to greater lengths to achieve (Muhwezi 2003, Kasozi 2002, Katamba 2002). Young women who were focused on their objectives did not dwell on these issues but with determination and discipline, they usually became high achievers and went far into Higher Education.

5.5.4.2 CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING AS AN ENABLER

Several respondents of the study agreed that the provision of career guidance and counselling facilities at their secondary schools played a significant role in nourishing their interest of joining University. Some of the seminars organized at the secondary schools hosted Makerere University officials who gave a brief account of the courses offered and the avenues of entry.

The study suggests various ideas concerning Guidance and Counselling and these were identified by the respondents to include: Secondary school teachers being trained in guidance and counselling, therefore Guidance and counselling courses and trainings should be incorporated into the National Teachers College system so that the NTC’s (National Teachers Colleges) produce guidance and counsellor educators. Student centred techniques and activities should be incorporated into the program such as peer counselling especially during University orientation periods. This would probably lessen the number of female dropouts due to social related issues like pregnancies, STD’s (Sexually transmitted diseases and other issues). The Ministry of Education and Sports should establish goals, achievements, and a record of accomplishment and activities that would help policy information with consultation with the Ministry of
Education and Sports so that guidance and counselling is incorporated and integrated into the current curriculum (Group interview).

A majority of respondents of the study further suggested that these Guidance and counsellor educators be identified and selected according to criteria that would best serve the needs of students, their schools, families and communities. These qualities include listening skills and professionalism. The Guidance and counsellor educators as suggested by a University administrator should be supported with appropriate trainings and professional development to meet the full and holistic needs of the participating teachers, students, schools, families and communities. The students suggested that there should be a collaborative effort between policy makers, educators like the Union of Ugandan Professionals established in 2008, school leadership, parents and community members who would enhance secondary school based guidance and counselling programs and provide the most effective personal, social, educational and career development for students (Group Interview).

5.5.4.3 GOOD ROLE MODELS WITHIN THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY AS ENABLERS

The study identified the influence of families as an enabler since a strong family background that was supportive was an emerging theme among the respondents. A postgraduate student currently doing M.A in Environmental Accounting attributes her success to her paternal family. When her father died, her uncle took on the responsibility of ensuring that they all remained in school. He was an Accountant at the Bank of Uganda and this influenced many of her siblings and his own children to go into accountancy (Masters in Environmental Economics, aged 32). It was through these sessions that some of the Muslim female students felt particularly encouraged to progress into Higher Education. One student had this to say:
“It was during one of these sessions, whereby a Muslim female Makerere University administrator adorned in hijab addressed us.....I felt so inspired....if she could make it, so could I, I thought to myself.....Her talk inspired the female students especially the Muslim girls and informed us of the affirmative action policies like the Carnegie female scholarship initiative that was available for students from marginalized districts and from deprived family backgrounds.”

(Bachelor of Education, yr. 3, age 23)

There were very few successful and established Muslim women in the society whom the younger generation could emulate from. One student had these comments to make;

“I remember when I was in secondary school and they invited a female administrator from Makerere University to give a career talk. I felt so inspired since she was dressed in Islamic attire and it was then I decided that I had to work hard to go the University, I wish more parents would empathise and let their children attend all career talks”. (Bachelor of Commerce student, year 1)

“Other than my sisters I was also inspired by the female government officials who were Members of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers. If they could do it, why not me? There were also quite a number of Muslims in this year’s Parliament............... should be around 20 or more if I am not mistaken and this is a great achievement for Muslim women who had always been under looked at because they lacked representation. These should be our role models to inspire us to achieve the best of our ability...........eh......it didn’t begin now.........even in Islamic history some of the notable scholars were women like Aisha, the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) beloved wife.....hmmh...men came from other states to seek knowledge from her” (Master of Arts in Economics, yr. 1, age 25)

The student who gave the excerpt above was a postgraduate in Rural development was inspired by her elder sisters who had good well-paying professions that enabled them lead a good life with high standards of living. She was motivated to be the same, live in a large, spacious and beautiful house, drive an expensive vehicle and dress in the latest and most fashionable clothes.

5.6 HOW THE MUSLIM WOMEN WERE ABLE TO OVERCOME THE BARRIERS

Despite the numerous problems identified from the literature review and voiced by respondents at the interviews, the study was able to establish factors that helped the
Muslim women in Uganda overcome potential barriers to progress into higher education

5.6.1 RESILIENCE AND FOCUS ON ACHIEVING BETTER

The study established that several respondents admitted that their families had to survive on incomes received from agricultural produce and this was made increasingly difficult with the nature of the polygamous families where the breadwinner would have to probably cater for numerous wives and children. The option of pursuing further studies became impossible when one respondent’s father died when she was 13 and her mother had to bring up eleven children from meagre sources. Her father left several wives and the land wrangles left them practically homeless. She was forced into marriage at an early age, she had only made it to primary 6 (Year 5 UK) and though she had the basic reading and writing skills, her husband did not allow her to go back to school. She ended up raising a family and since her husband’s income as a garage mechanic could not meet the bills, she opted for applying for a cleaning job at the University that she had now done for the past ten years. It was much later that colleagues encouraged her to study. She sat the mature age entry exam, passed and did the diploma in secretarial studies. She was currently a departmental secretary of a faculty. She recalls;

“The journey has been long but worthwhile......I am so glad that I decided to continue with my studies despite the financial constraints. The little money I earned as a cleaner helped me through......I am also glad that Makerere University introduced the mature age entry scheme......otherwise how would people like me make it to University.... (she beams with pride)...I won’t let my children joke around with their education...it has made me achieve the impossible!” (Makerere University Secretary, age 43)

Other than Agriculture as a means of livelihood, other respondents mainly the ones from a mixed background (Retired Administrator, age 68) whose grandfather was a
retail merchant bought and sold all sorts of merchandise from clothing to groceries and spices. Her grandmother fled from the family home and ended up having to raise her children alone. As a grandchild, the respondent was brought up under strict supervision. She was able to attend high school but had to drop out after ‘O’ levels due to financial constraints. She attended a tailoring course and opted for marriage at the age of sixteen. She recalls that:

“Had I been given the option to study I would have, I now have two daughters and both are in their late twenties, both have graduated and are pursuing their postgraduate. There is no pressure on them to get married because I do not want them to go what I went through at a young age. I am glad I got an opportunity to complete my studies after marriage and children......it’s one of my greatest achievements” (Retired Administrator, age 68)

Raised by her mother, another mixed race respondent (Diploma graduate, age 60) recalled that her father had passed away at an early age. Her late father had emigrated from Yemen and settled in Uganda as an Imam (spiritual leader). Her Baganda mother was a farmer who also traded in petty items. She remembered having to wake up early to help prepare samosas (Triangular savoury pastries) that her mother sold to earn a livelihood. She was very bright but attained education up to Standard 8 (Year 7 UK) and aspired to be a nurse. She got married at the age of 15 and never went to school again. With the mature age scheme at Makerere University, she was later able to enrol for a diploma course in secretarial studies.

One respondent who came from the war-affected area of northern Uganda had lost her parents at an early age and was one of the youngest in the family considers herself lucky because her elder siblings were able to chip in and see her through her primary and secondary education. Though she made it to University on a government bursary, her siblings were still responsible for her upkeep. She recalls:
“I grew up an orphan but I didn’t really feel it because my siblings were always there to support me. Their moral, financial and physical support made me what I am today...............no matter what I become or achieve I will always attribute it to my siblings...May the Almighty Allah continue to protect and guide them......all I can do is make du’a (supplication or prayer) for them so that they get the best gift which is paradise in the hereafter” (Bachelor of Laws, yr. 3, age 23)

Another respondent who came from a family with a higher income bracket admits that her family’s favourable financial position was able to see her through her education. She considered herself lucky because both her parents were educated to tertiary level and were both civil servants with good paying jobs. Though the situation was tough at various levels, her parents valued education and strove to give her the best. She made it to University on private sponsorship, graduated with a B.A Arts Degree and was currently working as an administrative Assistant at Makerere University (Makerere University Administrator, age 48).

5.6.2 POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS FEMALE EDUCATION AMONGST FAMILIES

The study established that several respondents cited that with globalization, many nations promoted literacy as a tool for social development. Women were encouraged to be at the forefront of these changes (Government official, age 40). An administrator working at Makerere University had this to say:

“My parents were both graduates of Makerere University so they strove to ensure that I and all my siblings male and female were given opportunity to pursue their education to whatever levels they wanted to...some of us used the opportunity while others dropped out and wasted it” (Master of Arts in Economics, aged 25).

One respondent whose father was a sugar cane farmer recalls the quote her father always told his children:
“The only inheritance I can provide for you is education because I have nothing else to leave for you. My daughters take this as my gift to you to use throughout your lives...” (Assistant Lecturer, age 33).

Positive gender discrimination gave rise to a general change in attitude about female education. Respondents whose parents were educated to a higher level strove to ensure equal opportunities are availed to their children irrespective of their gender.

5.6.3 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICIES

The study affirmed that many respondents admitted that the positive government policies in place were a great facilitator that saw many overcome barriers and achieve Higher Education. Those identified on the online questionnaire included; the government sponsorships, motivation of head teachers and bursaries including the 1.5 additional points for female students. Many respondents also cited the introduction of the UPE (Universal Primary Education) and recently the USE (Universal Secondary Education) that has enabled many female students progress further into education. The Carnegie scholarship for deprived families has also helped needy students into University education (Government official, age 45). One student who had been a beneficiary of the Carnegie female Scholarship initiative had this to say:

“My father died when I was a child and I was brought up by his sister. My poor aunt struggled to see me through secondary school......I managed to get enough points to gain admission for the Bachelor of Community Psychology course but it would have to be as a private student. Since my aunt couldn’t afford it I had resigned to fate......luckily a friend of my Aunt who worked at Makerere University then told her about the Carnegie scheme and encouraged me to put in an application......... since I was considered one of the deprived students (orphaned and coming from a marginalised district)......It was Allah I think that blessed this....... because I was given the scholarship for three years and during which they catered for my fees, books and living expenses. I am so thankful to Allah and my aunt’s friend who mentioned it to us. Although I am not working at the moment because I got married and have a young child....I do know that my degree will come in useful at a later stage....” (Community Psychology graduate, age 29)
The Positive discrimination environment was able to ensure that one of the respondents currently an administrative assistant at Makerere University had an equal opportunity to pursue Higher Education. The 1.5 scheme that boosted girls ‘A’ level results saw many girls gain admission into University in addition to pursuing courses that were mainly male dominated like engineering and architecture.

5.6.4 HOW THE INFLUENCE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY WERE OVERCOME TO PROGRESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The study relates family influences as a great determiner to one’s progress into higher education. One respondent confirms that her progress into Higher Education was a result of her late marriage. She was currently the third wife in a polygamous relationship. Her late marriage though was seen as a social taboo. She also attributed it to the lack of educated Muslim men to marry.

“Many Muslim girls have set a high criteria for themselves......I spent a long time being single and when the opportunity came along to get married, I accepted being in a polygamous relationship. There are a few Muslim men who are educated and responsible.....so why not share? Most young girls think they can do better that’s why they end up getting married to non-Muslims.....”

When asked that hadn’t this marriage been a barrier to her progress in Higher Education since her husband wasn’t supportive, she had this to add;

“Yes I agree that.......mmh...... yes he hasn’t been able to pay my fees but the fact that he is providing the basics is enough.....I can now concentrate on getting avenues to pay my fees. The most important thing is the honour I have achieved by being a wife....” (Master of Environmental Economics, yr. 2, age 32)

The study established that most of the University Muslim females would prefer single educated Muslim men who were scarce so rather than remain single she opted for a polygamous relationship. She currently had a toddler son and had embarked on a Master’s programme but because of his numerous responsibilities her husband was not able to support her with the fees and she had to struggle on her own to cater for her
tuition which was not easy. Despite all the economic constraints she faces she prefers being in a polygamous relationship to being a single woman. Islamically she is aware that the husband has to provide equally to his wives since she has equal rights to the other wives in the relationship but to safeguard the honour of being a wife she accepted to cater for all her economic needs.

5.6.5 OVERCOMING GEOGRAPHICAL BARRIERS (RURAL/URBAN SET UP) TO PROGRESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The study identifies how the geographical location of the respondents may influence their progress into higher education. One respondent of the study recalls the fact that since her primary school was located in a rural area, the reality and hardship that she faced having to get up early every morning to fetch water at a distance to bathe and wash her clothing all served to make her a stronger and more resilient person. She stated that:

“The well was several miles away and if we didn’t fetch water in our jerricans (plastic containers) for our use...the teachers usually caned us. This toughened us and made us more independent. Later as a married woman, I could juggle my marital responsibilities, work and studies.” (Assistant Lecturer, age 33)

Another respondent noted that:

“I used to hear of stories whereby students would miss school the whole day because of loafing in the town centre.... this was unheard of in our rural schools.....we had to be in school every day...this disciplined us and subsequently enabled us to perform better and gain access into University” (Master of Environmental Economics, yr. 2, age 32).

The study affirms that rural schools in most cases were at the countryside and offered less distraction for teenagers of secondary school than those who studied in the town area. Those who were serious would generally perform better.
5.6.6 WORKING WHILE STUDYING

Emergent from the interviews was the fact that most of the current postgraduate students were actually working and had taken time off to pursue their studies. She had this to say:

“My first year of work saw me sponsor my younger brother and sister through University. It was tough but after that, I managed to save a year’s salary to pay my fees for the Masters in Economics. I am now in my second year and hopefully I will complete in another year’s time. I have to report to work within a year but what has helped me was the paid study leave. I am glad I have been able to pursue my postgraduate study...this is what is going to help me build my future and that of my family...” (Masters in Environmental Economics, aged 32).

The study established from the interviews that some respondents were lucky to be attached to companies that sponsored their further education. With regard to this, the researcher acknowledges that Makerere University sponsored her postgraduate diploma in Counselling because she was an employee of the institution and was able to provide justification for pursuing the course. Other respondents had to save money from their salaries to pay for the courses and one student admitted that she had to work for two years before she could save enough money to pursue a Masters in Environmental Economics.

5.6.7 FAITH, BELIEF IN ONESELF AND DETERMINATION TO SUCCEED

The study established that several respondents felt they were able to overcome the barriers and progress further into education because of their faith and trust in God. Many believed that their God consciousness, self-discipline, and determination were instrumental in helping them overcome their educational barriers. One respondent had these comments to make:
“I always put my trust in Allah in everything I did. I prayed without fail and practiced my religion without fear. I was aiming for prosperity so I set my goals quite high; I was not afraid to take risks and took each challenge as it came along....this I think was my greatest tool.” (Graduate assistant and researcher, age 27)

One respondent attributes her success to herself motivation. She always saw the sky as the limit. She chose to do Law through the diploma scheme entrance. She studied with her son at Makerere University but it did not stop there, she recalled this:

“I went to the Law development centre in Kampala, Uganda and performed exceptionally well soon after I got a scholarship to pursue my Masters in Law at the George Washington University in the U.S. It was an amazing experience....if I can do it at my age, why not the younger Muslim girls? Tell the young Muslim girls to never give up, with ambition and motivation to succeed one can move mountains.” (Practicing Solicitor and graduate of Makerere University, age 60)

She was currently running her own law firm in Kampala and one of her passions was motivating young Muslim girls to achieve. She always surfs the internet for scholarship opportunities and these she would forward to all Muslim girls on her mailing list. She believes there are many opportunities available for Muslim girls but many did not know where to look for them. She also encouraged women to create their own jobs, be self-employed, and not rely on the limited job market.

