RE-IMAGINING DECENTRALISATION: IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN
ETHNIC GROUPS AND THE STATE IN UGANDA

by

SENTONGO ASHAD

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty
of
George Mason University
in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Committee:

Chair of Committee

Graduate Program Director

Dean, School for Conflict Analysis
and Resolution

Summer Semester 2013
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

Date: JUNE 27TH 2013

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at George Mason University

By

Ashad Sentongo
M.A Coexistence and Conflict Resolution, Brandeis University 2008
Diploma in Management, Dameline School of Management 1998
Post-Graduate Dip in Educ - Islamic University in Uganda 1992
B.A Islamic Studies, Islamic University in Uganda 1991

Dissertation Director: Terrence Lyons – Professor
School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution

Summer Semester 2013
George Mason University
Fairfax, Virginia
Dedication

To my parents for dedicating their lives to educate me. The late Hajji Asadu Semmindi Lutale passed away on April 23rd 2012 in the early days of writing this dissertation, and Hajjat Sarah Nakanwagi Lutale who continues to be a source of guidance and inspiration.

I profoundly thank Allah (SWT) for the life and wisdom He gave me, and for providing me with a supportive family, resourceful lecturers, supervisors, and friends with whom I shared this journey.
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<tr>
<td>ACCU</td>
<td>Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda</td>
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<td>BLB</td>
<td>Buganda Land Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAO</td>
<td>Chief Administrative Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAR</td>
<td>Conflict Analysis and Resolution</td>
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<td>CECC</td>
<td>Civic Education Central Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>District Administrators</td>
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<tr>
<td>DLB</td>
<td>District Land Board</td>
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<td>DP</td>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
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<td>DPSF</td>
<td>Decentralization Policy Strategic Framework</td>
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<td>DSC</td>
<td>District Service Commissions</td>
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<tr>
<td>KY</td>
<td>Kabaka Yekka Party</td>
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<td>LC</td>
<td>Local Councils</td>
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<tr>
<td>LG</td>
<td>Local Governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISR</td>
<td>Makerere Institute of Social Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>N^-ve</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NN^-ve</td>
<td>Non-negative</td>
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<tr>
<td>NP^-ve</td>
<td>Non-positive</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRA</td>
<td>National Resistance Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRM</td>
<td>National Resistance Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P^+ve</td>
<td>Positive</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAF</td>
<td>Poverty Action Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>PEAP</td>
<td>Poverty Eradication Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Resistance Councils</td>
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<td>RDC</td>
<td>Resident District Commissioner</td>
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<td>Structural Violence</td>
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<td>Traditional Leaders</td>
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<td>UNC</td>
<td>Uganda National Congress</td>
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<td>UPC</td>
<td>Uganda People’s Congress</td>
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ABSTRACT

RE-IMAGINING DECENTRALISATION: IMPROVING OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS AND THE STATE IN UGANDA

Ashad Sentongo, Ph.D
George Mason University, 2013
Dissertation Director: Dr. Terrence Lyons

Decentralization of state power is often argued to be the appropriate power-sharing system of government in ethnically divided societies, whenever group grievances over exclusion or discrimination by the state culminate into violent conflicts. Studies about decentralization also tend to focus on policies, systems and structures through which the state delegates, decongests and devolves its powers to local governments in which citizens participate. However, conditions under which decentralization can or fails to improve relationships especially between aggrieved ethnic groups and the state remain indeterminate. Failure to recognize these conditions may explain why the system manages conflicts within one group and not the other, and accounts for persistent group claims of entitlement to power and control of resources. In the face of the overwhelming
power and influence of the state and local governments over local communities, such claims tend to be framed and articulated by traditional authorities and their members as threats to group status, culture and identity.

This study determined that decentralization improves relationships positively when it is perceived to function effectively to deliver services, including meeting cultural and identity interests of ethnic groups especially over power and resources. However Non-positive improvement occurs when the system functions effectively to deliver services, but is perceived by ethnic groups to threaten their status, cultural and identity interests. Non-negative improvement occurs when poor service delivery frustrates ethnic groups, although not in ways that threaten their status, culture and identity interests. Relationships remain negative when poor service delivery frustrates ethnic groups, and the system is perceived to threaten their status, culture and identity interests.

This finding emerged from comparative case study of Buganda and Busoga ethnic groups in Kampala and Jinja districts, located in Central and Eastern regions of Uganda, respectively. Both ethnic groups share proximate linguistic and cultural characteristics, and decentralization was implemented the same way in both districts. However unlike in Busoga, Buganda claims entitlement to power
and control of local resources and the region is marked by violent interactions with the state.

Decentralization can be re-imagined to maximize implementation, by depoliticizing the system, with a local government’s mandate that is flexible enough to create opportunities that reduce the problem of dual authorities, and policy options that level-off disparities in power and control of resources between LGs and traditional authorities. In this way, the system becomes more efficient to manage conflicts when effective delivery of services also functions to improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state.
Chapter One

1.1 Introduction to the study

The subject of this study is power-sharing and ethnic conflict. It focuses on how decentralization of state power can improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda. The study builds on theories of power-sharing to examine decentralization, beyond structures through which state power is transferred from the central government to sub-national levels, to examine how the system can improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state to improve management of conflicts in multi-ethnic societies. Two comparative case studies of the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups in Kampala and Jinja districts of Uganda (Appendix 1) are used to trace the influence of decentralization on relationships. This study argues that differences in historical processes of identify formation and participation by groups in processes of state formation produced unique demands for power and competing claims of entitlement to control resources between the state and different ethnic groups. In this context, the uniform institutional setting of Local Governments (LG) in which power-sharing through decentralization is implemented across the country contributed to manage ethnic conflict in Jinja but not in Kampala districts.
Uganda is a multi-ethnic society with 56 ethnic groups, and is located in East Africa. It is bordered by The Republic of South Sudan in the north, The Republic of Kenya in the East, the Democratic Republic of Congo in the West, The Republic of Tanzania in the South, and The Republic of Rwanda in the South West. The country is important for this study because decentralization was adopted to respond to grievances over lack of access to power, poor service delivery and discrimination along ethnic lines, which marked centralized governments between 1967 until 1993. During this time different ethno-regional groups, especially from northern, central and western parts of Uganda, organized four military coup d’états and fought two civil wars to access state power. According to Mutebi (1999:23), decentralization changed this situation and “established a new accountability relationship between political leaders and constituencies.” Although the system drastically increased participation of local communities in LGs to manage affairs in their respective constituencies, it produced different experiences in Buganda and Busoga regions in the central and eastern parts of Uganda. These contrasting outcomes provide an important opportunity to analyze when and why decentralization sometimes contributes to conflict resolution in ethnically divided societies but not all the time. The findings are a valuable addition to academics, policymaking, and practitioners’ capacity to improve designing and implementation of decentralization in multi-ethnic societies.
Uganda is considered a success story and a model for decentralization and local governance in Africa (Barungi, 2003, Dawa, 2001). Various African leaders visit the country to learn about decentralization. The system is implemented through autonomous LGs that expand the scope of government to deliver services closer to the people, increase accountability and citizens’ participation in managing their affairs. However the system failed to respond to the conflict between Buganda and the state over the groups’ interests, yet is appreciated and contributes to positive relationships between Busoga and the state. This was evident during the constitutional review process of 2003. Busoga Kingdom proposed that the current decentralization policy should not be done away with but be allowed to operate (Kisambira, 2003). On the other hand Buganda Kingdom proposed to abolish the system in favor of federalism (Mulwanyammuli, 2001), for the region to become more autonomous and have more power to manage local affairs in Buganda.

Green (2008) argues that, “the uniform way decentralization was implemented across the country in Uganda helped to counter accusations of regional bias.”

