Sex, Gender, and Culture: The Emergence of Structural Violence While Seeking a Sexual Health Transformation in Uganda

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Date of Award
2015

Document Type
Open Access Thesis

College
College of Theology, Arts, & Sciences

Department
International Development and Service

Degree Name
International Development and Service, MA

First Supervisor
Dr. Teri Murphy

Keywords
sexual health, sexual education, structural violence, culture, Uganda

Abstract
With the 2nd highest fertility rate in the world and the 5th highest population growth rate, Uganda’s ever increasing number of inhabitants is becoming a hindrance to the nation’s ability to develop socially and economically. Despite the push for increased family planning services and sexual health services by the international community and national government, translating words into effective action has been met with cultural beliefs and behaviors blocking the road to changing sex practices within Uganda. Through conversations with the employees of Musana Community Development Organization in Iganga, Uganda, this research explores the complexity of the barriers standing in the way of an effective sexual health transformation in this East African nation. The results reveal just how deeply culture is embedded in the hearts and minds of the local people. The biggest deterrent preventing effective sex education is the gender disparity. Men, in particular, are reluctant to face their own participation in gender based structural violence. They are also reticent to see the need to become allies on behalf of the women in their community. Additionally, the research...
discloses the depth of the silence surrounding sex conversations with adolescents, opening the discussion regarding how to move away from teaching abstinence while maintaining cultural propriety.

CU Commons Citation
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Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) refers to any harmful act that is perpetrated against one person's will and that is based on socially ascribed gender differences. SGBV involves widespread violations to human rights and is often linked to unequal gender relations within communities as well as abuses of power. It can take the form of sexual violence or persecution, or it can be the result of discrimination embedded in legislation or prevailing social norms and practices. In the displacement context, SGBV disproportionally affects refugee women and girls as Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. It encompasses threats of violence and coercion. It can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual in nature, and can take the form of a denial of resources or access to services. It inflicts harm on women, girls, men and boys. SGBV is a violation of human rights. It denies the human dignity of the individual and hurts human development. SGBV is largely rooted in individual attitudes that condone violence within the family, th Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) can undermine long-term state