5.7 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

The study identified 70 respondents (see appendix 6) who took part in the group and in depth interviews. Some of the respondents were identified using the BOS online questionnaire and others through snow ball sampling. Consequently emerging from the data obtained were four major themes and these included: Social-Cultural, Historical, Economic, Government (Political) and Educational factors. The most important enablers highlighted were Social and cultural factors and more specifically family ethos and attitude. Religion was surprisingly more of an enabler than a barrier. Social issues rotating around the family circle like marriage, children, polygamy, HIV/AIDS and
gender issues were emphasized by most of the respondents. Economic factors determined by the Social Economic status, poverty due to dependence on agriculture, social pressures, competitive job markets and materialism were all barriers to their educational progress. Political or Government affirmative action policies that included educational factors like the additional 1.5 points to girls at ‘A’ level results were major enablers whilst the poor government initiatives to develop better facilitated schools in both the rural and urban areas were barriers. Through a case study of Makerere University, some of the barriers and enablers affecting the Ugandan Muslim Women’s progress into Higher Education were identified.

The study established from chapter 4 and the conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2) were several themes that emerged which were related to Social cultural factors the paramount one being the influence of religion on Muslim women’s pursuit of Higher Education. The study acknowledges that most Muslim researchers had strong opposing views on the influence of religion on educational attainment (Mernissi 2003, Badawi 1995, Ahmad 2008). Whilst Mernissi (2003) analysed its impact on Moroccan women negatively, Badawi (1995) and Ahmad (2008) cited positive influences of religion toward educational attainment. The interviews established that several respondents cited religion as both an enabler and a barrier. Enablers since Islam’s position on educational attainment for both men and women are viewed as a human right. The study acknowledges that the Qur’an possesses numerous verses that give strong evidence towards Islam’s stance on seeking knowledge. Contemporary Muslim scholars like Akram (2007) researched on Women Scholars of Islam and developed a book with 40 volumes illustrating different women in Islamic history whose zeal for knowledge took them everywhere and they were able to leave land marks with regard to scholarly literature in Islam.
The study revealed that one of the greatest limitations to Muslim women’s access to Higher Education was the socio-economic status of the people which reflected low employment levels, low incomes, low investments, dependence on Agriculture and lack of skills and technology which were common barriers to Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education. A number of respondents interviewed were able to identify their social economic status as either an enabler or hindrance to higher education. Well-established Muslim families who had earned their wealth through international trade of coffee, cotton and Ivory greatly promoted during the presidential era of Idi Amin Dada (1970-1979) saw many families flourish in wealth and social economic status. For these families obtaining education in tertiary institutions in Uganda or abroad was not a problem (Hon Member of Parliament, age 60).

The study established that those respondents who were reliant on agriculture were not so lucky and many struggled to ensure that their children obtained a basic education. Several respondents cited poverty as the main hindrance to their educational progress (Group interviews). A number of the respondents came from poor socio-economic backgrounds and many had to struggle to pay their way through primary and secondary education due to expensive Higher Education. The study affirms that 80% of Uganda's economy is agricultural based growing coffee, tea and cotton as the main export crops which generated 90% of export earnings.

Further to this most women in rural Uganda played an active role in the agricultural economy and many were seemingly the breadwinners (Group interview). Although Uganda had mineral deposits of copper and cobalt, the mining sector was now only a minor contributor to the economy. This coupled with the political upheavals of the 1970s and the troubles of the 1980s left the economy in disarray (Mamdani 1976,
Mukherjee 1985). However, economic reforms since 1986 have resulted in important progress with the government making significant strides in liberalizing the markets. These reforms improved the economy and gained the confidence of international lending agencies (Government official, age 60).

The study identified numerous barriers to Muslim girls’ educational progress with one of the main ones being that the Ugandan government provided limited scholarships to public Universities and at a very low quota that did not adequately cater for the female populace. Persuasive evidence from a report, World Bank (2007) demonstrated that gender equality in education was central to economic development. Despite more than two decades of data evidence of what works in improving gender equality, progress on the ground remained slow and uneven across Uganda. Overall, it was realised that Education was the critical path that needed to be undertaken to accelerate gender equality and the empowerment of Muslim women in Uganda (Nannyonjo 2007, Wood 2008). So it was important for the government to step up and provide better scholarship opportunities for increased female enrolment in University.

The study affirms that human rights mandates set the precedence of the research hence other researchers like Osler and Starkey (2005) and Arnot (2009) recognized that a common understanding and observance of human rights issues depended significantly on education. The study was able to highlight various strategies the Ugandan government was implementing toward the advancement of female education. It was quite clear from the interviews that the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) had in this instance, made a profound contribution towards widening participation and the advancement of gender issues in education in sub-Saharan Africa and more specifically in Uganda.
The study acknowledges that similarly, career guidance and counselling were factors identified amongst many respondents that would be great facilitators for educational progress. The study revealed that despite its importance, very few educational institutions had established professional guidance and counselling services. Many of the respondents recognised that there was a need to develop interest through active sensitization from an early age preferably primary school. Most primary and secondary schools in Uganda still lacked the basic guidance and counselling services that would be able to offer advice to Muslim girls to progress further for economic empowerment and be able to participate in politics as decision makers.

The study established further that respondents indicated a strong demand for secondary school guidance and counselling programs that would raise self-awareness, including understanding and appreciation of self, understanding the emotional and physical dangers of abuse, HIV/AIDS and sex education, dating and relationship issues, time management, coping with peer pressure, decision-making, crisis handling and managing life’s events: Interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, peer counselling, career exploration, school adjustment, investigating the world of work, job seeking and job keeping skills. This was especially important for University Muslim female students who succumbed to peer pressures of dating older men, due to financial security (Group interview).

The study identified another major theme within Historical factors like immigration and imported culture from the Arabs who settled and inter married with the indigenous Ugandans. Many of them were not keen on secular education since they felt that women were to be home makers and child bearers. Other historical factors which were barriers included the civil wars in the 80s and rebel activities in the North of Uganda including
the expulsion of Asians from Uganda in the early 70’s which created a gap in the
growth and establishment of educational facilities.

Conclusively, the interviews were able to identify the main enablers which were both
physical and psychological. Apart from the government affirmative action policies a
great enabler to women’s progress in higher education was career guidance and good
role models within the families and society. Emotional support from family and high
self-esteem were also great enablers identified by the women. Despite the trials and
hardships faced in their educational journeys most of them were able to overcome them
by having resilience and focus on achieving better, positive attitudes towards female
education, embracing and supporting affirmative action policies, working while
studying, faith and belief in oneself and the determination to succeed against all odds.
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter will give a critical account of how this research helps us to understand and critique the work of Bronfenbrenner (2005). Similarly the chapter will highlight how Bronfenbrenner’s work aided the study in understanding the interdependent and complex nature of the factors at play within the case study of Makerere University. The chapter will also discuss some critical potential solutions to the problems in accessing HE which go beyond the mainstream and all the issues which have been identified.

This thesis sought to address a significant gap in the literature on Muslim women’s education in Uganda by applying Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) Ecological Cycle (see fig 2.5.1) to explore the interplay of interconnected factors that influence her progress into Higher Education. The transcripts outlined in the study are inspirational and serve to challenge dominant stereotyped assumptions, prevalent in both the literature and institutions, about the lives of Muslim women and their families. Previous researches on Women (Ahmad 2001, 2006b, Ezati 2002, Kwesiga 2002, Afkhami and Friedl 1997) indicate that very few studies have explored the motivations, experiences and identities of Muslim women in Higher Education and the impact of these experiences on Muslim women’s religious and cultural identities, their subsequent relationships with their families, and personal attitudes towards relationships.

6.2 MAJOR THEMES OF THE STUDY RELATED TO BRONFENBRENNER’S ECOLOGICAL MODEL

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model (2005) was deemed most appropriate in identifying factors that may have been responsible for the underrepresentation of the Muslim
woman in Higher Education. Through an adaptation of Bronfenbrenner’s model, several themes emerged linking the various concepts that affect the child’s development within the environment to those that affect Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education as illustrated in fig 2.5.1. Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model theory (2005) relates a child’s development with the different relationships that the child has with the environment. The environment was divided into four levels; the Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem and Chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Within these systems, other themes emerged like the Economic system, Social conditions, History, Laws, Culture, Family and neighbourhoods.

These themes were able to generate a conceptual framework using the reviewed Literature. Subsequently the Literature review was able to generate several themes that were analysed using the conceptual framework developed at fig 2.5.2. The identified themes were then related to the study. Although the study was specific toward Muslim Women in Uganda, the literature review established that the themes were synonymous to all women in general globally. Those specifically identified in Uganda summarised several contributing factors to the underrepresentation of Muslim women in Higher Education in a conceptual framework illustrated in fig 2.5.2.

Basic elements, variables and relationships that affect women’s education in general were identified and most were directly linked or interrelated. The dependent variable, which in this case was the educated or uneducated women, has been influenced by various independent variables; these were be categorized into Human Rights, Environmental, Social, Economic, Political, Historical and Religious factors. Dependent variables included age, marital status, and the ethnicity, number of children
per family, mode of University entry, faculty, course, profession, rural/urban schooling and their influence towards the independent variables.

Diagram 6.2.1: Model linked to Bronfenbrenner’s cycle that is related to the conceptual framework that was developed using the mixed methods feminist empirical research findings

Diagram 6.2.1 encapsulates the findings of the mixed methods feminist empirical research that adapted Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model (2005) and the emerging themes from the Literature review and conceptual framework developed in chapter two (see Figure 2.10). There were six categories of key factors developed which rotated around the themes of Human rights, Social/Cultural factors, Economic factors, Historical factors, Government policies and Educational factors. The mixed methods research was based on the feminist perspective whereby Muslim women’s voices were used to capture the interplay of connecting factors that were responsible for their
underrepresentation in the field of Higher Education. The conceptual framework of the study also adapted Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model theory that relates a child’s development with the different relationships that the child has with the environment (see fig 2.5.1). Closely related to the conceptual framework was a study of the different complex layers of the environment, which had a different effect on the child’s development.

The diagram 6.2.1 similarly highlights the five parts of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model namely the Microsystem, the Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem and the Chronosystem that could be applied to the different factors that influence Muslim women’s representation in Higher Education. The structures in the Microsystem were similar to those that affect female education within the conceptual framework. These include family relations, friends, peers, school, the neighbourhood, or childcare environments. In the Exosystem layer were extended family, family networks, mass media, workplaces, neighbours, family friends, community health systems, legal services, social welfare services. This layer relates to the Social Cultural factors that affect women’s representation in Higher Education. Although Bronfenbrenner’s model (2005) did not highlight the environmental influence of social culture and tradition to the psychological development of the child, Social-Cultural factors had some of the strongest influences towards the representation of the Ugandan Muslim woman in the field of Higher Education and this was seen in the conceptual framework that was developed using the literature review.

Whereas earlier development theories sought answers for outcomes in immediate familial or social surroundings like those of Freud and Erikson (Burns 2002), Bronfenbrenner’s scope of development influences knows no bounds and this make
his model difficult to apply in a balanced way. Similarly the researcher found it difficult to collect so much information because with the breadth of data available and it was also challenging to hierarchize according to the relative importance of development influence.

Although the study agreed with the main concept of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory which claims that social interactions like biological interactions are always part of a larger environmental system where each person would continuously be in interaction with a set of complex social relationships, the main problem of this study was identifying and conceptualizing this multiplicity of sociocultural and environmental factors in a logical and comprehensive way. Previous research on Muslim women in most countries has already shown that education and the securing of academic qualifications is highly valued (Ahmad and Tyrer 2006, Dyhouse 2006, Ezati 2002).

However, the relatively lower rates of Higher Education participation amongst Asian and African women in comparison to women from other parts of the World have led some researchers to conclude that ‘culture’, religion and patriarchal constraints within Muslim communities play instrumental roles in restricting Muslim women’s educational and economic participation. Recent research exploring these discrepancies suggests that the issues are more complex and cannot be reduced to single factors or themes and these had to be analysed as a complex interplay of interconnected factors (Brah, 1993, 1996; Dale et al, 2002; Ahmad et al, 2003, Bronfenbrenner 2005, Comer 2004).

The Bristol Online Survey was able to establish some of the enablers that encouraged the Muslim females to progress into Higher Education. The factors were best summarised using Bronfenbrenner’s model of the Microsystem layer that encompasses
the family, classroom, peers and siblings. This included support from the parents and immediate family members who believed in their ability to achieve. One respondent cited her progress into Higher Education was due to her mother who believed in her and provided a conducive environment for her/them to study. She was also a role model who was hard working and focussed.

The study was able to apply Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) Exosystem layer to illustrate the influence of the school board, neighbourhoods and mass media. One respondent in chapter 5 attributed her success to the motivation of the head teacher and teachers of the school she studied from. Further to this the Macrosystem layer of the ecological model which covered the Laws, Culture, Economic system, Social conditions and History of a community reflects the main themes identified from the study. With regard to this, one respondent felt that culture was a hindrance and that the support from her mum who believed in educating a girl was what saw her through. Her mum had to prove to the traditionalists that a girl could also study and remain modest and God-fearing. The ecological layer illustrates the political and government policies like the Universal Primary and Universal Secondary education which included the 1.5 additional points is what enabled many female respondents to achieve an education. The Carnegie scholarship offered by Makerere University as part of the female scholarship initiative for deprived families encouraged many Muslim females to get a University education (see chapter 4 and 5).

The study was able to relate to Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) model which analysed factors that affected female education which were similar to those found within the conceptual framework of the research (see fig 2.5.2) and were part of the research findings. Adapted from Bronfenbrenner’s theory that demonstrated a developing
context of multiple reciprocal interactions in a continuous fashion over time between the child, family, neighbourhood, school and community, factors that had been mentioned frequently in the face to face in-depth interviews also included family relations, friends, peers, the school, the neighbourhood, or childcare environments.

Other relationships analysed similar to those identified in the interviews included those between the child’s teacher and his parents, between his church and his neighbourhood, his family, classroom, siblings and peers. Similar to the Mesosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s cycle, the study also identified the influence of marriage, family, children and siblings as factors that affected her progress into higher education. Similar to Bronfenbrenner’s Microsystem layer which looked at how relationships had influenced the child’s development, the study also analysed the closest relationships first, the parents effect on his/her beliefs and behaviour and vice versa. Other external factors, which were also identified in the study, included the people and institutions that the women interacted with within the environment, which also affected her progress in education (see fig 6.2.1).

The research identified relationships in fig 6.21 that are similar to those that link the Microsystems to the Exosystem layer of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model which state that the child is a product of his environment and this refers to the closest relationships, which includes where they live and the interactions the child has with their immediate surroundings. The structures in the Microsystem were similar to those identified by some of the respondents of the interview that affected her progress in education and include people and objects in an individual’s immediate environment especially those closest to the child like the family (parents and siblings) relations, friends, peers, school, the neighbourhood, or childcare environments.
At this level, relationships impacted her in two directions, both away and toward her (see fig 6.2.1). This was a reoccurring theme in the group and face-to-face interviews. Although a few respondents cited a positive influence of marriage towards the progress of their education, many felt that it was a hindrance especially with regard to the presence of children and other family responsibilities whilst others admitted that the family support and encouragement was a vital source of their progress. Similarly Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model also establishes the influence of the family in the micro system level of the model, similarly family support became an emerging issue in both the group and one to one interviews. The respondents further identified gender and Social class relation as part of the emerging theme under Social-Cultural factors that reflected the general preference for male children over that of females. Whilst males went to school, the females remained at home to do the domestic chores.