Regions, as referred to in this study, are geographical areas mostly identified with or named after a dominant ethnic group that is often organized around a King, e.g. Buganda region is the central region of Uganda. In most regions of Uganda, this usually indicates the strategic influence of the group in the region and
“salience of its core identity” (Volkan 1997, Korostelina 2007, Coleman 2000). For that matter, Buganda region in the central region is the territory of Buganda Kingdom where the Capital City Kampala, the seat of government and the monarchy are located. The indigenous Baganda tribe (Appendix 3) is a prototype ethnic group (Fearon, 2003), the largest of 56 ethnic groups in the country, covering 18% of 30 million people (Ugand Bearue of Statistics 2002). Busoga region (Appendix 4) borders Buganda region in the northeast. The indigenous Basoga ethnic group is the third largest ethnic group in the country and make up 9% of the Uganda’s population (Ibid). Like Buganda Kingdom, Busoga Kingdom is an ancient institution with structures of traditional leadership at county, sub-county and village levels. The structures continue to function alongside social, political and economic structures of the modern state, including LGs under the decentralization system of government.

Green (2008), further states that decentralization in Uganda replaced national conflicts with local conflicts. This is seen in the case where all districts still experience local level conflicts, mostly between local elites from the same ethnic groups that compete for local authority and resources within a constituency or zone. Horowitz (1985) maintains that such intra-ethnic, rather than interethnic, competition can promote moderation between contending ethnic groups, and reduces conflicts by taking the heat off from the center. However this is not the
case in Buganda region, where the conflict remains largely between the Baganda and the central government over interests that the system claims to respond to. Instead, for example, the group demands for more autonomy to appoint local leaders and control local resources e.g. ancestral land in Buganda. On the other hand, election of local leaders to control local resources and manage local affairs has produced “years of peace and stability, in spite of the poverty that affects most rural communities” in Busoga region (URN, 2010).

Sandole (2008) maintains that conflicts manifest in relationships. Hostilities between the central government and Buganda often escalate into violent communal riots to which the state also responds violently, in a vicious cycle that exemplifies negative relationships between both parties. Therefore this study focuses on how decentralization functions to influence perceptions, interests and interactions, as analytical elements of the relationship (Saunders, 1999) between the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups on the one hand, and the state in Uganda. Differences in how each group participated in building the pre and post independence state, and historical processes through which group identities were formed, produced unique forms of power and claims to control local resources between Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups. As explained later, these produced interests and demands that account for the variation in how each ethnic group
perceives the transfer of state power through LGs, and interact with the state to achieve their demands or interests.

The researcher's interest in this study emerges from personal experiences coming from Buganda region, which experienced atrocities from militaristic and centralized political regimes of Presidents Idi Amin and Milton Obote. The ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) promised and indeed produced a fundamental change in governance through decentralization after winning the 1981-86 civil war. A wave of reforms and political revival swept the country as communities elected leaders from village to national level, set local priorities and how to meet them. This study determined conditions that explain why decentralization, which was applied equally across the country and in which all people participate, produced different results among the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups in Uganda.

The study expands understanding and application of decentralization to manage conflicts in ethnically divided societies. Findings from the study explain the conditions under which decentralization produces different results in the relationship between the state that transfers power to lower levels of government, and ethnic groups as communities that exercise this power in regions where they are also organized, for example, as Kingdoms. This contribution will be valuable
for policy makers, academicians and practitioners involved in designing and implementing the decentralization to manage conflicts in multi-ethnic societies like Uganda.

1.2 Research Problem

Horowitz (1985) holds that in conflict situations, contested legitimacy and uncertain group worth are elements that combine to produce politics of group entitlement. In the process, actors fashion their own sense of group entitlement, and responses to structural constraints and limitations to achieve them (Scott 1985). Similarly, since independence in 1962 when Uganda became a unitary state, the Baganda have gone through a range of cooperative and confrontational relationships with successive regimes to achieve self-determination, control ancestral land, and fight discrimination (Tripp, 2010). Decentralization has been implemented for 20 years to respond to similar grievances across the country, through autonomous LGs that local communities elect and participate to achieve their interests. However, the system has failed to manage the conflict between the Baganda and the state over the same demands. The relationship between the Baganda and the state remains marred by hostility and violence over demands for more authority and autonomy from the state for self-rule and control local resources, including ancestral land. This is unlike among the Busoga ethnic group
where members appreciate the system, participate in decentralization structures, and maintain positive relationships with the state (Action Africa Help, 2010).

Frustration by the system was stressed in 2012 when a former Prime Minister of Buganda Kingdom Government chastised the central government that, “we were told decentralization would meet the tenets of a federal system, but as it turned out, it ended up creating jobs for NRM supporters where priorities of elected leaders are not consistent with expectations of Buganda” (Mulwanyamuli, 2011). The communal riots and violence of 2007-10 by Baganda against the state marked the escalation of hostilities in the relationship between the monarchy and the central government.

Consistent with scholarly works and peacebuilding practices, the NRM government adopted decentralization with the view that popularly elected LGs are better placed than the central government to identify and respond to the needs of local communities, and to hold local officials accountable in the use of public resources (Decentralization Policy Strategic Framework – DPSF 2006). The system was also developed to “diffuse social and political tensions and ensure local cultural and political autonomy” (Bardhan, 2005:48). However, grievances that such scholars and the Uganda government broadly claim the system aimed
to solve persist in Buganda region, and mark the negative relationship between the Baganda and the state.

Doornbos (1998:94) has argued that, “the generation of ethnic consciousness and the impetus of ethnic protest must all be understood in the context of the changing relationships between the state and civil society—that domain between the state and society—from which they derive significance and orientation.” The conflict between Baganda as a social group and the state in Uganda raises questions concerning the significance and orientation decentralization produces in the relationship between ethnic groups and the state. Since decentralization occurs within particular contexts, in Uganda it remains indeterminate how the system functions to mediate state power and traditional authority, citizenship and tribal loyalties, where for example the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups enjoy strong demographic, linguistic, historical and territorial advantages comparable to other ethnic groups in the country.

Easton (1990:34) argues that theories of state building assume that, “people learn to respond to political events and to political others regardless of behavioral patterns that characterize their behavioral domains.” However Buganda’s insistence on more authority and autonomy for self-rule and control of local resources, through successive regimes including under decentralization, reveal
that the group has not learnt to respond to political developments in the country. The Baganda find the current decentralization system inconsistent with the kind of relationship with the state the group perceived would help achieve their interests. Thus the demand for more authority and autonomy from the state in the region. Consistent with this study, Smith (2004:64) recommends examining “historical contexts of the conflict and political institutions that have contributed to political commitments”, to be able to understand “processes through which conceptions of political membership, allegiance, and identity are formed and transformed” (ibid).

Avruch (2000) maintains that, “power, so central to the realists’ view of the world remains problematic to conflict resolution theorists.” This study contributes to how the field of Conflict Analysis and Resolution (CAR) can deal with problems associated with power-sharing. Particularly the decentralization of state power to transform relationships in multi-ethnic societies, where different groups have unique perceptions and demands over local authority and autonomy, influenced by historical and institutional processes of identity formation and devolution, respectively. Boulding (1989) has also argued that, “power exists in the context of interactions with institutions”, where possibility boundaries necessary to satisfy interests are set depending on attitudes of actors in a particular situation. This conflict provides opportunity to contrast how decentralization has influenced the
relationship between the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.

1.3. Historical Context.

Ethnicity and centralization of state power combine to explain the political context in which decentralization was adopted in Uganda. Grievances over exclusion and discrimination along ethnic lines mark the history of centralized governments and violent struggles to change them during the pre and post-independence periods. Each regime was also marked by a “fusion-of-power”, (Mamdani 2009:25) where the chief executive, commander in chief, appointing authority of cabinet, was also head of ruling party and the President. Mamdani further maintains that the system was reproduced from the nature of the colonial state, where the colonial government supervised Baganda chiefs to rule fellow Baganda, but directly ruled other ethnic groups through state appointed Baganda chiefs as agents of the state. This “bifurcated” (ibid: 27) the state into rural and urban, civil and customary communities along ethnic lines, but was “molded around the system of authority found in Buganda Kingdom” (Okuku, 2002:28).

