THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS ON MUSLIM WOMEN'S DOMESTIC LIFE: A CASE STUDY OF KAMPALA DISTRICT, UGANDA.

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ABSTRACT

Islamic teachings provide comprehensive guidance on marriage, child custody and inheritance, including provisions intended to protect Muslim women's rights and welfare. However, the extent to which these teachings shape Muslim women's actual domestic experiences remains insufficiently examined in Uganda. In Kampala District, tensions between Islamic principles, patriarchal interpretations, cultural practices and socio-economic conditions raise questions about how religious teachings are understood and implemented within Muslim households. This study examines the influence of Islamic teachings on Muslim women's domestic lives, focusing on marriage, child custody, inheritance and coping mechanisms. The study adopted a qualitative ethnographic approach using a descriptive multiple-case study design. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with six Muslim women, three Focus Group Discussions involving twelve young women, six Sheikhs, six Imams and six married men. Data was analysed thematically. The findings revealed a gap between Islamic teachings and Muslim women lived experiences. Although Islamic teachings recognise Muslim women's marital, custodial and inheritance rights, the study shows that these rights are frequently undermined by selective religious interpretations, patriarchal cultural practices, economic vulnerability and weak institutional enforcement of Muslim Personal law. Women respond through negotiation and economic adaptation, although some coping practices reinforce their vulnerability. The study concludes, that the challenges identified arise substantially from the misinterpretation and inconsistent implementation of Islamic teachings. It recommends strengthening Islamic religious education, gender-sensitive religious leadership, women's economic empowerment and Islamic family dispute-resolution mechanisms.