6.3 USES AND MISUSES OF BRONFENBRENNER’S ECOLOGICAL THEORY

Until his death in 2005, Bronfenbrenner’s theory of human development was gradually evolving. Bronfenbrenner, as a self-reflective theorist acknowledged the changing nature of his theory and re-assessed, revised and extended and even renounced some of his earlier conceptions made in 1979 Bronfenbrenner (1989). His first theory emphasized aspects of the context which this study adopted that included the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem layers of the ecological cycle, which although he focused too much on, later he acknowledged his error for overlooking the role the person played in his or her own development (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). These aspects of Bronfenbrenner’s theory are similar to the researcher’s conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2) as illustrated in figure 6.2.1 which mainly focused on contextual matters that impact the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into higher education.
Moreover in later theories, Bronfenbrenner (1989, 1999) focused more on person-context interrelatedness where he laid emphasis on the processes of human development (Tudge et al 2009). Bronfenbrenner referred to ‘‘process’’ as that which could explain the connection between some aspect of the context like the culture or social class, religion or geographical location or some aspect of the individual like the gender, ethnicity and marital status all working toward a common interest (Bronfenbrenner 1988). These were similar to the main factors identified as the barriers or enablers to Ugandan Muslim women’s pursuit of higher education. These were later referred to as proximal processes which were key factors in the development of Bronfenbrenner’s theory from the early 90’s to 2005 (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, 1995, 1999; Bronfenbrenner and Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998).

As mentioned earlier in the thesis (see chapter 2, pgs. 55-63), the introduction of the Process-Person-Context-Time model (PPCT for short) became the essence of his theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Bronfenbrenner and Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006). Although this study was based on an earlier version of his theory (Bronfenbrenner 1999), it was important for the researcher to also base the study on some of the major concepts of the developed version (Bronfenbrenner 2005). In either case the study acknowledges that neither the field nor theory was well served because the research used an earlier or partial version of Bronfenbrenner’s theory. Most case studies that adopted Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory had conceptual unintelligibility because they borrowed ideas from his theory as it developed for example ideas were taken from the 1970’s, 1980’s and others from the 1990’s. Fig 6.2.1 illustrates this by combining both the ecological theory in fig 2.5.1 and the conceptual framework of the research in fig 2.5.2.
Despite this, the research bases some of its discussion on the theory in its developed form with the interrelations among the PPCT concepts (see chapter 2 p 55). The first P stands for ‘Process’ which refers to human development taking place through processes of a myriad of reciprocal interactions between the person and other persons, objects or symbols in the immediate external environment. Proximal processes refer to these interactions which occur regularly over long periods of time like the family unit, school, relatives, friends, neighbourhoods and the religious (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 1998). The activities may include play time with children, children activities amongst themselves, reading, learning new skills and all interactions that go on as the child develops. Some of the identified themes in this study classified these interactions which could be likened to the engines of development which make an individual make sense of their world and understand their place in it in a series of interconnections that play a part in establishing who they are (Tudge et al 2009).

The conceptual framework in fig 2.5.2 illustrates ‘Process’ under the Social Cultural factors which look at religion, cultural practices, geographical environment, health issues and others which are similar to Bronfenbrenner’s Microsystem in fig 2.5.1 that looks at the earliest immediate processes in a person’s life like the family, school, peers, religion, workplace and neighbourhood which play a major part in changing the prevailing order whilst fitting into a new one. Nonetheless the nature of the proximal processes would vary according to the different aspects of the individual as established by the research in chapter 4 and 5 which identified voices in both spatial (microsystem, exosystem, mesosystem and macrosystem) where respondents were able to relate their personal experiences at home, school, work, and within the cultural society and temporal contexts (chronosystem) though not emphasised as much as the spatial was
equally important because of the dynamic changes cultures and societies undergo due to time and historical events (Daniels et al 2012).

The research identifies both spatial and temporal contexts in chapter 4 and 5 that are interrelated with the shifting cultures and beliefs and have impacted the Ugandan Muslim women’s under representation in the field of higher education. Bronfenbrenner’s theory further established that, ”The form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes effecting development vary systematically as a joint function of the characteristics of the developing person; of the environment, both immediate and more remote, in which the processes are taking place; the nature of the developmental outcomes under consideration; and the social continuities and changes occurring over time through the life course and the historical period during which the person has lived” (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998:996). The research acknowledged that in order to study the two prepositions above, a simultaneous investigation was needed referred to as Process-Person-Context-Time Model (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998:996) which the study highlighted but did not go into much detail since the study was based on the earlier version of Bronfenbrenner’s contextual theory (see chapter 2, pgs. 46-55).

If the study was to be guided by the bio ecological theory; all four elements of the PPCT model should have been be present. But since this research design, did not give an adequate assessment of one or more of the elements, the study had to clearly acknowledge this so as to preserve the integrity of the theory. The second ‘P’ stands for ‘Person’ which Bronfenbrenner acknowledged as the relevance of biological and genetic aspects of the person (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, 2005) where he devoted more attention, to the personal characteristics of the individual towards any social situation
which included demand, resource, and force characteristics. The demand characteristics included “personal stimulus” features, like age, gender, skin colour, and physical appearance (Tudge et al. 2009).

Nevertheless the mixed methods research using the BOS online questionnaire (see appendix 3) identified these characteristics under variables like age, marital status, family and children, ethnicity and educational background, chapter 4 of the study was able to establish a quantitative base to carry out further qualitative investigation in chapter 5 using the in depth interviews. The personal characteristics were identified to be influential in terms of initial interactions that would be able to answer the key research questions addressing the Ugandan Muslim woman’s under representation in the field of higher education.

The resource characteristics, on the other hand were not immediately apparent but these could be established during the group and face to face in depth interviews in chapter 5 because they relate partly to the mental and emotional resources such as past experiences, skills, and intelligence and also to social and material resources (for e.g. access to good food, housing, caring parents, educational opportunities appropriate to the needs of the particular society, and so on). The conceptual framework in fig 2.5.2 identified these as part of the Economic factors whilst the ecological cycle fig 2.5.1 identified them in the Ecosystem layer which included the Economic, Political, Education, Government and Religious system and finally both were encapsulated in fig 6.2.1 where both were combined. The final force characteristics which include differences of temperament, motivation, persistence, could be likened to motivational matters that may have played a huge part in encouraging the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into higher education. From the findings of the study although two women
may have had equal resource characteristics, their developmental paths would be quite different if one was motivated to succeed and persist in tasks and the other was not motivated hence giving up easily (see chapter 5, p 213).

These force characteristics could be identified in many of the group and in depth interviews in chapter 4 and 5. Bronfenbrenner (2005) also established in his later writings that individuals played a role in changing their context through a passive or active role. Passive in that a person changes the environment simply by being in it, to the extent that others react to him or her differently on the basis of demand characteristics such as age, gender, and ethnicity or active in the ways in which the person changes the environment through her resource characteristics, whether physical, mental, or emotional or proactive where she may change the environment due to a desire and drive to do so like women emancipation projects like FAWE (Form for African Women Educationalists) highlighted in chapter 1, 2, 4 and 5. Within the environment, or context which the study effectively adapted, involves four interrelated systems which were termed as the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem (see fig 2.5.1).

What Bronfenbrenner took for granted was the simultaneous effect of the systems through a period of time and these could be highlighted by the external factors in the environment that impacted family members and as a result these also impacted the Muslim woman’s progress into higher education. For example the study looked at different ethnic groups in Uganda and though one group like the Baganda for example share a set of values for any particular value system to have any influence on a developing person it has to be experienced within one or more of the microsystems in
which that person is situated which would include the family, school, peers, religion, work and neighbours (see chapter 2, p 46).

The final element of the PPCT model is time. The study was able to highlight one aspect of time which was the macrotime or the chronosystem discussed earlier as a temporal context which refers to the fact that developmental processes are likely to vary according to the specific historical events that are occurring as the developing individuals are at one age or another these could include the civil wars and other historical factors that may have influenced the Ugandan Muslim woman’s progress into higher education. Elder (1974, 1996) captured and demonstrated the significant variation in the developmental paths of people from two units, born in the same geographical area but just 10 years apart. However the study did not include, Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998) time sub factors like the micro-time which occurred during the course of some specific activity or interaction and the meso-time which included the extent to which activities and interactions occur with some consistency in the developing a person’s environment (see chapter 2, pgs. 55-63).

The study recognised that although separate ethnic groups experienced the civil war in Uganda some geographical areas in the rural villages were hardly affected, unlike those in urban areas who had a totally different experience with rape, looting and murder as reflected in chapter 5. Time, as well as timing, is equally important because all aspects of the PPCT model can be thought of in terms of relative constancy and change for e.g. during the war those Ugandan families that fled to Kenya were offered better jobs and educational facilities hence developing better individuals. Cultures also evolve over time because in some periods of historical time the rates of change were much faster than at others as experienced and reflected in chapter 5 due to the civil war and other
historical factors like the expulsion of the Asian community from Uganda in the early 70’s. Most of the Asians who were expelled from Uganda in the early 70’s settled in the UK (Leicester mainly) and were able to establish successful business ventures becoming powerful entrepreneurs (Mamdani 1996).

The research as noted earlier (chapter 2, pgs. 46-55) was heavily based on the conceptual version of Bronfenbrenner’s theory and therefore did not include each of the elements of the PPCT model to qualify being termed as a complete test of the model. This study has applied a partial test which is possible but should only be identified as such. The model also proves the impossibility of treating a single study like this one based on the mature version of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory (2005). However since the study adopts a mixed methods approach focusing on the questionnaire and in depth interviews to reflect the respondents experiences and interactions (chapter 4 and 5) relevant for the study therefore developing their voices in relation to the underrepresentation of the Ugandan Muslim woman in the field of higher education has served its purpose and answered the research questions most appropriately.

The most relevant research that can be comparable to the study is Campbell et al. (2002) and Tudge et al (2003) which used Bronfenbrenner’s theory in its mature form but also were able to include time in their use of the PPCT model basing their research “on Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model in which interactions among personal characteristics, proximal processes, contexts, and time combine to affect developmental outcomes” (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998:278). These processes can be likened to the study’s microsystem factors in fig 6.2.1 which include the family, friends, peers, classroom, religion, work place and neighbours as assessed by early achievement scores from low-income African American families, which meant that it was impossible to
assess the ways in which proximal processes differentially operated in two different macrosystems (Bronfenbrenner 1993). Tudge et al’s (2003) observation research that studied proximal processes of a child with objects, materials, and people within their most common microsystems (home and child-care setting) whose quantitative measurements taken included the parents’ beliefs, the two macrosystems and time over a period of the first, second and third year of school was one of the successful studies that applied Bronfenbrenner’s theory in a systematic fashion (Tudge et al 2003).

The study offers a deeper reflection on how Person characteristics influenced proximal processes would need an assessment of the ways in which a demand characteristic, reflected by age, marital status, ethnicity and geographical location affected the ways in which relevant resource or force characteristics of the respondents of the study, influenced the ways in which they acted and interacted (see chapter 2, pgs. 46-55). Other influences within context would require an evaluation of two microsystems like the home and school and how two macrosystems like the ethnicity and the social economic status compared with their activities and interactions of interest (Tudge et al 2003). For the research to acknowledge the effect of time it should have been a longitudinal study to evaluate the influence of proximal processes in person and context and their outcomes of interest and should have taken into account what was occurring, within the respondents of the study at the current point of historical time and later periods too. This was not possible because the case study was within the period identified by the study and the respondents were those present at the time the field work was conducted over a period of 6 months.

Furthermore, this study has established that very few authors had based their research on the mature form of Bronfenbrenner’s theory (Tudge et al 2009), where they may
have used at least three of the PPCT concepts, including proximal processes, where they presented the theory in its mature form and tested the theoretical assumptions through appropriate research designs. Although Adamsons et al (2007) related her study to the theory by examining biological father/step father involvement by clearly linking them to the four elements of the PPCT model, it was discovered that the study placed certain limitations on the researcher’s ability to implement the PPCT model because it could only consider how long the stepfather had been a part of the family since the variable does not represent the element of time as was conceived by Bronfenbrenner (2005).

Hence with such constraints this study also acknowledges it as a limitation since time (father relationships) could not be measured in this instance and their conceptualization of process may differ from that of Bronfenbrenner because father/child engagement reflects only a reasonable representation of proximal process. Although the study establishes in chapter 4 and 5 how the family were considered a strong enabler to the Muslim Woman’s progress into higher education, the length of time spent between daughter and parents was difficult to measure or establish so it was considered a general factor under the microsystem (social factors like family, parents and siblings see fig 6.2.1). Although Adamsons et al (2007) adequately used the PPCT model they acknowledged minor differences in conceptualization or absence of certain elements, which could be used for future researches in family relationships as reflected in chapter 4 and 5.

The study acknowledges that failure to include the evolution of Bronfenbrenner’s theory would be misrepresentation of the theory (see chapter 2 pgs. 46-55). Although numerous authors focused attention exclusively on one or more of the contextual
‘‘systems’’ in Bronfenbrenner’s theory, many others focused on contextual influences (Tudge et al 2003). None the less, given this conceptualization of the theory, researchers like Singal placed exclusive attention to the various contextual systems while Voydanoff admitted to only using Bronfenbrenner’s ‘‘ecological systems approach as a framework’’ citing Bronfenbrenner (1989), and dealt exclusively with microsystem and mesosystem influences on development (Tudge et al 2009:205).

Nevertheless, none of these studies including this research involved the type of systemic person-process-context analysis for which Bronfenbrenner had argued from 1983 to 1989, let alone any consideration of the mature form of the theory. McDougall et al. (2004) study gives a nearer portrayal of this study because he drew on several of Bronfenbrenner’s papers from the 1990s to describe his bio ecological perspective as one involving the interplay of person characteristics, contextual factors, and proximal processes.

The study found clear relations between person characteristics (age, sex, and academic achievement) which were similar to the variables of this study like gender, age, marital status, ethnicity and educational background. The independent variables also known as contextual factors were analysed in fig 6.2.1 which included socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and the school culture (all working together under the ecosystem hence impacting the progress of the Ugandan Muslim women into higher education) but explicitly treated peer and student-teacher interactions as an aspect of their primary contextual factor (school culture) rather than as proximal processes. Similar to this study, McDougall and her colleagues also ignored the fourth aspect of the PPCT model and, although they noted the problem of conducting a purely cross-sectional study, should have described it as a theoretical limitation (see chapter 2 pgs. 46-55).
Consequently we acknowledge that a correct application of Bronfenbrenner’s theory was necessary in the study since it had an important role to play in developmental and family studies. Failure to do so would mean that it wasn’t tested appropriately and any data arising would confirm that the theory hadn’t been correctly described, and consequently a misrepresented theory could be attacked from non-supportive data. Most studies quoting Bronfenbrenner based it on his theory (model or framework) thus reflecting ignorance of its evolution and changes that occurred between 1979 to 2005.

Researches using a more up-to date version of the theory, from the 1980s, described the importance of Bronfenbrenner’s process as something that linked person and context. Even then, however, despite stating correctly that he termed his theory “ecological systems theory” (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), these researchers like this study, did not actually apply the systems part of the theory in their research even though they claimed their research was based on it. At best, some of the researchers acknowledged the fact that one had to examine the interdependent roles of the developing individuals and the contexts in which they were situated, though others continued to write as though Bronfenbrenner was simply a theorist interested in contextual influences on development (Tudge et al 2009).