Two experiences combine to explain how ethnicity became a central issue in centralization of state power in Uganda: First, unmediated despotism of the colonial state where the institutional context privileged some and excluded other
ethnic groups from access to markets, education, land and appointment to positions in government (Mamdani, 1996). This condition made ethnicity the appropriate card for elites to play in order to organize, mobilize and assume political power (Horowitz 1985, Gunther and Diamond 2003). Secondly, communities became more tribalized as elites mobilized especially members of their respective ethnic groups to fight exclusion from accessing state power, including during the struggle to gain independence. This struggle deep-rooted ethnicity in the organization and management of the state, from which the peasant majority remain unreformed in the post-independence state (Mamdani 1996). In the same way, the centralized nature of the state continues to be organized through ethnically dominated political parties (Bates 2008, Ndegwa 1997) that also remain a thorn in the current decentralization system.

The first attempt to constitutionally decentralize state power was made in the independence constitution of 1962, which created administrative units with varying levels of autonomy in political leadership and service delivery. Although the system drew much from the nature of the colonial state, the constitution designated Buganda region a federal state i.e. under the central and autonomous control of Buganda Kingdom government. On the other hand Busoga, Bunyoro, Toro and Ankole Kingdoms were designated semi-federal states i.e. were under the central government of the Republic of Uganda with limited autonomy for self-governance. Other regions like Northern and Eastern
Uganda had district councils, drew their authority from the central government, and were led by commissioners appointed by the state. Leaders in the federal and semi-federal units were also able to “raise substantial revenue in addition to central government grants and employed their own staff” (Lubanga, 1996).

Elite manipulation of ethnicity to create political constituencies and control state power or win elections dominated subsequent political developments during the early post-independence state. Kakuba (2010) also argues that; “although political parties in most cases were designed and governed by ideas to represent the interest of the masses or its members, they placed emphasis on religious loyalties and ethnic leanings.” For example, Baganda of the protestant religion dominated the first political party in Uganda - the Uganda National Congress (UNC) formed in 1958. Baganda Catholics formed an “ethnic party” called Kabaka Yekka Party (meaning ‘King Only’ Party) to champion of the cause of protecting Buganda’s interests in the post-independence state (Chandra, 2004:66). KY merged with UNC, led by Milton Obote and dominated by northern region tribes, to form the Uganda People’s Congress (UPC) that won the first elections of 1964. The Democratic Party (DP) was also formed to advance Catholic interests in the new state.
In 1966, a crisis occurred when the military commanded by Idi Amin overthrew the first government that was elected in 1964. It all started with a disagreement on how to reconcile non-Baganda grievances over access to state power and state resources, with the Baganda’s claim to entitlement to positions in government, control over ancestral land and maintaining a federal status for Buganda. Buganda Kingdom palace was attacked on the orders of Milton Obote and the Kabaka of Buganda, who was the first elected president of Uganda, fled to Britain where he later died. The 1962 independence constitution was suspended and a new constitution was promulgated in 1967. Federalism and Kingdoms were abolished, backed by a military that was dominated by Acholi and Langi tribes of northern Uganda.

The country was thereafter declared a republic where all political and administrative functions of previously decentralized governments, according to the 1962 constitution, were consolidated under the central government, led by President Milton Obote. All Kingdoms were divided into districts, whose leaders were appointed by the central government. According to Semboja and Therlkildsen (1995:77):

*Non-state forms of association were construed as potential threats to the regime and were either co-opted or banned outright...and the state positioned itself as the motor of governance, development and*
provider of services, leaving no room for the active participation of non-state institutions and the masses in affairs of the state.

Ethnicity, which marked the nature of the colonial state, was reinforced after independence when the state became unceasingly exclusive, repressive and militarized in favor of northern region tribes. In the same way, “fusion-of-power” gained an ethnic quality when northern region tribes dominated state power through favoritism, because they dominated the army, which also had become a major actor in affairs of the state. The army commander and the President, who was also the leader of the ruling Uganda Peoples’ Congress (UPC) Party, were also from the same region. This produced the north and south ethnic divide among citizens i.e. between southern Bantu and northern Nilotics people, respectively. For that matter, “opposition to Milton Obote who was from the northern region came from mainly Bantu politicians from the central and western regions” (Okuku, 2002).

Post-independence governments in Uganda did not adopt policies to de-emphasize ethnic influences in affairs of the state, because this favored how different groups came to access state power. Ethnic groups that succeeded to dominate political power also controlled the “infrastructural power” (Mann, 1984) of the state at the expense of less dominant ethnic groups. Infrastructural power
relates to the ability of the state to penetrate and centrally coordinate activities of communities through its own structures. Attempts to create viable LGs were futile because they functioned at the expediency of ruling elites to ensure that local communities were not able to organize to threaten the status quo. Such communities were denied sufficient resources and authority to meet local interests, which helped to guarantee that local communities lack the capacity to challenge the central authority of the state. The Commission of Inquiry (1987) on LG also confirmed that, “local authorities were deprived of central government grants, and only a small proportion of the national budget was allocated to local authorities.”

The UPC Party government of 1967-1971 and military governments that followed acquired the same centralized character of the state but with an ethnic quality, where leaders exploited both to consolidate control of the state and resources. Barongo (1989) also affirms that, “ethnicity in Uganda was a consequence of excessive centralization of power and little respect for institutions in a multi-ethnic political context.” According to Mamdani (1999), this was the nature and character of the colonial state that was reproduced by post-independence regimes. The 1987 Commission’s report on LG stated that the 1980-85 regime of President Milton Obote attempted a "Mayumba Kkumi" (ten houses) system of decentralization, to revive political participation and improve service delivery to
communities. Here, ten houses from each village elected a local committee of leaders that worked with the district leadership and the state to ensure that communities participate in government programs. The report noted however, that this failed because the system mainly played a security function to entrench authoritarianism and patronage of the ruling UPC party. It also promoted “solicitous behaviors of officials at the local level who were involved in the distribution of essential but scarce commodities (particularly, sugar, salt and soap).” Constraints to LGs were also evident in the powers of the Minister of LG. The Commission’s report (1987) stated that:

The Minister had extensive powers over local authorities. For instance... he had control inter alia over the number of members of council, election of senior officials of council, election of council members themselves and the bye-laws they may pass, and empowered the minister to take over a Local Administration.

Therefore during this time LGs facilitated centralized influence and control by the state over local communities, which ethnic groups that dominated state power exploited to entrench their dominance. The above discussion explains the historical context within which the 1993 decentralization policy was adopted, then entrenched in the 1995 Constitution of Uganda as a system of government, and
has since been implemented across the country. The period between 1993 to date is the focus of this study.

1.4 Rationale for the study

This study argues that decentralization may improve relationships between the state and ethnic groups in some cases but not in others. Different histories of constructing group identities, unique demands over access to state power, autonomy of ethnic groups to meet culture and identity needs, and interests to control local resources explain these outcomes between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda. Systems and structures that expand the scope of government to enable political leadership and citizen participation into lower levels of government influence how ethnic groups perceive and interact with the state to achieve their interests.

In doing so, decentralization can improve relationships in cases where it is perceived to respond to historical grievances and unique interests, reinforce culture and identity of ethnic groups, in the process of providing services closer to the people. This can reduce on the problem of persistent hostilities and recurrence of violence, which challenges post-conflict societies where the system has been implemented, like Uganda.
1.5 **Main research question:** Does decentralization improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda?

1.5.1 **Research sub-questions**

- How do the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups in Uganda understand decentralization?
- How does decentralization improve perceptions, interests and interactions between ethnic groups and the state in Buganda region?
- How can decentralization improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Buganda region?

1.6 **Operational definition of terms**

In this study, power-sharing is examined as a system of managing conflicts related to access to state power in ethnically divided societies. Sisk (2003) describes power-sharing as a system of governance in which all major segments of society are provided a permanent share of power, which serves a “dual purpose to promote peacebuilding and a foundation for growth of democratic institutions” (Noel 2005). In this context, power-sharing signifies a shift from conceptualizing state power as ‘power-over’ to ‘power-with’ (Boulding, 1989; Nye, 2008). Under the former, state power is understood as limited, perceived as unequally distributed, and conceptualized as domination, coercion and control, and “often surges into violence, aggression and absurdity” (Foucault, 1981). This
view underlies the centralization of state power and associated civil wars and insurgencies that often seek regime change, secession etc. The latter perceives state power as expandable, corroborative, cooperative and capable of translating into peace, and is the underlying notion in power-sharing. Ideally therefore, adoption of decentralization in Uganda sought to break the cycle of coercion and repression that characterized centralized post-independence regimes, towards more collaboration and interdependence between citizens and the state. Foucault (1981) also argues that power is something that circulates, in which individuals circulate between threads but are also free to exercise this power. This study is concerned with this view of power, where state power is decentralized to lower levels of society and in turn improves the relationship between groups that receive and exercise this power and the state.