Many researches like this one include some contextual variable (social class, for example) and an individual characteristic, such as gender, and may test for class-gender interactions in their outcomes of interest. This study therefore acknowledges that researchers who base their work on a specific theory like Bronfenbrenner’s may not have to use the latest version of that theory or the theory in its entirety (see chapter 2, pgs. 46-55). Researchers can obviously choose to draw on specific concepts from the current theory or on an older version which is applicable in this case since the diagram
6.2.1 was able to provide conceptual or theoretical clarity. Unfortunately most researches (Tudge et al 2009) treat Bronfenbrenner’s theory as though it was simply a theory of microsystem or macrosystem influences on development and thus disregarding the fact that some researchers like myself did not simply apply the mature form of Bronfenbrenner’s theory because it was viewed as being too difficult to translate effectively into any research.

Furthermore, the connections in his theory were not clear and similarly Tudge et al (2009) argue that Bronfenbrenner didn’t reflect any application of an appropriate method in his own research but instead commented on it which was not designed to specifically test a theory. This study contends that it would be impossible to design a study related to Bronfenbrenner that included each and every aspect of the theory, because of its largeness and complexity.

Although this study captured Bronfenbrenner’s contextual properties in figure 6.2.1 and in chapter 4 and 5, other important person characteristics weren’t fully included like demand, force, and resource not forgetting genetic attributes, all within the four different contextual systems, and the three aspects of time (micro, meso, and macro), that would include collecting data over time and positioning it in its historical time, notwithstanding the proximal processes, which are the most important part of the mature theory that rotates around continuous interactions and activities which help develop personalities hence requiring regular data collection (Tudge et al 2009).

The study presents the above arguments but despite this, the researcher reflects that Bronfenbrenner never implied that every aspect had to be included within a study, in fact his opinion was clear that if a study involved the PPCT model, it should focus on proximal processes, shown by their influence of characteristics of the developing
individual and context in which they occur and reflected by the relevant developmental outcomes (see chapter 2, pgs. 46-55). The gender of the child which in the case of this study lays emphasis on the Muslim female could look at her interactions with the parents in relation to the ethnicity, race or social class and these were analysed in relation to the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem layers of the cycle and the effect of the chronosystem as illustrated in fig 6.2.1 using data collected from a mixed methods approach over a period of time which would also serve as an adequate application of Bronfenbrenner’s theory (Tudge et al 2009).

Conclusively the study acknowledges that most of the researchers in the field of human development should not base their studies on the theory if they weren’t taking the relevance of the theory seriously enough. Furthermore Bronfenbrenner’s theory was not only in English, but was also easily accessible. Tudge et al (2009) contends that Bronfenbrenner’s ideas have great potential for developing further researches on human development and therefore should be tested appropriately and not be limited only to contextual influences or the development or person-environment interrelations. Finally the study acknowledges and proposes that the complexity of the myriad of factors influencing a person’s development in Bronfenbrenner’s theory can be analysed in part instead of adapting the whole evolved theory. Researchers would therefore develop various research bases linked to either the spatial (ecological layers) and temporal contexts (chronosystem) or the PPCT model that can be built on and developed to answer complex future human development research questions.

6.4 LINKING BRONFENBRENNER'S MODEL WITH THE BARRIERS AND ENABLERS TO THE PROGRESS OF MUSLIM WOMENS EDUCATION

Through an application of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model, the study was able to illustrate some of the spatial contextual factors associated with the environment that
may affect the progress of Muslim women in higher education. Similarly, these factors could be linked to the major themes that emerged as barriers and enablers to the progress of Muslim women in Higher Education in Uganda. Some of these were illustrated within the conceptual framework established from the literature review and they included Laws and Human rights issues, History, Socio-Cultural conditions, Economic and Political conditions (see fig 2.5.2).

The study revealed that the main limitations to Muslim Women’s access to Higher Education as mentioned in detail in Chapter 4 and 5 and adapted from Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Cycle (fig 2.5.1), the conceptual framework (fig 2.5.2) and the myriad of factors developed from the findings (see fig 6.2.1) were mainly four: Social-Cultural, Historical, Economic and Political factors. Under these major themes, several sub-themes developed from social cultural factors which encompassed traditional culture and the religion of Islam (perceived differently by different families), Gender issues in a patriarchal society, early marriages, Polygamy and extended family, Family attitudes and support, Marriage and family, Socio-economic status, rural urban location and migration, the geographical location, dependence on Agriculture, the influence of HIV/AIDS and government policies, political and historical factors including post colonialism, civil wars, the expulsions of Asians from Uganda, immigration and imported culture from the Middle East and Asia, educational factors like Institutional strikes and lack of guidance and counselling services throughout the educational ladder (see chapter 4 and 5).

The study adapts the Mesosystem layer in Bronfenbrenner’s model to establish the influence of religion as part of the Exosystem that provides the connection between the structures of the woman’s Microsystems (Berk, 2000). This is where there is connection
between the female child’s teacher and her parents, her mosque, neighbourhood, family, classroom, siblings and peers all affect his development. Islam being the pivotal theme has been illustrated within the conceptual framework, reviewed literature and interviews and has played a major part towards the progress of Muslim women in Higher Education in Uganda. With the exception of a few respondents, most of the women interviewed in chapter 5 expressed religion as having a positive impact in their progress in Higher Education. Bronfenbrenner’s model categorises religious affiliation as part of the Mesosystem whose influence operates between the Microsystems and the Exosystem. Religion interlinks with the influence of neighbourhoods and this is reflected by a respondent in chapter 5 pgs. 191-194.

The study also incorporated the findings in chapter 4 and 5 to include the influence of extended family, family networks, the mass media, the workplaces, neighbours, family friends, community health systems, the legal services, the social welfare services and so on (see fig 6.2.1). Berk (2000) compared this external layer to the Social Cultural factors that affected women’s representation in Higher Education. These included family traditions, religion, cultural practices like the FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), early marriages/bride price, poverty, geographical environment, Rural/Urban Settings, gender Issues (Patriarchal Societies), Health Issues like HIV/AIDS and other terminal illnesses. This layer contained the attitudes and ideologies, values, laws and customs of a particular culture or subculture. Bronfenbrenner’s factors were similar to those the researcher obtained in her findings. These factors mentioned above were influential in advancing or hindering the Ugandan Muslim Woman’s progress into Higher Education.

The study further reflected that most Muslim families had a strong family educational ethos that identified with their daughters feelings and purposes while at the same time
accommodated their expectations. Hence, the study revealed in chapter 4 and 5 that majority of the participants encouraged their daughters to study to fulfil academic career ambitions and to achieve independence which was an opportunity that was not available to them when they were younger. Most of the respondents interviewed and substantiated by Ahmad’s report (2008) did not want to see their daughters solely dependent upon their future spouses and families that always placed them in a subordinate position. Therefore, fathers were also seen as powerful supporters and primary motivators of their daughters’ University careers hence the push for them to get a higher qualification (see chapter 5, p. 199, 215).

Similarly, the theme of Culture within the conceptual framework in chapter 2, fig 2.5.2 did not give justice to the impact of cultural influences towards the attainment of Higher Education among Muslim women. Although cultural practices like religion and early marriages were addressed in chapter 4 and 5, FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) which was still practiced in Uganda was not influential in the pursuit of Higher Education for Muslim women. This was mainly because although culturally condoned by some tribes, Muslims belonging to those tribes had a small representation in the University populace and respondents interviewed confidently attributed the practice to members who were not secularly educated and their customs were deeply rooted in tradition other than religion (Group interview 1).

The study established in chapter 4 and 5 that Bronfenbrenner’s Macrosystem layer could be related to relationship of the female child to the prevailing conditions of the environment. These include parliamentary laws, Culture, the Economic system, the Social conditions and the history of the place. In relation to the conceptual framework for Muslim women in Higher Education, the system can be likened to the Government
policies, the political conditions and the educational factors that have had a positive discrimination to enhance girl’s accessibility to primary, secondary and tertiary Institutions in Uganda (see fig 6.2.1).

One of the respondents failed to pursue her postgraduate studies in Denmark where she had received a partial scholarship (M.Sc. Environmental Economics year 2 student, aged 32). All she needed was to show that she could support herself and none of the organisations she approached could help. It was hopeful that the conception of the Union of Muslim Professionals as discussed in chapter 5, p 211 would be able to support similar students in future. Additionally, proper management of Muslim organisations in Uganda to support struggling students would also help, coupled with the regeneration of Carnegie and similar scholarship initiatives from oil rich countries like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, and Bahrain who were economically prosperous (Pohl 2011).

Additionally, although funding was available on a small scale, in most cases it was not accessible to the respondents. Many respondents in chapter 5, p 222 suggested that the bursaries, scholarships and funds should be advertised openly in newspapers so that there was equitable competition for them. One respondent suggested that the funds issued by the government should be done on two merits, religion and performance. This would ensure that the Muslim female students in low performing rural districts had an equitable chance of accessing Higher Education.

The study adapts the chronosystem within the ecological cycle to represent the time dimension (see fig 6.2.1) and how the factors are susceptible to time changes and may change in character and influence over time. Major changes that involved societal upheavals are established in chapter 4 and 5 like the war in Uganda and natural
disasters and epidemics like HIV/AIDS and the women emancipation movements contribute to changes in cultural values. Mothers who were less likely to work 50 years ago were now working and proven breadwinners in most families. Divorce rates had also gone up and the prevalence of child care centres were all interrelated issues that affected Muslim women’s representation in Higher Education over the passage of time in Uganda. Government policies that were discriminative produced significant limitation.

Conclusively, the study captured in chapter 4 and 5 the Muslim women’s voices at Makerere University that could identify the major themes that affect Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education in Uganda and the findings have been illustrated using fig 6.2.1 which combines Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model shown in fig 2.5.1 and the conceptual framework shown in fig 2.5.2. The combined model which captures the findings in fig 6.2.1 illustrates an analysis of the interplay of connected factors that have played an important role in the representation of the Ugandan Muslim woman in the field of Higher Education. All the factors rotate around the theme of human rights issues, which is the premise of the study.

6.5 THE INFLUENCE OF THE FACTORS IDENTIFIED IN THE STUDY AS RELATED TO BRONFENBRENNER'S MODEL ON MUSLIM WOMEN'S PROGRESS INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

Chapter 4 and 5 further identified the factors that had the strongest influence on the level of Education of Muslim women in Uganda. These were basically enshrined in the Microsystem of Bronfenbrenner’s cycle (fig 2.5.1) which included the family, school, peers, religious affiliation and neighbourhood. The study recognized that without family support and encouragement most Muslim females were unable to progress favourably into Higher Education. The interplay of factors in the Exosystem of Bronfenbrenner’s
model (fig 2.5.1) and also encapsulated in the conceptual framework (fig 2.5.2) revealed that the Economic, Political, Educational, Government and Religious system all had strong influences on the level of education attained by Muslim women in Uganda (see details in Chapter 4, 5 and fig 6.2.1). Chapter 4 and 5 of the study acknowledged a number of factors that were responsible for facilitating women’s progress into Higher Education and these included:

6.5.1 SOCIAL CULTURAL FACTORS: ISLAM AS A RELIGION AND ITS IMPACT ON MUSLIM FEMALE EDUCATION

The study acknowledges that though some Muslim families discouraged their daughters from progressing further into education, the study revealed in chapter 4 and 5 that Islam (within the microsystem layer) had a religious inclination that encouraged female education and students to aim for the best in whatever field one was in, whether it was secular or religious knowledge, to achieve maximum potential as is encouraged by Islam. Islamic Shariah (Law) encourages education for both male and female, whose purpose should be to serve the Muslim Ummah (community) and help develop people’s full potentials as human beings (Aslan 2011, Afkhami et al 1997, Badawi 1995, Abdalati 1993). A considerable number of respondents were of the view that in order to encourage female participation into Higher Education, establishment of religious founded schools that encouraged female education were important. According to the school guide Uganda (2011), there were only 730 Islamic founded primary and secondary schools in Uganda compared to the 16,685 and 3,620 overall primary and secondary intake respectively.

6.5.2 EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

The study recognised that the Educational factors also within the microsystem and identified in chapter 2, pgs. 63-68 could be viewed as part of the social-economic or
political factors within the conceptual framework (see fig 6.2.1), they were also distinguished as a separate entity due to the various policies developed to enhance positive discrimination to girls’ accessibility to Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Institutions. The affirmative action policies discussed in chapter 1, 4 and 5 included the 1.5 point scheme, the FSI (Female Scholarship Initiative), the Gender Mainstreaming division and the Guidance and Counselling Services.

6.5.3 THE GENDER MAINSTREAMING DIRECTORATE OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

The study recognises the influence of the Gender Mainstreaming Programme identified in chapter 2, p 67 and developed under the Department of the Academic Registrar in 2001, by a group of visionary women and men who proposed the idea of institutionalizing gender in Makerere University’s functions (see chapter 1, 2 and 5). This led to a higher status of the institution, whose purpose was to mainstream gender as a crosscutting theme in Makerere University’s functions and beyond. The Makerere University Female Scholarship Initiative (FSI) identified in chapter 1, and some of the respondents in chapter 4 and 5 that had been sustained by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, had supported over 691 females from disadvantaged backgrounds, 639 had so far graduated, among whom very few were Muslim.

The study revealed in chapter 5, p 216 that FSF was currently the ray of hope for the continuity of a worthy cause to make the best and greatest investment that guarantees returns for women at personal, society and national levels. Decisively, the study establishes in chapter 5, p 210 that Makerere University was determined to keep the candle burning because many more young women including Muslim women would still need to access Higher Education. In the face of increased privatisation of Higher Education and the increasing gap between the rich and poor, the study concluded that
the need for scholarships was still pertinent, especially for the Muslim girl child (Tembon and Fort 2008, Occitti 2011).

Another strategy identified by the study was to sharpen or focus attention on gender inequality by means of advocacy and better impact evaluation research. The Gender mainstreaming division of Makerere University that was developed was in 2001 to ensure that all the divisions in the University were gender responsive (see chapter 2, p 67). With regards to the underrepresented Muslim female there has been no specific policy but it is hoped that with these research findings more will be done to cater for underrepresented religious denominations in Uganda.

6.5.4 POLITICAL INTERVENTIONS: MORE PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION FOR MUSLIM WOMEN

The study reveals in chapter 1 that the current composition of the 9th parliament of Uganda arising from the elections of 2011, comprised of 9% of Muslim representation (see chapter 1, fig 1.6.1, p 15). This was quite a substantial representation considering the fact that women represent 34.9% of the full Parliament. District women representatives had increased from 79 in 2008 to 112 in 2011 (Hephaestus Books 2011). In order for Muslim Women’s voices to be heard, the study establishes that it was important to have increased representation in Parliament within the exosystem layer and this could only be achieved when more Muslim girls access Higher Education. Currently the study established in chapter 1 that the Ugandan cabinet boasts of 3 Muslim female Ministers and in addition to the 8 parliamentary members, which makes a total of 11. Respondents interviewed in chapter 5 who represented the government decision-making body of the parliament attributed their success to the support of their families.
Another notable emerging issue amongst the parliamentary representatives interviewed in chapter 5 was the fact that most of them attended some of the best secondary schools in Uganda, coupled with the reality that their family’s social economic status was quite sound, hence making the issue of dropping out of school inconceivable. The honourable council were able to suggest avenues where Muslim women could increase their representation into Higher Education. Through the in depth interviews in chapter 5, they intimated focus, high self-confidence, determination and will power as factors that enabled their progress into higher education. These positive attitudes saw some of the respondents travel miles up the education path and achieve what they had today. This would be in addition to the support systems that the government policies had developed like the gender-mainstreaming directorate and a ministerial post for Gender, Labour and Social Development that were crucial to women’s development in Uganda (Honourable Members of the 9th Parliament of Uganda, age 40, 60, 45 and 40, see appendix 6).

6.5.5 DISTRICT REPRESENTATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN AND RURAL /URBAN SETTLEMENT AND GOVERNMENT FACILITATION

The study established in chapter 4 and 5 that for Muslim females to access Higher Education, equal opportunities needed to be availed at the district level. A few of the respondents reflected on the poor representation of Muslim students in some of the Western, Northern and Eastern districts of Uganda. For example Kasese district in Western Uganda, which was the Researcher’s home district had a low Muslim girls population consequently it would be favourable if the districts gave representation quotas to Muslim female students (see Map 1.7.1). The poor infrastructure, and the generally long distance that students in the rural areas had to trek to school, were also a hindrance, one respondent in chapter 5, p 187 (Deputy Registrar, Makerere University,
aged 50) reflected on the long distances (almost 5 miles) that they had to walk to school every day.

The study established in chapter 1 and 2 that the government of Uganda had through the MoES (Ministry of Education and Sports), given districts that lacked facilities enough teachers, desks, chairs, space, books and teaching aids (Muhwezi 2003). The numbers of classrooms (microsystem layer) were increased through the Classroom Construction Grant (CGC) and the number of trained teachers through the TDMS (Teacher Development Management System) (see chapter 1 and 2). Attendance levels for females were quite high but in predominantly patriarchal communities’ girls’ attendance continued to be affected. Dropout rates for female students were at par with those of male students. Reasons for this were established at the group interviews in chapter 5 where the respondents claimed: lack of interest, pregnancy, early marriage, lack of fees, looking for jobs in the urban areas, sickness, family responsibility, and dismissal from school due to indiscipline, was all major issues that led to student drop out. To reduce the levels of dropouts respondents felt it would be favourable if the government facilitated public transportation to village schools in addition to increase in equipment and teacher provision (Onsongo 2011, Muhwezi 2003).

6.5.6 PROACTIVE MUSLIM WOMEN IN THE SOCIETY

Throughout the findings of the study in chapter 4 and 5, respondents were able to cite hope and positivity from Muslim women who had been proactive in the society. These include the female Ministers, Parliamentary representatives, professionals and entrepreneurs within the mesosystem layer of Bronfenbrenner’s theory. These women would act as role models for young girls in school and this would help prevent Muslim girls settling for early marriages and being short changed in educational aspirations.
This project would also ensure that Muslim girls had a point of contact to social network and interact.

One respondent (chapter 5, p 194) took it upon herself to study rural development at the Masters level to support struggling and suffering women in the villages. Her project would organize the rural women into co-operative groups to enhance economic development using micro finances that avoid interest. She felt her knowledge would be more beneficial to the Ugandan rural woman who could not easily access working skills but were at the same time expected to be providers for the family. This project would not only provide some technical skills but will also give economic empowerment (Postgraduate student, Rural Development, age 35).

6.5.7 HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES: WIDENING PARTICIPATION INTO HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

The study applauds the efforts of FAWE (Forum for Women Educationalists) as identified in chapter 1 and 2 because of its significant contribution to educational and gender issues in sub-Saharan Africa. Tembon and Fort (2008) have gathered ample evidence to reflect FAWE’s advocacy work (exosystem layer) towards female representation in Higher Education. The Literature review of chapter 2, pgs. 107-108 of the study established that FAWE needed a gender based approach to address the educational needs of both girls and boys which is why the FAWE’s gender responsive models had been implemented in both primary and secondary single-sex and mixed-sex schools in the past fifteen years. FAWE had proudly established a strong network of grassroots organisations that promoted female education in sub-Saharan Africa, Uganda inclusive. The FAWE had also mainstreamed gender fair practices like that of the GMD (Gender Mainstreaming Directorate) of Makerere University. Girls were encouraged to speak out problems that hinder their personal and academic development using life
skills training and were promoted to participate in Science, Mathematics and Technology (chapter 5, p 222).

The study recognises FAWE’s concerted efforts that have been directed at reducing the gender gaps in enrolment, retention and performance in African schools. The interviews in chapter 5 established that their overall aim was to reduce gender disparities so that more girls have access to schooling, complete their studies and perform well at all levels. Among the FAWE’s major achievements and those highlighted by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) in chapter 2, pgs. 107-108 include establishing a strong network of grassroots organisations promoting female education in sub-Saharan Africa, mainstreaming gender fair practices into national education policies and establishing plans in several countries one of them being that a pregnant and young mother be allowed to continue and finish school (Sutherland-Addy 2008).

The study acknowledges that due to FAWE’s constant lobbying (within the exosystem layer), several countries, including Uganda, have adopted gender affirmative policies which were also acknowledged by the respondents in chapter 4 and 5 that included: effective provision of free and compulsory education e.g. UPE (Universal Primary Education) and USE (Universal Secondary Education), gender responsive school infrastructure with separate rest rooms for boys and girls, an increase in the number of female teachers as role models and affirmative admission policies like the additional 1.5 for the University entry scheme. Additionally laws and sanctions developed against early marriages and sexual harassment. There are more women government representatives in Uganda since each district had a Woman representative. The Ugandan government is also spending more on gender-responsive programmes (see chapter 2, pgs. 107-108 ).
6.5.8 FUNDING, SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

The study recognises how Uganda in 1974 under the leadership of President Idi Amin Dada, was established as one of the 57 member states of the OIC (Organization of Islamic Co-operation) (see chapter 1 and 2). The idea to start the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) was conceived at the second summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1974. Inaugurated in February 1988 with 80 students, the University had the main objective of serving the Higher Education needs (exosystem layer) of the English-speaking Muslim community in southern and eastern Africa. The researcher is also a Bachelor of Education graduate (1995) of the Islamic University in Uganda and can firmly attest that had it not been for the scholarship provided by the OIC (Organization of Islamic Co-operation) she would not be where she was today, completing a Ph.D. in Education Research at the University of Leicester. The University is currently a private institution that enrols students not only from East Africa but also from North, South and West Africa (New Vision Newspaper, June 2012).

The study established from the interviews in chapter 5 that other Muslim organisations operating in Uganda include the Union of Ugandan Muslim Professionals established in 2008 at Makerere University. It was not an umbrella organisation for Muslims, but was a Union of Professionals registered as a Muslim faith based association. It played commentary roles with other Muslim organization and institutions. Objectives of the union as identified (chapter 5 p 211) included dissemination of information that would strengthen professionalism, Islamic propagation and career guidance to the students at all levels of education in the Muslim Community. The Union maintained an active database of Muslim Professionals and through this database; social networking would
occur that would pave the way for an increase in bursaries, especially for Muslim women who would like to pursue postgraduate study (Pohl 2011).

Other initiatives suggested in chapter 4 and 5 included, openly advertised bursaries for equal competition to be availed through the Ministry of Education and Sports. Open linkages with the International Muslim community enables more Muslim girls to access educational funds. The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) established the Islamic University in Uganda in the late 1980’s (see chapter 2, p 39, chapter 5 p 194) and this has been responsible for increasing the number of Muslim graduates in Uganda. With the availability of Muslim female funded Degrees, Masters Degrees and Ph. Ds, female enrolment would definitely increase and proportionately the Muslim female representation.

The study recognises other scholarship avenues that have increased female representation especially in the postgraduate sector which include government, NGO’s (Non-Governmental Organisation) and private scholarships offered by different Ministries e.g. Finance, Labour, Economic and Social Development (Brar et al 2011, Pohl 2011). Some of the respondents interviewed in chapter 5, p 216 suggested that International aid to developing countries like Uganda must consider women’s educational issues by taking various forms like literacy projects, crafts, women’s co-operatives and support groups.

6.6 CRITICAL POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS IN ASSESSING HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

The study recognises that one of the most important steps suggested by the respondents in chapter 4 and 5 that can be taken to make Uganda’s education policy and practice more gender sensitive is to revise the broad educational aims and goals with an intention of incorporating gender concerns in the curriculum. This would include as
established from the chapter 1, 2, 3 and 4 adding gender studies as a subject at all levels of education. The study established the great need to increase the number of gender sensitive female teachers and administrators in education. Currently most academic institutions in Uganda were identified as male dominated societies that control the learning/studying, teaching, educational administration, and policy monitoring and evaluation (see chapter 2). In order to encourage Muslim women’s participation, the study recommends that a policy shift should be encouraged so that more women are included in policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation.

The study acknowledges that Government official respondents interviewed in chapter 5 suggest that the Ugandan Government should allow the current top leadership involved in policy monitoring, to carry out effective evaluation and sensitization on gender sensitive issues. The Government could further encourage as identified in chapter 1 and 2 the establishment or promotion of existing NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisation) like FAWE which the research established would work towards achieving greater gender parity in education.

6.6.1 MUSLIM GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

The research has further established in chapter 2 pgs. 63-68 that it was important for the government to work with partners to design, execute, manage and evaluate participatory, community-based initiatives to advance the conditions of Muslim girls and women. The study suggests that the Ministry of Education and Sports should monitor the development of programmes that would help girls enrol and stay in school in addition to helping women gain access to or create new educational, financial, and social resources in their communities. The researcher contends that this would be the best way of encouraging Ugandan females whether Muslim or not to
enrol in higher education and also be motivated to progress and aim for higher qualifications.

Through, FAWE as established in chapter 1, 2, 4 and 5, female education has been encouraged by tackling the physical environment in some institutions, through addressing the inadequate infrastructural facilities whilst promoting separate, private and secure rest room facilities for girls and boys, secure classrooms with adequate space utilization, building and opening up of science and information and communication laboratories, library space, adequate desks, chairs, classroom and laboratory equipment, sports and recreation facilities. For boarding schools the study established that FAWE (see chapter 2, pgs. 107-108) had encouraged the establishment of separate dormitories for girls and boys with nearby matron’s houses, adequate dining facilities and amenities such as water, electricity, health facilities and adequate security such as fencing and lighting.

With regard to the academic environment, respondents in chapter 5 acknowledge that FAWE had encouraged both male and female student empowerment with skills in self-expression, assertiveness, confidence, leadership and decision-making, protection against HIV/AIDS and a general good performance. The study acknowledges that through this intervention, girls have been able to confidently take Science, Maths and Technology (SMT) and perform exceptionally well. FAWE had also ensured that financially disadvantaged girls access scholarships (FSI and FSF) and career guidance promoted by the Ministry of Education and Sports. Affirmative action policies identified in chapter 1 and by most of the respondents in chapter 4 and 5, such as the 1.5 points facilitate female enrolment into University. Additionally the study contends that male and female teachers should be trained and put in practice gender responsive
curriculums to encourage critical and innovative thinking among the female students suggested as one of the objectives of FAWE (see chapter 2, pgs.107-108).

The study approves of FAWE’s involvement with the social environment which had been to encourage community members to participate in their children’s life and school life. Respondents interviewed in chapter 5 encouraged active sensitization on the benefits of educating girls, prioritizing their progress into higher education, as well as provision of safe, harassment free girl environments for them to learn in. The study is confident that these strategies would inevitably help girls and women improve their own lives, the lives of their families and the conditions in their communities. The study establishes in chapter 4 and 5 the importance of the parents’ role especially the mothers, since the mothers would create conditions that ensure their daughters have equal access to basic education, and are able to make informed decisions about their futures, and are able to protect themselves from trafficking, sexual exploitation, HIV and AIDS (Group Interviews).

6.6.2 LAUNCHING OF NEW COURSES
As a member of staff of Makerere University, the researcher was able to identify that Makerere University had recently launched a Master of Arts in Gender Awareness Economics degree, the first of its kind in an African University. The research contends that the gender-focused programme which was launched as part of the gender mainstreaming policy to incorporate gender as a key component of policymaking and analysis would be instrumental in encouraging Muslim women to attain higher education. Similar programmes were being run by universities in the United States and Europe. The research established that Makerere University developed the degree together with the American University, Essex University,
Sussex University, Central Bank of Kenya and the Nigerian Institute of Social Economic Research with support from UNDP in order to make a greater impact on Women’s education in Uganda as has been supported by the United Nations Development Programme highlighted in chapter 2 of the study.

The programme, as established by the researcher would be run by the Makerere University’s Faculty of Economics and Management in collaboration with the Department of Women and Gender Studies. The programme would hopefully meet the increasing demand from local and international organisations to make gender part of the planning and implementation of their emergency response and development programmes. As part of the general national policy, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), as identified in chapter 2, was hopeful that the programme would produce a new generation of economists, planners and policy makers, who would work towards reducing the high cost of gender inequalities to national development and increase the effectiveness of poverty reduction strategies (Onyalla 2010).

Furthermore the researcher attests that the programme would increase the effectiveness of economic policies and poverty reduction strategies in Africa, by making them deliver more equitably to women and men, girls and boys since according to the New Vision (June 2010) paper,

“Studies have shown that improvements to women’s access to education, health care, jobs and credit can spur economic growth and poverty reduction. Despite this evidence, gender equality considerations are rarely included in economic policy making and planning”

Hence the researcher affirms that unless the government of Uganda begins active implementation of gender equality policies in their local government strategies the Economic development of Uganda would always lag behind.
6.6.3 ELIMINATING GENDER DISCRIMINATION THROUGH INVESTMENT IN PROLONGED GIRLS’ EDUCATION

The research establishes in chapter 1, 2, 4 and 5 that girl’s education is central to development; therefore much overall progress should be made under the EFA (Education for All) agenda. The study confirms that research into the effects of education on poverty reduction has demonstrated the importance of continuing with secondary education, as opposed to just completing primary education. The study suggests that without secondary and University education there would be a lack of teachers, hence affecting primary education and in Uganda like in many countries as the study has established there was a shortage of Muslim female teachers. The study clearly indicates that secondary education helps to eliminate child marriage and/or early childbearing because studies have discovered that education statistically decreases fertility levels when it is at least seven years long hence giving Muslim females more time to progress further into higher education (UN, 1995; Singh and Samara, 1996: 153).

The research reaffirms that making Muslim girls’ education a high priority should be implemented alongside suggested interventions like scholarships, stipends, increased female teacher recruitment and gender-targeted provision of educational materials since all are as identified by the interviews in chapter 5, as effective ways of increasing enrolment of Muslim girls. Furthermore the intervention strategies identified in chapter 1 and 2 that have worked to improve girls’ education include fees elimination and the inception of Universal primary and secondary education in Uganda, alongside advocacy with organisations like FAWE for better impact evaluation research, addressing cultural and social constraints through community action like preventing early marriages, gender isolation, and domestic violence.
Nonetheless the study acknowledges that by raising education standards and its quality there would be an improvement in the economic returns to female education and consequently the gender sensitive school and pedagogy models that promoted regional development through the Forum for African Women Educationalists in Uganda (see chapter 2, pgs. 107-108).

6.7 WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ENSURE SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS TOWARDS MUSLIM WOMEN’S HIGHER EDUCATION

The study establishes that most of the respondents in chapter 4 and 5 had similar views concerning strategies that can be implemented by the Government to ensure that there were supportive environments for encouraging Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education. The Government representatives interviewed were of the view that female educational funding opportunities needed to be increased and implemented as Government ventures and access to friendly educational loans should be channelled through various Ministries and Local Governments like the Resident District Commissioners who would ensure a free and equitable publication of the scholarships that allow girls to compete favourably giving religious quotas that are necessary in areas that have a minority of Muslims.