*Decentralization* refers to the “transfer of state power to different sub-national levels of government by the central government” (Constitution of Uganda 1995, Oxhorn et al 2004:7). In Uganda it takes the form of (i) *Political decentralization* – local leadership, participation and inclusion in decision-making, and relations between higher and lower governments, and (ii) *technical decentralization* – local administration, planning, budgeting, financial management, human resource management and development, monitoring and evaluation, supervision and mentoring (DPSF, 2006). However literature on decentralization suggests three
forms: devolution as transfer of political authority, deconcentration as transfer of administrative powers, and delegation as the transfer of managerial responsibilities. Inspite of the conceptual clarity, the forms overlap in most cases, since one may not function effectively independent of the other (Rondinelli, 1998; USAID, 2001; Kauzya, 2007:76). This is because “stakeholders’ interests during decentralization are rarely the same” (Kauzya, 2007:80), i.e. politicians, civil servants who facilitate processes, and the society at the grassroots who receive and utilize the authority transferred.

*State* refers to “the central government as the locus of power and authority with its associated political and administrative systems and institutions where citizens have equal membership” (Easton, 1990:200). This way, the state “claims legitimacy to monopolize and mediate or facilitate satisfaction of individual and group interests, and regulate its interactions with and between groups” (Cohen and Service, 1978:1). For this reason, access to state power by different ethnic groups is critical to in-group pride, self-esteem and favorable comparison of group identity (Tajfel, 1982:3; Korostelina, 2007:4). In Uganda, unequal distribution of state power contributed to the history of violent conflicts and was the reason given to adopt decentralization as a system of government for the country in 1993.
Ethnic Identity - Teshome (2008: 71) explains that, “the term “ethnic” derives its origin from the Greek term “ethnos”, which signifies the unit of human beings who are united through common socio-cultural expressions.” He therefore notes that ‘ethnic’ could be perceived “as a skeleton concept, whose range of variation reaches from the smallest local groups to tribes and peoples.” According to Sithole (1986), the term “tribe” denotes groups of clans under recognized chiefs. Tajfel and Turner (1981:22), on the other hand, define social identity as “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.” In this study, ethnic identity is a tribal self-concept with associated values, cultures, status, territory, histories, resources, and common expressions used to define the group, its leadership and membership.

In Uganda ethnic group identities have been constructed over time, but were mostly influenced in terms of salience and organization of membership by processes of state formation during the colonial and post-colonial periods (Mamdani 1999, Okuku 2002). From this perspective this study draws from Saunders (1999) political definition of interests to examine the relationship between ethnic groups and the state, which includes human identity, values, fears, hopes and choices among rival claim on resources.
Volkan (1997:12) states that, “in Africa, ethnic identities are understood as tribal identities.” Therefore ethnic groups referred to in this study are communities of the same tribe, whose “members think of themselves in terms of family resemblances, creating the perception that group members are born into these ethnic identities” (Horowitz 1985:55). They also claim to have a common origin and to share a common culture (The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2002). Nnoli (1978) further affirms that ethnic groups are “social formations distinguished by the communal character of their boundaries in which language, culture, or both are relevant factors.’ Through these boundaries, ethnic groups perceive and articulate shared interests and estimate their self-esteem and status in comparison with other ethnic groups, and to determine threats. Giddens (1984) has argued that structure is implicated in that very freedom of action. In the same way influences from the state, for example through centralized or decentralized structures of the state, are also implicated in the formation of these boundaries and interactions to achieve their interests.

Smith (2004) has argued that identities often generate and usually substantially affect governing power, most importantly when they contain demands of entitlement that challenge allegiance and obedience to a state. In Uganda this manifests most in changing contexts and processes of interaction between ethnic groups and the state. Security, access to power, control of local resources, need for high social status and positive identity are some of the motivational factors
(Tajfel 1979) that influence these interactions. Smith (2004) further argues that once ethnic identities are formed, they go on to shape attitudes and choices. In Uganda, processes through which state power was centralized and decentralized influenced attitudes and political choices of ethnic groups, and their interaction with the state to achieve perceived shared interests.

From the above discussion and in the context of this study, an ethnic group is a group of people with a traditional consciousness of a common tribal identity where other members are accepted or rejected on linguistic, cultural and territorial grounds. State is used synonymously with central government, both known to be the locus of power to manage and administer affairs of the country. Power is thus a form of authority and functions through which decisions are taken and local resources are managed to implement programs that meet interests and priorities of citizens. Decentralization is therefore the transfer of such power through locally elected LCs and their LGs to provide services and meet local interests.

1.7 Scope of the study

1.7.1 Geographical Scope

The study was conducted in Buganda (central) and Busoga (Eastern) regions on one hand, and the government of Uganda. The capital city, Kampala, is located in
Kampala district (Appendix 5), within Buganda Kingdom and the city of Jinja is located in Jinja district (Appendix 6), within Busoga Kingdom. Jinja city is historically known as the country’s industrial center. Structures and systems of decentralization were applied and function the same way in both regions, but Kampala district is marked by communal violence and hostilities between the Baganda and the state, while no similar incidents by the Basoga were reported in Jinja district.

1.7.2 Content and geographical scope

The study focused on perceptions, interests and interactions as elements that mark the relationship between the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups on one hand, and the state on the other. In this comparative case study, the level of analysis is between Buganda and Busoga regions in which the districts of Kampala and Jinja are located respectively. Since structures of both are monarchies, cultures and language of local people are almost similar, this level of analysis is appropriate to compare how decentralization functions in both districts to influence perceptions and interactions between members of ethnic groups and the state to achieve their interests. The units of analysis were (i) individual representatives of ethnic groups who in their own words described their experiences and interpretations of the issues under study, and (ii) the state because this is where the policy of decentralization was adopted, mechanisms
and structures of implementation were developed and resources to facilitate LG programs and activities up to the grassroots are allocated.

1.7.3 Time scope

The study covered the period since 1993 until 2011, because decentralization was adopted as a system of government in this same year that traditional institutions were also revived through an Act of Parliament by the NRM government. Restoration of traditional institutions revitalized tribal loyalties, cultural values and practices, but also attachment to local resources, status and roles historically associated with tribes in their ancestral territories. In a more contemporary sense, both systems have evolved alongside each other; each setting expectations and demands from local communities, and offering uniquely suited services and benefits to their respective regions.

In the following, chapter two explains the theoretical framework within which the study was conducted, informed by Social Identity (SI) and Structural Violence (SV) theories to explain the research question i.e. Does decentralization improve the relationship between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda? Chapter three explains the methods used for data collection and analysis to arrive at the findings reported. Chapter four describes ethnic groups in Uganda, and how
ethnicity evolved to shape culture and identity interests that contend with those of
the state and challenge how decentralization functions to satisfy them. Chapter
five explains decentralization as a power-sharing system of government that
functions parallel to decentralized traditional structures in Buganda and Busoga
regions. The former is the mainstream devolved power of the state, and the later
is an enduring alternative form of authority with structures that continue to
function alongside LGs, and both deliver services to citizens and communities.

Chapter six explains interests, perceptions and interactions of the Baganda and
Basoga ethnic groups on one hand, and the state on the other. I argue that
structural violence manifests when devolution is perceived not to function to
deliver services to citizens, and meet culture and identity interest of Baganda.
Chapter seven presents study findings that demonstrate that decentralization
failed to improve relationships between Baganda and the state, but managed to
improve the relationship between the Basoga and the state in Uganda.