Likewise, the study establishes that the Government should encourage publication of female literature to encourage literacy amongst women (Solicitor, aged 60). The study contends that subsidized costs for editing and printing material brought forward by female scholars should be encouraged as this would definitely act as motivators to young girls, who have ambitious dreams of attaining Higher Education. Furthermore, positive and interactive Muslim female role-models representing different arenas in the public sphere should be encouraged since interacting with Muslim female Ministers, Members of Parliament, and Professionals like Lawyers and Doctors in educational
institutions who would deliver self-motivating career talks to Muslim female students would definitely excite and enthuse many of the Muslim female students to have professional ambitions (Hon member of parliament, aged 40).

The study made several other suggestions towards improved Muslim female advancement in Higher Education that included, compulsory Islamic education in schools reflecting religious positive attitude towards education and the revival of a syllabus reflecting the great Muslim female scholars in Islam. The study establishes in chapter 2 and 5, how Nadwi (2007) a lecturer from India had unearthed over 40 volumes of Muslim female scholars through a study of the history of Islam, which strongly reflected on the Muslim women who had emerged and made a tremendous contribution or impact to the development of educational sciences, that should be made known to female students so that they act as motivating factors to encourage the progress of Muslim females into higher education in Uganda (Deputy Registrar, Makerere University, aged 50).

The research has taken a step, which would probably be useful to policy makers, and this has been to address cultural and social constraints on girls' education (Patriarchal societies, gender isolation, gender violence, and conflict). The study contends that community action would be invaluable to address cultural issues that create barriers to female education and these include early marriages, preference of male to female children and female genital mutilation (FGM). Therefore active sensitization of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) by community groups at grass root level which some respondents cited to have worked would be helpful in trying to advocate for attitude change, amongst these groups in Uganda.
6.7.1 INSTITUTIONAL FACILITATION

The study established through the group interviews (see appendix 6) that facilitation and provision of female washing and prayer facilities in all Educational Institutions was necessary since provision of this Islam-friendly environment would probably encourage Muslim females to enrol and also to progress into Higher Education. In Britain alone, with the implementation and revision of the Equal Opportunities Act 2010, all educational and public institutions were furnished with a quiet room, which could be used to perform the daily prayers during school times. Similarly in Uganda, most tertiary institutions had prayer facilities for both male and female students. Respondents in the group interviews were of the view that there should be freedom to practice religion and freedom should be respected with regard to Islamic dressing. Others suggested segregated facilities for females in institutions of learning, which was being done at the Islamic University in Uganda but could not be implemented in secular institutions like Makerere University.

The study further suggests that another important facilitation would be provision of transport facilities for women only to Colleges or Universities. Respondents from the group interviews contend that female students residing in hostels around Makerere University had the privilege of being ferried to the main campus with hostel shuttles, therefore although seemingly minor, this had encouraged a great number of Muslim females from different districts in Uganda who were resident in the neighbouring hostels to have unlimited access to the Library and learning facilities at the Makerere University main campus; thus improving overall performance and completion rates among them. Those who were both working and studying suggested established childcare facilities for women who would like to continue studying but have family
responsibilities. Although this issue was raised, many respondents acknowledged having extended family supporting them with child care issues which was invaluable.

The group interviews in chapter 5 pgs. 209-216 also suggested other efforts that could foster Muslim women’s participation in Higher Education in Uganda which included: Extra coaching or tutorials for the under achieving Muslim female students and this could be facilitated by the Union of Ugandan Muslim Professionals. Members specializing in different fields to give career guidance talks and provide support to students specializing in their particular fields and also provide greater access to resources that can allow women to broaden abilities to progress into Higher Education. The study also identified in chapter 1,2, 4 and 5 how career guidance and moral counselling in Secondary Schools, Colleges and Universities by the Union of Ugandan Muslim professionals would be able to promote self-esteem amongst female students and power building workshops to encourage women to go back to school in addition to sensitization and general awareness workshops where women who progress into further education are shown how this would be profitable to them and their families in the long-term (see chapter 2 pgs. 209-210). Lastly Islamic study circles to provide support and encouragement towards Muslim leadership supported by organisations that play an active part in encouraging education among Muslims more so females, through provision of scholarships and bursaries and emphasis on female professions that need work force and support especially in teaching and nursing so as to encourage free and fair opportunities for Muslim women to be employed in different sectors of the economy.
6.7.2 BUILDING CAPACITY OF MUSLIM WOMEN TEACHERS AND EDUCATION LEADERS

The study establishes in chapter 1, 2, 4 and 5 that in order to ensure that strategies that are implemented continue working towards a gender-based environment; the mentioned perspectives need to be linked to discussions and policy development on gender-responsive recruitment, deployment, and support for male and female teachers. The study suggests that the government should deploy education assessors to ensure men and women should have equal status in schools and they should be able to act as positive role models for girls and boys and additionally opportunities for positive interaction with parents and community members should be exploited.

The research acknowledges that Muslim Women teachers may need extra support in leadership, career and management skills hence the training should be assessed to reflect the priority differences between men and women. Nonetheless the study argues that since teacher support, development content, and the processes for professional development require gender consideration, teacher networks and learning groups should be developed to provide supportive development opportunities for women, which can be adapted to fit with other family responsibilities. Additionally the study recommends ensuring links between Muslim women teachers and community-based women’s organisations that would provide mentoring opportunities to collaborate a new young Muslim woman teacher with an older and more experienced educator, as well as recruiting and deploying Muslim women teachers in pairs (Keet 2010, Mirza 2009, Tembon and Fort 2008). The study argues that with this policy effectively implemented there would be a gradual increase in the number of Muslim females accessing higher education in Uganda.
6.8 INTERVENTIONS THAT HAVE WORKED TO IMPROVE MUSLIM GIRLS EDUCATION IN UGANDA

In line with the findings from the literature reviewed and study conducted in Uganda, there have been various recommended interventions. The study establishes that although some interventions have been implemented in developing countries and have proven successful in raising female enrolment and completion rates in most cases these have failed to work in Uganda. The interviews identified these to include; increase demand of Higher Education by such means as eliminating user fees and providing stipends and conditional cash transfers to Muslim girls. Although this is currently being done for all students at Makerere University in the form of government sponsorship for students who have performed exceptionally well Muslim girls are still not accessing these opportunities because of the low population of Muslims in Uganda and other social economic factors that may be holding them back.

The study acknowledges that despite the success of the Carnegie female scholarship scheme that was operational from 2001-2011 it had to stop due to in availability of funds from the International donors (Carnegie Corporation of New York). The scheme paid tuition and upkeep allowance for girls coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. Through this scheme several Muslim students were able to attain degrees which they would have otherwise been unable to aspire to due to the low economic status of their families. The University was currently organizing fund raising activities to revive the programme (Deputy Registrar, Makerere University, aged 50).

The study reveals that the benefits of educating Muslim women in society have proved to be priceless therefore; the study suggests that there should be improved economic returns to female education, such as raising education standards and quality. This can only be done with the support and financial backing of the Ministry of Education and
Sports liaising with the Ministry of State for Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Presidential adviser on Muslim Affairs, the various Muslim female parliamentary representatives and the Resident district commissioners to promote post primary education for girls using monetary incentives that would help develop tertiary institutions in Uganda. Additionally the study argues that they could genderize post basic education to improve national economic competitiveness via such initiatives as modernizing agricultural education at the graduate level (Ocitti 2011, Brar et al 2011, Aguti 2002). The findings of the study therefore identify some of the interventions that have so far helped and need to be worked on further so as to improve Muslim women’s progress into higher education.

6. 9 WEAKNESSES OF THE STUDY

The research was a case study of Makerere University focusing specifically on Muslim women in Uganda. The main weakness of the study was the unavailability of literature in the area of Ugandan African Muslim Women. Very few researches had been done on the African Muslim woman in the field of Higher Education. Due to the scarce literature available on Muslim women’s education in Uganda and the world in general, the Researcher reflected on the need to have more studies in this department. The study therefore suggests that there is a gap in Muslim women’s literature that needs further exploration. In future more investigations need to be undertaken in this field with regards to Muslim women’s contribution towards education and likewise in different sectors of the community.

Similarly, the Researcher realised that data collected from the current students would not suffice an adequate response to the research questions, therefore she saw the need to include graduates of Makerere University who were in influential posts of the
government and Muslim women professionals who had graduated the last ten to twenty years.

Another weakness identified was from the data collected during the fieldwork, which was carried out over a period of six months (July to December 2011) and was mainly captured from students who were at the Makerere University main campus. The study therefore may have not sufficiently addressed issues of students whose faculties were based on other campuses, whom the Researcher found difficult to access due to massive traffic jams experienced as a result of poor road networks in Kampala City. Although data was collected from Muslim women specifically, the Researcher acknowledged that having respondents from other religious denominations and also including a few male respondents may have provided a richer and different insight to the study.

6.10 GAPS IDENTIFIED IN THE STUDY

From the findings in Chapter 4 and 5, the study indicates that although attendance of free primary education had improved significantly, there were overall district inequalities with regard to Muslim female representation because grant-aid was based on expressed need other than potential need and unfortunately the Muslim females missed out more in this area. Likewise, although the study identified significant steps that have been made to address gender imbalances at the University, much still remains to be done for Muslim women, before gender is fully integrated across all aspects of University life. The study affirms that although gender equity interventions had been introduced there was no critical and gender based appraisal of the organisational structures, practices and policies that make the Universities friendlier to Muslim female students therefore the interventions have done very little to transform the institutional
cultures and change the attitudes and gender relations among men and women at the Public Universities (see chapter 2, pgs. 107-108).

The study acknowledges in chapter 1 and 2 that despite great progress in addressing gender imbalances in education, according to a recent situation analysis report of the Gender and Equity Responsiveness (2012), the study contends that Muslim girls have continued to be disadvantaged, compared to boys in all aspects of education access. Although indicators for gender equality and equity were defined in the policy identified in chapter 1 and 2, no targets were set to improve Muslim female representation into Higher Education and this made it difficult for the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic development to budget accordingly and as the study reveals in its findings in Chapter 4 and 5, meant that Muslim women would continue being left out in most aspects of public sector development.

A critical analysis of the government gender based activities revealed by the study in chapter 1 and 2 suggests that the activities which were not sensitive to Muslim women were unconsciously geared towards integrating female students into highly gendered institutional culture, framed and characterised by unequal gender relations. The study also found that although there were a number of gender equity policies in Higher Education, there was inadequate monitoring and evaluation therefore most of the staff and students interviewed were unaware of the gender equity interventions (Deputy Registrar, Makerere University, aged 50). Other gaps identified by the study included: the inadequate funding of the gender responsive activities, inadequate qualified academic staff to teach and manage gender related courses and centres and a general lack of gender awareness among the staff and students of the University that needed to
be addressed due to negative attitudes towards gender issues and lack of clear gender policy guidelines (see chapter 2, pgs. 107-108).

Whereas much of the study identified the importance of having Guidance and Counselling offices in institutions (see chapter 2, 4 and 5 p 210), there were some major gaps that were also identified and these included: lack of/inadequate trained personnel (counsellors) to provide guidance and counselling for all the institutions in Uganda, a heavy workload for teachers of guidance and counselling, inadequate monitoring and supervision of the service and inadequate guidance and counselling materials and space. The study established that some schools were more academically oriented and therefore minimised the importance of guidance and counselling and there was a poor reading culture even for the sparsely available reading guidance and counselling materials (Group Interview).

The research acknowledges that Uganda has been at the forefront to promote gender equity initiatives and has done much towards education and female participation in politics, though the study reveals there is still so much more to be done for Muslim women (see chapter 4 and 5). Nonetheless the study applauds initiatives like the UPE (Universal Primary Education), USE (Universal Secondary Education), the 1.5 entry points into University undergraduate programmes, the FSI (Female Scholarship Initiative), the establishment of the first Department of Women Studies at Makerere University, Kampala, the provision in the constitution for women to have one-third proportionate representation in public bodies, including having a female district representative for each district in Uganda at Parliamentary level (see Chapter 4 and 5).
6.11 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Chapter presents the conclusions derived from the interpretations of the findings of the study and suggests recommendations in line with the outcomes that sought to address the main research questions raised in Chapter 3. Using Makerere University as a case point, the study was able to tackle the key research questions as established in chapter 4 and 5 which included identifying the limitations to Muslim Women’s access to Higher Education in Uganda; the factors that had the strongest influence on the level of Education attained by Muslim women in Uganda, the enablers or individual strategies that lead some Muslim women to achieve more in Higher Education and alternatively, what strategies women had used to progress in Higher Education. Finally the study was able to suggest ways to improve female participation in the future.

The theoretical framework of the study borrowed from Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) Ecological Model (see fig 2.5.1) then established a conceptual framework with themes identified from the Literature Review (see fig 2.5.2). Reoccurring themes were identified and their implications were analysed as barriers and enablers for Ugandan Muslim women in their pursuit of Higher Education (see fig 6.2.1). A mixed methods feminist perspective was applied in chapter 3 seeking to listen to women’s voices at Makerere University, Uganda. The study hoped that its findings would impact Educational research on theory, practice and policy so that women’s education nationally was effectively represented as a means toward achieving targets set by several mandates including the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Education for All (EFA) and Widening Participation into Higher Education (FAWE 2005) as discussed in the study (see chapter 2, pgs. 105-108).
The study summarises the findings of the mixed methods feminist perspective in chapter 4 and 5 derived from Muslim women’s voices at Makerere University through a reflection of their lives, backgrounds and families. The study also looked at how Muslim women, who have gained access to University, overcame various cultural and institutional challenges prevalent in the community. It documents the lives of some of the Muslim women who are regarded as academic achievers, and shows how Muslim women can act as role models for other women. It also documents a number of areas of concern around careers advice and recruitment into Higher Education and the ways racist stereotypes of Muslim women impact on their daily lives.

The study has been useful in identifying the problems, prospects and needs of Muslim women in Uganda. A further reflection of the study that was linked to Bronfenbrenner’s Ecosystem (see fig 2.5.1) establishes that Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education has been affected by interplay of environmental factors whose layers enshrine most of the factors mentioned in the conceptual framework (see fig 2.5.2). The data analysed summarises these findings in a model that can be linked to both diagrams to highlight the myriad of factors that affect Muslim women in their pursuit of Higher Educational opportunities (see fig 6.2.1).

The study concludes that the problems faced by Muslim women with regards to educational opportunities in Uganda were synonymous with those faced by women all over the world (see chapter 4 and 5). This final chapter outlines additional strategies that have been established including the Gender mainstreaming directorate at Makerere University, the National gender policy at the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Ministry of State for Gender, Labour and Social Development. Unfortunately though, none of these initiatives consider equal representation based upon religious
composition, hence the continued underrepresentation of Muslim women in higher education in Uganda.

To address the concern of Guidance and Counselling in schools, the study suggested several interventions to improve its delivery in schools so that it reflects an increase in Muslim female representation in Higher Education (see chapter 5, p 210). These included interventions such as counsellors training. The study discovered that although it was important to train teachers in guidance and counselling by the Ministry of Education and Sports, there was also the need for active sensitization of all stakeholders on the importance of guidance and counselling and the MoES with their foreign education partners i.e. DFID, USAID and UNICEF, who should make an extra effort to provide guidance and counselling materials for schools. In addition to creating space for guidance and counselling, there should be regular monitoring and supervision of counselling services at school level where parents and community involvement should be encouraged and teachers motivated (chapter 5, p 210, Government official, age 40).