In chapter eight, I present conclusions from the study, and explain conditions
under which decentralization can or fails to improve relationships in conflict
situations. I argue that decentralization can improve relationships between ethnic
groups and the state in Positive (P\textsuperscript{+ve}), Non-positive (NP\textsuperscript{+ve}), Negative (N\textsuperscript{-ve}) and
Non-negative (NN\textsuperscript{-ve}) ways. The study concludes that conditions where
relationships are NP\(^{+ve}\) and NN\(^{-ve}\) indicate areas that practitioners and policymakers can begin to re-imagine the system to become more effective to manage conflicts.
Chapter Two

This chapter explains the theoretical framework within which the study is conducted. It also explains consociation theory as the theoretical foundation around which decentralization was conceptualized as a power-sharing system of government. Social Identity (SI) and Structural Violence (SV) theories are also explained as theoretical underpinnings of the study through which the influence of decentralization on relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda was examined. None of these theories can independently explain the whole complexity of the conflict because each one of them has limitations. As visualized in the framework below, the above combination of theories complemented each other to explain how decentralization succeeded to manage conflicts between the Basoga and the state, but failed to manage conflicts between the Baganda and the state in Uganda.

2.1. Theoretical Review

Theoretically, power-sharing through decentralization is often argued to be the appropriate power-sharing system in ethnically divided societies, whenever group grievances over exclusion or discrimination by the state culminate into violent
conflicts (Appendix 1), such as what happened in Liberia, Kenya, Philippines, Indonesia, or apartheid regime in the case of South Africa. As an increasingly preferred system of governance, decentralization strategies have also been recommended as a solution to ongoing conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia, as well as Sri Lanka, to provide immediate post-conflict stability (Cohen and Peterson 1999). Like in the case of Uganda since independence on October 9th, 1962, legacies of particular ethnic groups that dominate state power and violent struggles to change government precede implementation of the decentralization system of governance. Excluded groups that often identify with a common history, culture or territory tend to negatively perceive the state as deliberately frustrating their interests and both interact with hostility and violence. In such conditions power-sharing through decentralization is adopted with a goal to manage conflicts through consensus (Lijphart, 1979) and/or as an incentive to promote moderation and cooperation (Horowitz, 1985), between contending groups.
This framework reflects the main thesis of this study. Under decentralization, the state deliberately undertakes legal and structural reforms to transfer state power through a range of systems and functions to lower levels of the society through LGs. By doing so the system expands government to become more inclusive, through autonomous political leadership and administrative structures accountable to the people and in which local citizens participate. In this way, power-sharing through decentralization assumes that conflicts over access to state power or poor service delivery are managed. Especially when autonomous
LGs function to deliver services to local communities that were previously under the central government. In conflict situations with persistent negative relationships due to inequitable distribution of power, the framework suggests that decentralization can also improve perceptions and patterns of interaction between ethnic groups and the state to achieve their interests. The system becomes more effective when affirmative relationships develop and are reciprocated or experienced between the state and citizens, as a necessary condition for uninterrupted and effective implementation.

2.2. Power and power-sharing

Korestelina (2007) asserts that in the new millennium the challenge in many state-based conflicts is not to develop but to choose from the many identities and accept or be ready for change. In the context of this study, acceptance of a system and the changes introduced in communities as a result of the states’ transfer of powers to lower levels of society also affect how ethnic groups meet their cultural and identity interests, and ultimately interact with the state. Coleman (2000) argues that the idea that power is abstract is ambiguous, but its consequences are real. On the other hand, Stanley (2002) maintains that power cannot be found in the abstract; instead it exists in the context of interactions with institutions. Such perspectives about power influence discussions about “the
functions of state power” (Stanley 2002:98) and its consequences to perceptions, interests and interactions between ethnic groups and the state.

By and large, power is necessary for the state and ethnic groups to achieve interests and satisfy their needs respectively. According to Boulding (1989), the level at which power functions to achieve interests and satisfy needs depends on possibilities often created by attitudes, actions and relationships between actors in a particular situation. In the context of decentralization, possibilities created by the transfer of power by the state to lower levels of society can improve attitudes, perceptions and actions of ethnic groups as they interact with LGs to achieve their interests, or simply to achieve a symbolic expression of identity of the group (Coleman 2000).

Stanley (2002) maintains that power must be unpacked in order to render any analysis more nuanced and sensitive. Similarly, Boulding (1989) views power from three perspectives; widely as a potential for change, at the individual level as the ability to get what one wants, and at the group level as the ability to achieve common ends. In this study decentralization of state power is considered an opportunity to change conditions and create opportunities where individuals get what they want and for groups to achieve shared interests. In this way,
decentralization is expected to improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.

Coleman (2000) on the other hand explains power as mutual interaction between the characteristics of a person and the characteristics of a situation, where a person has access to valued resources and uses them to achieve personal, relational or environmental goals, often through various strategies of influence. In the same way, LGs are structures of influence through which local communities participate and interact to make and implement decisions to achieve personal or communal goals and interests.

The above views underpin Horowitz’s (1985) and Coser’s (1956) view of conflict, as a struggle in which the aim is to gain objectives and simultaneously to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals. In the context of decentralization, the view suggest some form of “interdependence” (Deutsch, 2000) between the state that transfers some of its power and lower level communities that receive and exercise the same. Conflict occurs therefore, when each party seeks to control and influence structures through which power is transferred and exercised, “to gain status and access to resources (Nye 2008:389) at the expense of the other. However Coleman (2000:110) contends that such a top-down view of power is a misconception, and reinforces the belief that power holders gain by using their power “against” rather than “for” others.
Nye (2008) also explains behavioral power, which is difficult to measure in advance of actions, but seeks to shape one’s preferences through shaping the preferences of others. This form of power is relational, and often manifests as cooperation, collaboration and inter-dependence between parties. He further argues that such power “commands such self-sustaining legitimacy and moral authority far beyond the temporality of status and resources” (Pg, 391). In this study, the concept of “relationship” is used in recognition of this power, most often rendered passive during power-sharing processes, yet influences the management and resolution of conflicts. Nye further emphasizes that while hard power may be important to gain status and resources or force warlords into a ceasefire, behavioral power determines the larger outcome of the conflict. From this perspective, this study examined relationships as a form of behavior or soft power that can improve effectiveness of decentralization to manage conflicts.

Korostelina (2007:27) asserts further that, “identification is an open, evolving process of socialization,” that continues during and after conflict. Similarly during implementation of decentralization, different communities continue to identify themselves as ethnic groups, often with unique political, social, cultural and identity interests. Interactions with LGs to achieve their interests constantly shape their perceptions towards the system and the state.
In modern states, the state is in form of a central government and the institutions through which it functions remain the locus of power (Pierre and Peters 2000), and “claims the legitimacy to monopolize such authority” (Cohen and Service 1978:1). However identity is the locus of self-esteem (Korestelina, 2007) of ethnic groups like in Uganda. Control of state power is critical to maintaining favorable self-esteem and is “a measure of relative worth’ (Horowitz 1985) of a group’s identity, which must be passed on from generation to generation (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). In the context of decentralization therefore, expanding the scope of government, political leadership and citizen participation in LGs should also contribute to positive estimation of group status, for example, by enabling the Baganda to control ancestral land in Buganda region.

Favorable and positive self-esteem on its own, although desired and can lead to conflict when it is low across the group, may not qualify or lead a group to control state power. Instead it emerges when an ethnic group can influence and control power and resources within a state to meet its interests in comparison with other groups. Myths, stereotypes, prototypes, shared glories or traumas experienced from historical processes of state formation shape strong ethnic boundaries within which self-esteem is perceived and explained by ethnic groups. Such boundaries also define and help to differentiate between insiders and outsiders in the control of power and resources within the state. From this instrumentalist
perspective (Sisk 1996) ethnicity is contextual and under decentralization, it is contingent to a variety of variables including how ethnic groups perceive and estimate devolved functions of the state to meet their cultural and identity interests over power and control of local resources.

As is the case between the Baganda and the state in Uganda, when the state perceives that a group’s sense of identity and the cohesion it produces among members threatens or challenges its authority and legitimacy, both primordial and instrumentalist tendencies combine to generate a web of conflictual relationships. This occurs when group identity-based claims and images from the past, and state actions that emphasize control and domination of power from top to bottom, often trigger intense mobilization by the less-powerful group to resist and justify violence against the state.