Secondly, the study suggested various efforts that could alleviate the economic situation that had prevented so many Muslim girls from attaining Higher Education. These include: proactive Muslim organisations aided by oil wealthy Arab nations to fund Muslim female scholarships, fundraising from friends, provision of interest free loans and self-dependence earned through family businesses and co-operatives and gaining self-employment through skills training or seeking employment, so as to save money to continue with further education. Other respondents were of the view that developed countries as in the Arab world, U.S.A, Canada and Europe needed to provide free education for low-income earning families, especially pre-colonised nations like Uganda and Kenya who were still economically dependent on Britain. The government
should also provide study/employment opportunities whereby employees would be encouraged to go back to College whilst earning a salary. This would definitely encourage many civil servants, more so Muslim women, to go back to school since they would have job security and would be guaranteed a monthly income whilst studying (Group interviews).

The study revealed that the important change needed was that of attitude especially that concerning familial responsibilities, which were identified as a major contributor or facilitator towards Muslim women’s progress into Higher Education. Additionally the study applauds the positive influence and attitude of parents, family, relatives and friends who played an important part in encouraging the progress of Muslim female education in Uganda. The research further argues that it is imperative to culturally discourage early marriages and encourage those who had stopped schooling due to early marriages to resume their studies. The study reflects on the psychological support from family members for female students struggling to achieve in Higher Education being of paramount importance.

As a critical solution it was therefore essential to consider having Muslim Support groups for women who would like to progress into Higher Education and who may not be receiving support from family members. The study acknowledges that support groups would be seemingly a new idea that might take years to appreciate and also implement. The study offers critical solutions which may effectively enhance the progress of Muslim women in higher education and these include: enhancing Muslim girls and women’s education, launching of new gender based courses, investment in prolonged girls education, institutional facilitation and building capacity of women teachers and educational leaders.
Conclusively, this chapter has presented some of the prevailing gender inequities in education in contexts of crisis, post crisis, and state fragility. It has highlighted some of the concrete global policy developments that may support increased attention to gender equality and education and more so among Muslim women. These developments include the EFA (Education for All), Millennium development goals (MDG) Widening Participation into Higher Education and FAWE (Forum for African Women Educationalists in Uganda) (see chapter 2, p 78, 107-108). Access to Education has been and will always be a concern for Muslim girls and women across the world. In many countries, even basic education for Muslim girls was not a right but a privilege.

The study reveals that access to quality education in rural areas in Uganda was geographically difficult since in Uganda and other countries access to quality education was related to socio-economic status. Entry to University was restricted due to costs and finally cultures where education for girls was discouraged due to customs, religion and patriarchal traditions. Based on the findings of the study is the realization that gender inequality in the society is a complex issue that cannot be tackled by Universities alone. The study therefore has made recommendations at the level of government and political interventions, society and donor agencies that can help, in the improvement of policy and practice towards an impartial gender based educational policy, that would embrace different religious, cultural and traditional practices and at the same time address other institutional barriers that may hinder the progress of not only Muslim women in Uganda but all women globally.
APPENDIX 1 (PILOT INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE)

Women’s Higher Education online survey
1. Default Section

1. How old are you?
☐ 18-25
☐ 26-35
☐ 36-45
☐ 46-55
☐ 56-65
☐ 65 and above

2. Select the option that best describes your ethnic background?
☐ Black African
☐ Indo Asian
☐ White British
☐ Black Caribbean
☐ Arab
☐ Somali
☐ Latino
☐ Mixed Race
☐ Other (please specify)

3. Please state your religion
☐ Muslim
☐ Christian
☐ Catholic
☐ Hindu
☐ Buddhist
☐ Jew
☐ Other (please specify)

4. Marital Status? If married, what ages were you married and how many children do you have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Age of Marriage</th>
<th>No. of children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>☐ None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>☐ 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>☐ 4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>☐ ☐ more than 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohabiting</td>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Which one best describes your family background? (The type of family you grew up in)
- Nuclear (Parents and children only)
- Extended (Parents, children, in laws, grandparents)
- Single parent home (One parent home)
- Polygamous (Father had more than one wife)
- Adopted (Fostered by others)
- Orphanage (No parents or family)

Other (please specify)

6. Tick against all the educational levels attained from Childhood. (Tick those that apply to you)
- Nursery or Kindergarten
- Primary
- Secondary (O Levels or ages 12-16)
- Secondary (A Levels or ages 16-18)
- Madrasah (Islamic Schooling)
- Certificate (= short training sessions)
- Undergraduate studies (Diploma)
- Tertiary Institution e.g. Polytechnic, Teacher Training College
- Undergraduate degree
- Postgraduate degree
- Postgraduate diploma

Other (please specify)

7. What can you identify as having been a barrier to your progress in Education? (Tick those that apply to you)
- Gender issues (preference of one sex over the other)
- Religion
- Socio-Economic status
- Health (Terminal diseases like HIV/AIDS, TB and Cancer)
- Physical Disability
- Culture and Traditional factors
- War or Civil Strive
- Historical factors (Colonialism and Neo-colonialism)
- Government policies
- Rural/Urban divide (Town settlement or Rural area settlement)

Other (please specify)

8. What factors can you say have supported you as a woman, in your pursuit of Higher Education? (What helped you get further in your education?)
- Economic factors (standard of living)
- Religious
- Social and Cultural factors
- Political factors or Government policies (Wars and Government policies)
- Geographical factors (Rural or Urban

Other (please specify)
9. Please explain how the factors you have chosen in question 7 and 8 were either barriers or supporters to your progress in Education? (Explain how the factors helped or hindered your progress?)

10. Please explain how you overcame the barriers you encountered in your pursuit of Higher Education? (What helped you overcome the problems you faced?)
APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW OUTLINE

1. Briefly, describe your educational experiences to date?

2. Can you briefly describe what you feel has been the impact of culture and religion on your educational achievement?

3. What factors do you think have supported you as a Muslim woman in pursuit of your Higher Education?

4. What factors do you feel have been a barrier to your progress in education?

5. What do you feel needs to be done to ensure maximum support of Muslim women in secular education?
### APPENDIX 3: RESULTS OF THE BOS (BRISTOL) ONLINE SURVEY

#### 1. a) Marital Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohabiting</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 1. b) How old are you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 55</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2. Number of children if any?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 8</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3. Ethnicity (tribe)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muganda</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutoro</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukiga</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munyakole</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mugisu</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musoga</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muteso</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munyoro</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhima</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munyoro</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucholi</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other (please specify): Somali, Arab, Asian, Mixed race

#### 4. Home District
### Section 1: Educational background

#### 5. University entry?
- **a) Direct:** 66.7% (111)
- **b) Mature:** 16.7% (27)
- **c) Diploma:** 16.7% (27)

**5b) Undergraduate students**
- 73.3% (121)

**Postgraduate students**
- 26.7% (44)

#### 6. College studied
1. **College of Agricultural and environmental Sciences:** 4% (7)
2. **College of Business and Management Sciences:** 12% (20)
3. **College of Computing and Information Sciences:** 25% (41)
4. **College of Education and External Studies:** 20% (33)
5. **College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology:** 10% (17)
6. **College of Health Sciences:** 2% (3)
7. **College of Humanities and Social Sciences:** 16% (26)
8. **College of Natural Sciences:** 4% (7)
9. **School of Law:** 6% (9)
10. **School of Veterinary** 1% (2)

---

Other (please specify): Kabarole, Karamoja, Arua

Kabarole district (Tooro kingdom)
7. Course studied and current academic year. e.g. Law student, year 3 (sample of responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B COM 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA (OFFICERS ADMINISTRATIVE LAWS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INDUSTRIAL AND FINE ARTS 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAW 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACHELOR OF INFORMATION SCIENCE 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. If you are a graduate of Makerere University. Please state the year you completed the course and what your current profession is? Example Teacher, Bachelor of Education degree, graduated 2005 (Sample of responses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.A EDUCATION GRADUATED 2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAW 2010, LAW DEVELOPMENT CENTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIFA (INDUSTRIAL AND FINE ART) 2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACHELOR OF COMMERCE  2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACHELOR OF COMMERCE 2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Where do you currently work? (Sample of response)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEACHER, KAWEMPE MUSLIM SECONDARY SCHOOL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAINING IN LAW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWN BUSINESS PRINTING CARDS AND STATIONERY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCOUNTANT, KENYA COOPERATIVE CREAMARIES (KCC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCOUNTANT, KAMPALA CITY COUNCIL (KCC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Select which option reflects your Primary education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Private school in a rural area:</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Government school in a rural area:</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Private school in an urban area:</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Government school in an urban area:</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Other please specify:</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other (please specify): Parastatal school (partly Government Funded) or Religious founded

11. Select which option reflects your secondary education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Private school in a rural area:</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Government school in a rural area:</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Private school in an urban area:</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Government school in an urban area:</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Section 2: Other factors that may have influenced educational progress

#### 12. The simple scale measures your attitude towards various factors that may have influenced your progress in Higher Education

12. a. Influence of family background towards Educational progress. Please give reasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither positive nor negative</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very negative</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. b. Please give reasons (sample of responses)

I was the first graduate in family - there was neither positive nor negative

Inspired by my educated mother

My Mother was the first Sheikat in Tooro District. She valued education; and wanted us to have the best of both Islamic teaching and secular education

My mum wasn't educated so she pushed so much for me to me educated

The purpose of education was hardly emphasised.

#### 13. Religion had an influence on my educational progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither positive nor negative</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very negative</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. b. Please give reasons (sample of responses)

Islam tells us to teach both female and male hence no discrimination

A large part of my secular education was with non-Muslim students but due to the strictness of my beliefs, I was able to avoid taking part in some evil activities.

I attended a Muslim faith based school for my ‘A’ levels and its strict nature regarding dressing and behaviour helped me attain discipline that made me work hard until I got government sponsorship to University.

My Father felt it would be better to marry me off at an early age because he felt it was the religious thing to do.

The 5 daily prayers gave me discipline, commitment and inspired me to work harder.
14. Culture and tradition had an influence on my educational progress

| 1. very positive: | 15.1% | 25 |
| 2. positive: | 0.0% | 0 |
| 3. neither positive nor negative: | 66.7% | 111 |
| 4. negative: | 18.2% | 29 |
| 5. very negative: | 0.0% | 0 |

14. a. Please give reasons (sample of responses)

It was seen as a waste of time for a girl to advance in education. Most were expected to get married and have families. Accepted levels where '0' level education

Most people in my village and district were uneducated. Nature provided for their needs so they saw no need of studying as many could dig their land and get plenty of food after harvest.

My culture and tradition has no influence in religion if at all.

My Mother was determined that her children should have a right to education

My father made sure we all studied especially his daughters. His own father didn't allow him to progress further than primary school because of the family business. His sisters were married off at a tender age and he vowed that he would educate all his children because he felt cheated.

15. My marital status had an influence on my educational achievement

| 1. very positive: | 0.0% | 0 |
| 2. positive: | 20.0% | 33 |
| 3. neither positive nor negative: | 40.0% | 66 |
| 4. negative: | 20.0% | 33 |
| 5. very negative: | 20.0% | 33 |

15. a. Please give reasons (sample of responses)

My husband supported me to advance with a Master's programme.

My marital status had a negative influence from the pressure I got in subsidising my work time, college time and family time.

The environment I grew up in had a lot to do with my achievements rather than marital status.

My parents insisted that I complete my studies before marriage and I am glad I did because now I am married and pursuing my postgraduate and can see it has some hindrances.

I got married and completed my studies; he was very supportive throughout my first degree.

16. Having children affected my educational progress

| 1. very positive: | 0.0% | 0 |
| 2. positive: | 20.0% | 33 |
| 3. neither positive nor negative: | 80.0% | 132 |
| 4. negative: | 0.0% | 0 |
| 5. very negative: | 0.0% | 0 |

16. a. Please give reasons why (sample of responses)

It was difficult to balance studies and child care, since I was expecting when I was doing my MBA- my husband's support made it more manageable.
To some extent but having house helps made it easier. My house help is a relative and she has helped raise three of my children so it became easy to balance studies with the family.

I live with extended family so it was easier for me because they helped look after the children. They also cooked, cleaned and helped take care of the house when I was too busy.

I had to ask for a dead year to wait for my twins to grow, I failed to balance studies with the children. My husband was not very supportive.

I sent the younger children to my mum, their Grand mum during examination period or whenever I had assignment deadlines.

### Section 3

#### 17. The economic status of my family influenced my educational progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very positive</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neither positive nor negative</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very negative</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 17.a. Please give reasons why (sample of responses)

Due to lack of money, this motivated my mum to prioritise my education and this motivated me to work hard and ensure that I attain the best grades.

I come from a Muslim family of the lake Sheikh Mwalimu Hassan Kamihandakituku. The family has very hard working and friendly members who follow Islamic principles. Moreover, since Muslims do not drink intoxicants this makes members very active and each minute of their life is put to useful use compared to other religions where alcohol is not prohibited. As a result, the majority of family members are rich and funds for school fees can easily be raised.

Money has always been a problem. It was a struggle for me to get to University because my family was Polygamous. Having elder brothers and sisters helped because they would contribute towards my fees and I was able to complete the degree in BCOM.

I come from a middle class family of professionals so school fees was never a problem. My parents encouraged me to study and were willing to sponsor my education even up to PhD level.

I had to drop out of school after secondary because of fees, work, save and educate myself at University level because my parents were too poor and relied on mainly agriculture.

#### 18. The rural and urban set up of my primary and secondary school influenced my educational progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Set up</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very positive</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neither positive nor negative</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very negative</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 18.a. Please give reasons why (sample of responses)

Practical activities of my early life inspired me to be innovative and this is one of the reasons that I enjoy growing fruit trees wherever I go or work. An example is Bugolobi parish in Kampala where I planted over 100 pawpaw trees for the community and as a result, every week, each household in the village
gets two paw paws free of charge.

The setup of a school influenced my progress in having an impression that I was going to a well-cared for school.

The urban primary school gave the best foundation because most of the teachers were highly skilled.

The rural school I was in had no facilities and teachers were not motivated so it performed poorly.

I was in an expensive private school, so I performed well and went to a good secondary school. This helped my progress into Higher Education.

19. The HIV/AIDS scourge and other terminal illnesses affected my educational progress

| 1. very positive: | 0.0% | 0 |
| 2. positive: | 2.3% | 4 |
| 3. neither positive nor negative: | 20.3% | 33 |
| 4. negative: | 33.3% | 55 |
| 5. very negative: | 44.1% | 73 |

19. a. Please give reasons why (sample of answer)

Some relatives who used to buy me some scholastic materials passed away and it became more difficult to progress into Higher Education. The family had to fund raise on most occasions to get my school fees.

My parents passed away and we had to be taken in by our maternal family. They did their best to see us progress in Education but it wasn’t easy because we were 6 orphans.

When I lost my parents I lost hope in continuing with Higher Education and it was through the Carnegie scholarship that I was able to get a degree.

I had to drop out of secondary school, get work and support my siblings and it was only later that I was able to join University as a Mature age student.

20. The civil war in Uganda (1979-1986) had an impact on my education progress

| 1. very positive: | 0.0% |
| 2. positive: | 8.3% | 14 |
| 3. neither positive nor negative: | 16.7% | 27 |
| 4. negative: | 16.7% | 27 |
| 5. very negative: | 58.3% | 97 |

20. a. Please give reasons why (sample of responses)

Due to insecurity we would keep out of school for days hence impacting on the progress.