In such contexts, power-sharing often seems the most appropriate solution (Schnecker 2002). Ideally most governments in Uganda have had some form of power sharing, where members of different ethnic and political groups are appointed in government, but not as an institutionalized system and elaborate policy of the state. Sisk (1996) perceives power-sharing as a system of governance in which all major segments of society are provided a permanent share of power, which, according to Noel (2005), serves the dual purpose of promoting peace building and is a foundation for growth of democratic institutions. This view dominates negotiation, mediation and other 3rd party
practices that seek solutions to post-electoral, civil war, insurgency and other forms of conflicts in divided societies, seeking to promote peace, growth and democracy. Numerous power-sharing agreements have been signed in post civil war situations e.g. Sierra Leone 1996 and 1999, Liberia 2003, Burundi 2000 and 2004, and post-election situations e.g. Kenya or Zimbabwe and Nigeria in 2008. However, Varshney (2002) cautions that such arrangements may lock affected groups into long periods of silence, giving the appearance of a well-governed society, but runs the risk of an eventual outburst of frustration and violence.

Abdullah (2000) on the other hand views power-sharing as merely the alternating of power. This view is reflected in the leadership of the United Nations and the European Union where the role of Secretary General and President rotates within member countries respectively. The view also has examples from pre-colonial Africa. In 1849, two brothers Andani and Abudu of the Dagbon Kingdom in Northern Ghana agreed to share power by alternating succession between their two families after the death of their father, Chief Yakubu Nantoo. The agreement broke down when the 1888 Berlin conference divided the Kingdom into the East controlled by German-Togoland and the West under the British Gold Coast (Ghana).
During this time, a member of the Abudu family could not ascend to the throne in Ghana because he was held in Togo by the colonial government. A violent intra-ethnic conflict ensued in 1917 over succession, when borders were removed and the families were reunited under the Kingdom again. To date the conflict engulfs other tribes in the region like Mampurusi, Namumba and Konkomba (Ziblim 2005). On March 17 2002, Cheif Yakubu Andani II was beheaded and more than 40 others during a Fire Festival, as a sign of an ongoing ethnic conflict that also stretched into Togo.

2.3 Consociation and integrative theories.

Various scholars have made propositions that seek to achieve power-sharing, but most of them largely fall under consociationalism and the integrative models. Noel (2005:xiii) mentions four main propositions of consociationalism i.e. (i) grand coalition of political leaders, (ii) mutual veto in decision making – to guarantee vital interests that are at stake, (iii) proportionality in government and other opportunities, and (iv) segmented autonomy with high level of self-governance (decentralization). To date these are fashionable visible mechanisms for statecraft in Africa as some of the indicators of the level and nature of democratization on the continent. This study is concerned with the fourth proposition about segmented autonomy with high level of self-governance (decentralization).
According to Sisk (1996), the integrative model or approach to power-sharing was developed by Horowitz (1985: 597-600) as a reaction to consociationalism. The model suggests (i) dispersion of territorial power to take the heat off of a single focal point, (ii) devolution of power and reservation of offices on an ethnic basis to foster intra-ethnic rather than inter-ethnic competition at the local level, (iii) policies to promote inter-ethnic cooperation, such as electoral laws that encourage pre-election inter-ethnic coalitions through vote pooling, (iv) Policy-driven alternative social alignments by emphasizing cross-cutting cleavages, and (v) reducing disparities between groups through managed distribution of resources. This study considers the first and second propositions to be consistent with the consociation proposition. Together, the propositions are the basis of the discussion about decentralization as a system of “managing conflicts, especially in ethnically divided societies” (Schnecker, 2002:203).

According to Sisk (1996), both theories differ in that, consociation seeks elite accommodation within power structures to defuse tensions and generate consensus during conflict. The integrative approach on the other hand is incentive-based, and encourages leaders to appeal to sentiments beyond their ethnic groups as an incentive to mitigate conflicts. It also seeks to build crosscutting cleavages that foster inter-ethnic cooperation and promote intra-
Horowitz (1985:598) argues that, “inter-ethnic cooperation is more likely where intra-ethnic competition is present, since links may be easier to forge between portions of groups than between groups that are cohesive and undivided.” However intra-ethnic competition, for example among Baganda belonging to rival political parties, has not shifted Buganda’s grievances away from the state and has not affected collective expression of the groups’ demands. Instead many of them also ensure to maintain loyalty to the ethnic group separate from that of the party, where those in government also keep good relations with the monarchy despite the hostility between both institutions.

For example when the state was suspected to have ordered the arson that destroyed the Kingdom’s Kasubi tombs, the monarchy rejected government support to reconstruct the mausoleum. However, the monarchy accepted money from the Vice President and Speaker to the Parliament of Uganda, both of whom are of Baganda tribe. In this case negative relationships between the Baganda and the state persist despite of representation in “prized positions within the government” (Roeder and Rothchild 2005:8), and local communities also participate in LGs.

The view that power is relational and interactive suggests that power-sharing is not an exclusive problem for elites to deal with, but can also collectively improve perceptions, interests and interactions between communities within a polity.
Consociation and integrative models eminently offer state-based structural approaches, and do not go far enough to examine relationships that determine how individuals and groups perceive and interact within power-sharing structures to achieve their interests. Mehler (2008) also observed that what is usually and conspicuously absent from power-sharing arrangements is the broad-based participation by those who should benefit from the process in the first place, the citizens.

According to Sawyer (2005), the Interim President of Liberia from 1990 to 1994, the shortcomings in Liberia’s post-conflict work was largely due to a failure to fully engage Liberians as partners in the design and implementation of activities, treating them instead as observers. This confirms the view that power-sharing mechanisms tend to achieve tension reduction and elite accommodation in government, without resolving any conflicts (Rothchild, 1997, Roeder and Rothchild, 2005, Mehler, 2008). Relationships matter while dealing with conflicts and help to create spaces and opportunities for contending parties to participate in government. This is critical to ensuring effective post-conflict power-sharing and to reduce the problem of “engineering violence by political elites to achieve wealth and power” (Bates 2008:93).
2.4 Structural Violence Theory

The Structural Violence (SV) theory (Galtung 1969) helps to explain ways centralized systems of pre and post independence governments were violent against non-Baganda and Baganda respectively. The struggle for power to redress this violence marked the context within which a decentralized system of government was adopted in 1993 to expand the scope of government, increase political leadership and participation as the local level. The theory states that SV is a type of violence that is “built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances” (Ibid:172). For example while distribution of state power under the colonial system clearly disfavored non-Baganda, the Baganda claimed that post-colonial systems prevented them from satisfying their needs and interests. As Galtung argues further, both systems of government clearly dominated over agency of the groups, and sanctioned high degrees of exploitation, inequality, exclusion or powerlessness. Violence in this case manifested as the difference between actual conditions experienced and expectations of the people under each regime (Ibid:172).

According to Bates (2008), the problem of SV can be located in historical processes of state formation, when the champions of independence established centralized political authorities to achieve self-interests. The state became “the locus of authority in the distribution of opportunities and resources to nationals”
(Pierre and Peters 2000:48). In Uganda this process sought to promote “all people as one, regardless of ethnic origin” (Mamdani, 2009:22), with “equal membership, rights, opportunities and duties in a political community” (Easton, 1990:79). However political and economic structures of the state continued to sanction unequal distribution of power and resources, and account for the SV that has led to numerous civil wars, state collapse and complex humanitarian crises. As Kabwegyere (1972) observes, the haves had more than they need, while the have-nots lacked the basic amenities of life, yet both were in the same social structure. He maintains that such structural violence can also be called ‘social injustice’.

Kabwegyere (1972) further asserts that everything that made up and accompanied colonialism was violent, used as a tool used by the colonial state to create a new order totally alien to the natives. SV gained an ethnic quality when the colonial state privileged the Baganda on the basis of their ethnicity, and discriminated against other ethnic groups. This produced regional disparities where all development was concentrated in Buganda, and produced an ethnically organized society (Mamdani 1999). This history accounts for the persistence of ethnically mobilized political groups and insurgencies in the post-independence state. The situation was similar to Rwanda where the structure of Belgian colonial rule fostered a sense of difference and eventually unequal opportunities between
the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups (Rothchild, 1997). As Banerjee and Pande (2007) argue, institutionalized special treatment of dominant groups in government sanctioned by the state generated negative perceptions of the state, bolstered ethnic identities and increased polarization.

According to Galtung (1969), SV is indirect, thus different from direct violence where the means of realization are not withheld but directly destroyed. It is maintained through six mechanisms including linear ranking order, a cyclical interaction pattern, correlation between rank and centrality, congruence between the systems, concordance between the ranks, and high rank coupling between levels. To understand these mechanisms, Galtung recommends looking at actors, systems, structures, rank and levels, which are exemplified as follows.

In the case of ‘cyclical interaction pattern’ for example, “all actors are connected, but only one way. Thus, there is only one 'correct' path of interaction” (Galtung 1969). In Uganda the colonial divide-and-rule policy separated native communities each in “a customary shell guarded over directly by the state or indirectly through state appointed Baganda authorities” (Mamdani, 1966). The one-way path of interaction was such that under direct rule, the colonial system denied non-Baganda political and economic opportunities. Baganda chiefs were appointed by the state to rule non-Baganda in regions outside Buganda “in an
institutionalized master-servant relationship” (Volkan 1997:54). This was done violently to enforce colonial order, appropriate land and defeat resistant communities.

On the other hand, direct rule allowed Baganda to rule over fellow Baganda in Buganda region. This produced a stronger sense of autonomy for the region, the Kabaka and local chiefs had more authority to manage social, political and economic affairs in Buganda according to culture, including control of land. In Busoga Kingdom for example, Baganda chiefs that were appointed by the colonial government included “S. Twasenga in Bulamogi (1906-1914), N. Tega in Kigulu county (1906-1915), Kaggwa and Kategere (1899- 1906) and Kasibante (1906-1908) in Bugabula, and high above all of administrators was Semei Kakungulu, (Nayenga 1979).

A correlation between rank and centrality emerged, where the Baganda dominated both the central colonial government, and also as appointed political leaders among non-Baganda ethnic groups in other regions of the country. This interaction made ethnicity “the focus of deadly distinctions, as the differentness between tribal groups was magnified and images of the other came to resemble those of the enemy” (Volkan 1997:75). This was made possible because the Baganda become more successful in economics, education and political leadership. In 1894, Britain
declared Uganda a protectorate ruled through Baganda chiefs. The country was named ‘Uganda’, a Swahili word for “land of the Baganda people,” which became a built-in mechanism for conflict (Azar 1990) because it ranked the status of all other ethnic groups below the Baganda. In 1900 the colonial government granted Baganda a semi-autonomous (federal) status. The decision institutionalized a linear ranking order that favored claims of ethnic superiority in all aspects of the colonial government, and produced an exaggerated sense of entitlement (Horowitz 1985) to state power among the Baganda.

This is the context in which Uganda became an independent state in 1962, after elites capitalized on such ethnic differentiation to mobilize ethno-political groups to resist the colonial government. Polarization between ethnic groups gained political expression in form of ethnic-based struggles to change institutions and policies that deprived communities and groups of political and economic opportunities. Smaller non-Baganda tribes became a large political majority against the Baganda ethnic majority (Horowitz 1985), and have controlled state power since 1966.

Mamdani (1999) observes that the nature of the colonial state in Uganda produced the same structure of the post-independence state. The observation confirms Galtung’s (1969) view of “congruence between the systems”, where the SV that marked the colonial state was reproduced in the post-colonial state, only that this
time it is perceived to be against the Baganda. Since 1966 when the first elected President and King of Buganda was overthrown by the military, the Baganda claim to be deprived of their entitlements, political and economic opportunities, by successive governments often dominated by politicians and military officers from non-Baganda ethnic groups.

For example, Uganda has had eight political regimes; four of them changed power through military coups, three changed through civil wars and another civil war still ongoing in northern Uganda for over 25 years. Only three of the eight presidents were Baganda, yet all Baganda Presidents combined stayed in office for less than 3 years in total. Each of them was overthrown by the military that until today remains dominated by non-Baganda ethnic groups. Non-Baganda presidents have led the longest political regimes, including the current NRM government that has been in power for over 26 years. Bates (2008) argues that, “structures of post-colonial states favored some groups over others to extract wealth and power from citizens.” In Uganda all eight military regimes are marked by a “fusion of power” (Mamdani 2009:32) where the Chief Executive, Commander in Chief, and head of the ruling party, is also the President elected directly by the people. This system has made the presidency and the military key actors under each regime, especially in how less dominant ethnic groups access economic and political opportunities,
based on “tribal loyalties that produce nepotism and discrimination” (Oloka-Onyango 1997:189).

This underscores the “high rank coupling between levels” (Gultung 1969) that has marked each regime in Uganda. Members of the ethnic group that dominate the military automatically tend to dominate the economy and politics in the country. The Baganda constantly claim to be disenfranchised and repressed under each regime, denied of their entitlements through dictatorship and state policies that discriminate against the group. Such perceptions of structural violence, also experienced by different ethnic groups under each regime, helped to make power-sharing through decentralization most appropriate for Uganda.

2.5 Social Identity Theory (SIT)

The theory developed by Tajfel and Turner, (1979, 1981, 1986) helps to explain that part of self-concept that defines the Baganda and Basoga ethnic group, through which members estimated their status and relationship within the state. Inter-ethnic prejudice marks Uganda’s political struggles, each group seeking to remain socially prestigious with a high status and maintain a positive identity (Tajfel 1981). Tajfel defines social identity as that part of an individual’s self-concept derived from membership to a social group, together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership. Social identity is an
individual-based understanding of the group (Brewer, 2001). Control of state power, under a centralized or decentralized system of government, is therefore a motivational factor as ethnic groups compete to maintain a positive identity and status of a group. For example given the privileged history, failure by Baganda to control state power under successive regimes implies dysfunctional systems of government perceived to be repressive towards cultural and identity interests.

Hymans (2002) states that SIT has been criticized, especially in international politics and international relations studies for maintaining the in-group and out-group dichotomy as a black-white divide with distinct insiders and outsiders. This would imply that the Baganda and the state are mutually exclusive entities. However, individuals have multiple identities and choose to compare themselves only with ‘relevant Others’ and not just with everybody else (Tajfel and Turner 1979). As stated earlier the ‘relevant Other’ among the Baganda is clearly the state, controlled by non-Baganda under a unitary structure that favors their political majority over Baganda’s ethnic majority. Both describe membership using ethnic markers to create “total groups” that estimate each others’ status and positive identity (Tajfel 1981) based on control of state power.

Under SV, Galtung (1969) describes ‘in-group favoritism’ as a condition where in-group members are favored by the system to access power or resource
opportunities at the expense of ‘Others’ considered members of the out-group. This view describes the common perceptions that characterized different ethnic groups under successive regimes, which decentralization sought to mitigate. In Uganda, this condition produced self-depreciation and self-appreciation tendencies (Tajfel 1982) among different ethnic groups. For example non-Baganda ethnic groups viewed themselves at the bottom and Baganda at the top of the social pyramid during the colonial period. However self-appreciation tendencies have favored non-Baganda since 1966, backed by their dominance in controlling political and resource opportunities in the modern state.

Helland-Hansen (2007) stresses that, “different people define their nationality in different ways: for some language is the fundamental criterion, others consider race as the primary distinction between peoples, while religion and culture are perceived fundamental by others.” In Uganda the conundrum is such that the Baganda enjoy insurmountable historical, linguistic, demographic and geographic cleavages that maintain the “salience of their identity” (Korestelina, 2007). These are the boundaries through which this majority ethnic group and its membership perceive and understand their citizenship and nationality in Uganda. This condition explains the protracted struggle by non-Baganda to maintain control of state power and resources, as a necessary measure to mitigate the insecurity that may come with a majority ethnic group also becoming a dominant political
majority. It also explains why a non-Baganda controlled state negatively estimates Buganda’s actions and intentions whenever hostilities escalate between the group and the central government. Both perceive their need for recognition, security and self-determination (Burton 1990) threatened in fundamental ways.