Loss of property and family members affected my education. Fewer funds could be raised and further sub divided to cater for orphans.

My family had to migrate to neighbouring Kenya for a while until the situation stabilized. In Kenya I was able to study in a stable environment, I performed exceptionally well and gained admission into
Makerere University thereafter.

It was unsafe to study in the boarding schools and there were times we had to be guarded by soldiers and taken into the bushes whenever there was an attack. In some schools, soldiers raped female students.

The influence of the war was not much in my district. It had no influence on my educational progress.

21. The government affirmative action (1.5 points) for female students influenced my educational progress

| 1. very positive: | 0.0% | 0 |
| 2. positive: | 38.0% | 63 |
| 3. neither positive nor negative: | 33.3% | 55 |
| 4. negative: | 16.7% | 27 |
| 5. very negative: | 12.0% | 20 |

21. a. Please give reasons why (sample of responses)

It didn’t impact on my entry since I had been given a flat course, so I had to join a private University for a better course

Only for female and not for male students. It has helped many girls gain entry into University which is unfair to male students.

I was given a course I wasn’t interested in but because my father couldn’t afford fees as a private student I took the course I qualified in as a Government student due to the 1.5 additional points.

It didn’t help me much because I was given a flat course which I had to pay for anyway.

The 1.5 helped me get a place at the University, without it I may have gone to a tertiary college.

22. What would you say were the main barriers to your progress in education? (sample of responses)

Financial resources; Death of my mother, while still a child; Hostile step-mother

CHILD BIRTH

Influence of my mum on which schools I should go to, she preferred day schools to boarding, yet most good schools where boarding schools.

Lack of raw models in education.

Poor government services.

Large polygamous families. Living with extended family and orphans of relatives who had died of terminal illnesses (HIV/AIDS).

Dependence on Agriculture and poor skills training so poor employment opportunities hence no money for school fees.

23. What would you say were the main enablers to your progress in education? (sample of responses)

- Strong faith in Islamic Religion - Supporting father - Support from my late mother’s family

1. My Mother believed in me - she provided a conducive environment; she was hard working and encouraged us to study.

2. Despite the poor human rights records during the period 1971 - 1979, the Government encouraged women to participate in many activities such as joining different sections of police plus other sectors, which were previously a preserve for men only. This could have set a trend for women to have that courage to tread where others had feared to dare in the past.

3. The NRM Government put into place policies that encouraged woman to work and study at the same time. The liberalized economy and recognition of women’s efforts contributed to women’s ego.


5. Above all, God’s mercies and willingness to give me the opportunity to study to such a high level.
Influenced by Qur'anic teachings especially from chapter 96 Al 'Alaq. Tells all men and women to read and seek knowledge.

**MOTHERS SUPPORT**

Support from my mum who believed in educating a girl. The fact that I had to prove to the traditionalists that a girl could also study and remain modest/God-fearing

The motivation from the head-teachers

Introduction of the UPE (Universal Primary Education) and recently the USE (Universal Secondary Education) has enabled many female students progress further into education. The Carnegie scholarship for deprived families has also helped such students into University education.

Government sponsorships and bursaries, the 1.5 additional points for female students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>24. Would you be willing to take part in a follow up focus group discussion or one to one in-depth interview? If yes please provide your mobile contact number and email address. Thank you for taking part in this survey (sample of respondents contacts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+256790790335 <a href="mailto:zahra.muhammed@orange.co.ug">zahra.muhammed@orange.co.ug</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+256772356485 <a href="mailto:mugumbu2002@yahoo.co.uk">mugumbu2002@yahoo.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+256701345432 <a href="mailto:nakijobasawuya@yahoo.com">nakijobasawuya@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+256704671339 <a href="mailto:amanfatuma@yahoo.co.uk">amanfatuma@yahoo.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes, of course (I would do anything halal to support a Muslim) +254711440201 [nnaava@yahoo.com](mailto:nnaava@yahoo.com)

May Allah bless you and give you the success you need to uplift the Ummah.

+256772602871 [fatumah@acadreg.mak.ac.ug](mailto:fatumah@acadreg.mak.ac.ug)
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (with prompts and cues)

1. Could you briefly introduce yourself and describe your educational background?
2. Where is your home district?
3. Were you brought up in the rural area (village) or urban area (town) and how was your experience in both primary and secondary school?
4. At your particular course at University, what was the approximate ratio of males to females? Were Muslim females effectively represented?
5. While at University, did you at any time feel religiously discriminated? If so how?
6. How would you describe your family background? Did you grow up in a large or extended family which was Polygamous or was the family small and monogamous? Did this affect your educational progress? How?
7. Do you feel your progress into Higher Education has been affected by the level of your Parents education or attitudes towards education? How?
8. Are you married with children? Has this been favourable towards your educational progress? If yes, how? If no, how?
9. Have you ever felt that culture has had an impact on your progress into Higher Education? For example have early marriages or female circumcision been issues in your family? If yes, how? If no, why not?
10. Have you ever felt discriminated as a girl child compared to your brothers while pursuing Higher Education? Did you at any time feel there was preference to the male family members over you?
11. Would you consider your family background as one with strong religious values? Have you ever felt that your religion was oppressive towards your pursuit into Higher Education? If yes how? If no, why?
12. Would you consider your family as one with a high standard of living? If yes, why? If no, why?
13. Have Economic factors played a major role in your progress into Higher Education, if so how?
14. Uganda has been one of the first countries to go public on the issue of HIV/AIDS due to the high mortality rate. It has been said that every one in five families have experienced the impact of HIV/AIDS. Is this true for yourself? How did it affect your educational progress?

15. Uganda experienced civil war between the early 70’s and mid 80’s? Did this in any way affect your progress into Higher Education?

16. Do you think the government of Uganda has effective representation of Muslim women in politics? Why if yes or no?

17. What other factors would you consider to have been barriers towards your pursuit of Higher Education? Briefly describe how each one affected you?

18. How did you manage to overcome these barriers?

19. What do you think about the 1.5 additional points, an affirmative action introduced by the Government in 1990 given to female students who have completed ‘A’ Levels so as to access University education? Did it have an impact on your educational progress?

20. What factors would you consider to have been main motivators towards your Educational progress? How were these favourable?

21. Would you consider going for a Higher Educational qualification? If yes, why? If not, why not?

22. What do you feel needs to be done and by who so that young Muslim girls can achieve their full Educational potential?

23. Do you think the Muslim organizations and leadership have played their role in ensuring progress among Muslims seeking further education? Do you feel that Muslim females been able to access this support?

24. As a person who has managed to achieve so much? What advice would you give young Muslims girls out there?

25. As a policy maker and implementer what role can you play to ensure that young Muslim women are given maximum opportunity to progress even further into Higher Education?
APPENDIX 5: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Researcher: Fatihiya M Saad, School of Education, University of Leicester, England, UK.

Topic: “The underrepresentation of Muslim Women in Higher Education: A case study of the causes and opportunities for change in Uganda”.

Dear Respondent,

The research seeks to explore the reasons behind the underrepresentation of the Ugandan Muslim Woman in the field of Higher Education. You have been identified as a resourceful person to this study and any information given will be used solely for the Research.

The research will be conducted with respect to your rights, interests and dignity and in conformity with rules and regulations of the British Revised Ethical Guidelines (2004). You will be interviewed verbally for 45 minutes (or more). Information will be both written and recorded with an audio tape. All information given will be treated with the utmost respect to privacy and confidentiality. Participants are free to withdraw from the exercise at any given moment but within understandable limits.

If you agree to the terms and conditions as stated above, please sign below.

NB: The information given below will be for the researcher’s record purposes. None will be disclosed publicly unless permission has been sought and given by the respondent.

Background information
Name (OPTIONAL) ___________________ Signature __________
Date _____ Age ________ Your Family background ____________________________ (nuclear, extended, polygamous)
Marital Status _______________ (married, single, divorced, cohabiting) Children ________ (no.)
Highest attained Educational level __________________ (secondary, diploma, degree, Masters, PhD) Course studied ________________________________
Duration and date of graduation ________________________________
Current Employment __________________________________________________________
Home District ________________________________Ethnicity __________________________ (tribe)
Secondary Schools attended ________________________ (indicate whether village or town school)
Primary Schools attended ________________________ (indicate whether village or town school)
E mail ________________________ Phone contact ________________________
## APPENDIX 6: FEMALE MUSLIM RESPONDENTS INTERVIEWED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>HOME DISTRICT</th>
<th>ETHNICITY</th>
<th>MARITAL STATUS</th>
<th>FAMILY BACKGROUND</th>
<th>NO OF CHILDREN</th>
<th>UNDERGRADUATE COURSE AND YEAR OF STUDY</th>
<th>MASTERS COURSE AND YEAR OF STUDY</th>
<th>CURRENT PROFESSION OR OCCUPATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>MAYUGE</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>POLYGAMOUS</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>BACHELOR OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION</td>
<td>NOT ATTAINED DUE TO POLITICAL PRESSURES</td>
<td>HON MINISTER OF STATE FOR GENDER, LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>ARUA</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>POLYGAMOUS</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION</td>
<td>NOT ATTAINED DUE TO POLITICAL PRESSURES</td>
<td>HON MEMBER PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER ON MUSLIM AFFAIRS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>MPIGI</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>POLYGAMOUS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>BACHELOR OF SCIENCE AND DIPLOMA IN LAW</td>
<td>NOT ATTAINED DUE TO POLITICAL PRESSURES</td>
<td>HON MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT REPRESENTATIVE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>MPIGI</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>POLYGAMOUS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>BACHELOR OF COMMERCE</td>
<td>NOT ATTAINED DUE TO POLITICAL PRESSURES</td>
<td>HON MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR MPIGI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>JINJA</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>POLYGAMOUS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE</td>
<td>MSC COMPUTER SCIENCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</td>
<td>ASSISTANT LECTURER IN COMPUTER SCIENCE, MAKERERE UNIVERSITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>LUWERO</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>POLYGAMOUS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE</td>
<td>MASTER OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS</td>
<td>PART TIME LECTURER IN AGRICULTURE MAKERERE UNIVERSITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>HOME DISTRICT</td>
<td>ETHNICITY</td>
<td>MARITAL STATUS</td>
<td>FAMILY BACKGROUND</td>
<td>NO OF CHILDREN</td>
<td>UNDERGRADUATE COURSE AND YEAR OF STUDY</td>
<td>MASTERS COURSE AND YEAR OF STUDY</td>
<td>CURRENT PROFESSION OR OCCUPATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
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<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MABALE</td>
<td>MUGISU</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>POLYGAMOUS</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>BACHELOR OF ARTS IN EDUCATION (GRADUATED 2001)</td>
<td>M.A GENDER STUDIES (YEAR 2)</td>
<td>PART TIME LECTURER IN GENDER STUDIES MAKERERE UNIVERSITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>MASAKA</td>
<td>MUGANDA</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>POLYGAMOUS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>BACHELOR OF SCIENCE WITH EDUCATION (GRADUATED 1990)</td>
<td>MASTER IN EDUCATION (GRADUATED 1995)</td>
<td>DEPUTY REGISTRAR MAKERERE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>KABAROLE</td>
<td>MUTOORO</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>POLYGAMOUS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>BACHELOR OF LAWS (GRADUATED 2006)</td>
<td>MASTERS OF LAW (GRADUATED 2011)</td>
<td>PROFESSIONAL PRACTICING SOLICITOR KAMPALA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>MAKINDYE</td>
<td>MUGANDA</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>NUCLEAR</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>BACHELOR OF SECRETARIAL STUDIES (GRADUATED 2002)</td>
<td>MSC IN COMPUTER SCIENCE (YEAR 1)</td>
<td>ADMINISTRATOR COLLEGE OF MAKERERE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE COMPUTING AND INFORMATION SCIENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>MPIGI</td>
<td>MUGANDA</td>
<td>MARRIED</td>
<td>NUCLEAR</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>BSC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (GRADUATED 2009)</td>
<td>MSC IN COMPUTER SCIENCE (YEAR 1)</td>
<td>ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY TECHNOLOGY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>ZANZIBAR</td>
<td>COMORIAN</td>
<td>SINGLE</td>
<td>NUCLEAR</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>DIPLOMA IN SECRETARIAL STUDIES (GRADUATED 1991)</td>
<td>NOT HOPEFUL DUE TO FOREIGN CITIZENSHIP</td>
<td>SENIOR PERSONAL SECRETARY MAKERERE UNIVERSITY STATISTICS</td>
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<td>AGE</td>
<td>HOME DISTRICT</td>
<td>ETHNICITY</td>
<td>MARITAL STATUS</td>
<td>FAMILY BACKGROUND</td>
<td>NO OF CHILDREN</td>
<td>UNDERGRADUATE COURSE AND YEAR OF STUDY</td>
<td>MASTERS COURSE AND YEAR OF STUDY</td>
<td>CURRENT PROFESSION OR OCCUPATION</td>
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<td>B.A EDUCATION (YEAR 1)</td>
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<td>STUDENT</td>
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**SUMMARY OF STATISTICS OF INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUALIFICATION</th>
<th>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>THOSE INTERVIEWED IN GROUP AND FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS</th>
<th>HOW THEY WERE IDENTIFIED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 HON. MINISTER, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Snow ball purposeful sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 MUSLIM WOMEN PROFESSIONALS</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Snow ball purposeful sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ADMINISTRATORS</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Snow ball purposeful sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ACADEMICIANS (LECTURERS AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTS)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Snow ball purposeful sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 POST GRADUATE STUDENTS</td>
<td>(made up one group interview of 8) 23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Opportunistic sampling from the BOS (Online questionnaire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS</td>
<td>(made up one group interview of 8) 26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Opportunistic sampling from the BOS (Online questionnaire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 groups of interview</td>
<td>(mixed postgraduate and undergraduate students of 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Opportunistic sampling (one group interview of 8 had a mixture of undergraduate and postgraduate students)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 7 (FOLLOW ON QUESTIONNAIRE)

INTERVIEW OUTLINE

1. Briefly, describe your educational experiences to date?

________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________

2. Can you briefly describe what you feel has been the impact of culture and religion on your educational achievement?

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
3. What factors do you think have supported you as a Muslim woman in pursuit of your Higher Education?

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________

4. What factors do you feel have been a barrier to your progress in education?

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

5. What do you feel needs to be done to ensure maximum support of Muslim women in secular education?

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
“IN CELEBRATION OF WOMEN’S EDUCATION”

“WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO A YOUNG WOMAN WHO WANTS TO COMPLETE HER UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND PROGRESS EVEN FURTHER?”

“HAS YOUR JOURNEY TO UNIVERSITY BEEN EVENTFUL WITH LOADS OF EXPERIENCES TO SHARE?”

IF THE ANSWER IS “YES” ~ THEN MEET ME FOR A CHAT AND REFRESHMENTS AT THE MUMSA STUDY ROOM (NEXT TO THE UNIVERSITY MOSQUE)

WHEN: After Friday Prayers
TIME:  2:00 TO 4:00 PM

“BE PART OF THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS POSITIVE CHANGE IN MUSLIM WOMEN’S EDUCATION IN UGANDA”

CONTACT: FATIHYA 0712 809 888 or e mail sfatihiya@yahoo.co.uk
Please log on to the Makerere University website and complete the on line questionnaire
https://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/leicester/highereducation
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