Negative estimation of Buganda’s intentions by the state was evident when government rejected the recommendation to establish a federal system of government in Uganda, by the Constitutional Review Commission (1993). The Commission report stated that 85% of Baganda and 65% of non-Baganda preferred a federal system of government. Implementing this recommendation would almost revert to pre-independence conditions where Baganda dominated the state.

Social Network Analysts (SNA) (Scott 1988) would argue that this intergroup approach ignores interpersonal connections and networks that may be responsible for intergroup hostilities between the Baganda and the state. Gray et al (1998) further argues that SIT assumes that fears and threats are perceived and reacted to equally across the group. These views seem to suggest that SIT does not account for interpersonal differences between individuals within and outside government in this conflict. Also during the 1966 crisis or communal riots
of 2007-10, the theory assumes that during each of the events all Baganda perceived the threats the same way. However, Labianca et al (1998) argue that, individuals do not exist in isolation but represent and are influenced by groups, and that interpersonal relationships and intergroup perceptions are reciprocally interdependent, each is, in part, both cause and effect. Similarly in Buganda, inter-personal disagreements between the Kabaka and the President underpin collective action among the Baganda as a group, to resist state actions perceived to threaten the monarchy and Baganda identity. In which case accounting for collective actions in Buganda against the state is to recognize inter-personal differences among leaders, despite the fact that both the Kabaka and the President joined hands to fight during the 1981-86 civil war.

Black (2003) argues that ethnicity in its contemporary form is a consequence of the creation of the nation state, which in Uganda was marked by differentiation between groups along ethnic lines. The salience of ethnic identity in the functioning of the state is thus an outcome of political processes that encouraged ethnic identification along regional and tribal lines. Decentralization was implemented in such conditions, where the state that devolved some of its powers is known to have kept tribalism and ethnicity alive (Volkan 1997). Under the system, ethnic groups continue to estimate and compare their status, and how devolution functions to satisfy their identity and cultural interests, including
control of local resources. Therefore SV and SIT theories provided the appropriate theoretical framework to examine and explain the structural and relational aspects of how decentralization can improve relationships.
Chapter Three

This chapter highlights the methods used for data collection and analysis to arrive at the findings reported. It covers the research design, scope of the study, sampling, data collection, management, and study limitations.

3.1 Research Design

Smith (2004:304) maintains that, “though the challenge of drawing reliable inferences is universal in social science, the most crucial work in analyzing identities must often be done by immersing ourselves in information about the actors in question, and using both empathy and imagination to construct credible accounts of identities and interests.” Similarly, the researcher conducted a comparative case study of Kampala and Jinja Districts in Uganda, to be able to explore variations (Moses and Knusten, 2007) in how decentralization can improve relationships between the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups on one hand, and the state on the other. The study was exploratory, seeking to examine and explain the influence of decentralization on relationships, as a contemporary phenomenon occurring within a real life context (Yin, 2003). The study describes and explains similarities, and accounts for differences between cases, to illustrate
conditions and circumstances (Willig, 2008) under which the influence on relationships occurs.

In Uganda, decentralization was applied across the country under the same policy and legal framework, and all structures through which it is implemented have the same functions. Therefore a case study involving Kampala and Jinja districts is sufficient to represent the whole country, and the design was most appropriate because it allowed the researcher to conduct exhaustive situational and contextual analyses between cases without affecting the reliability and validity of the data and findings. Using the method-of-difference (Odell, 2001:161), I selected Kampala (central region) and Jinja (Eastern region) districts because decentralization was implemented the same way, but Kampala is marked by communal violence and hostilities between the Baganda and the state while no similar incidents by Basoga ethnic group were reported in Jinja district.

A comparative case study approach allowed use of various methods to collect primary and secondary data. This opened opportunities for ongoing triangulation between sources during the research to validate the data collected, and between methods of data collection during data analysis to improve reliability of the study (Sandole, 2008, Druckman, 2005, Flick, 2009). The limited number of cases selected for the study enabled the researcher to focus on the depth of each
individual case in form of systems and structures of decentralization, persons, events, groups or location of the issues under investigation. The data collected included historical and contemporary information, views, opinions, concerns and experiences. This enabled the researcher to understand people’s perceptions towards decentralizations, and how it mediates their interactions with the state to achieve their interests.

3.2 Research Subjects

According to the 2002 population census published in 2005, the population of Uganda was 23.19 million people, but is currently estimated to be over 31 million. The population of Baganda is 18% of the total population of Uganda. The population of Kampala Capital City located in Kampala District is 1.189 million people. The population of Basoga is 9% of the total population of the country. The City of Jinja, located in Jinja District has 0.87 million people. The total study population was 2.06 million people.

Buganda and Busoga regions border each other (Appendix 1), local languages are almost similar, rural life is mostly agrarian and many cultural practices of their respective people are the same. The unique difference is between violence in Buganda and non-violence in Busoga, despite proximal characteristics between both cases. This made Kampala and Jinja districts most ideal to
examine the object of study (decentralization) and to access the subject of study (relationships between ethnic groups and the state) (Flick, 2009, Willig, 2008).

Although no region of Uganda is ethnically homogeneous, as the country continues to develop and modernize, each region is marked by a dominant ethnic group e.g. the Baganda in Buganda and Basoga in Busoga regions. Tables 1 and 2 show the distribution of different ethnic groups in the central and eastern regions of Uganda.

Table 1: Distribution of ethnic groups in the Central Region

![Bar chart showing distribution of ethnic groups in Central Region]

Table 2: Distribution of ethnic groups in the Eastern Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basoga</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iteso</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagisu</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagwere</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jopadhola</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banyole</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basanta</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabony</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunam</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baganda</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


3.3 Sampling design and sample size

3.3.1 Purposive sampling

The researcher used purposive sampling to select knowledgeable and experienced participants and other materials relevant to this study. The method allowed selection of critical cases and information, in which the relations and issues to be studied become especially clear (Flick, 2009). In this case, participants in the study represented the whole population based on their experience, role in the community or official positions as politicians and
administrators at national and LG levels, key members in cultural institutions and as experts in the different fields related to the study.

3.3.2 Sample selection

This study recognizes that citizen participation in LGs, political leadership by officials elected from local communities, and expanded scope of government to the grassroots are some of the landmark achievements of decentralization in Uganda. The researcher therefore sought to understand how these aspects of decentralization influence perceptions of ethnic groups and their interaction with the state to achieve their local interests. Participants in the study were thus purposively selected from members of Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups, along evidence of variation (Jones and McEwen, 2004) in their knowledge of the ethnic group, role in society and decentralization, to provide multiple perspectives of the study. Secondary sources of data were also purposively selected, guided by relevance to the issues under study, initial analysis of data from primary sources, and appropriateness to provide explanation to the conditions and requirements of a comparative case study.

The participants included Members of Parliament at the national level. These were selected because they are responsible for the development of government policies, and some of them participated in the drafting of the 1995 constitution


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that contained decentralization as policy of government. LG leaders at LG Councils I (Village), II (Parish), III (Sub-county), and V (District) levels as implementers of decentralization were also among the study participants since they are familiar with the decentralization policy, objectives and functioning of its structures from state to the village levels. While undertaking these functions, LG officials also supervise, monitor and evaluate how the programs implemented conform to the policies of the central government. In the process, they are also allowed to enact bylaws that must enhance LG performance in delivering services to local people.

Cultural Leaders who participated are those appointed by Kings as chiefs at Ssaza (County), Gombolola (Sub-county), Muluka (Parish), and Kyalo (Village) levels in both monarchies. In spite of a number of members from other ethnic groups living in Kampala and Jinja Districts, besides Baganda and Basoga respectively, chiefs continue to function alongside LGs as custodians of culture and symbols of group identity. They were relevant to this study to help explain identity and cultural interests of their ethnic groups, and perceptions associated with decentralization among their members.
3.3.3 Sample Size

Since participants in the study were reasonably homogeneous i.e. from members of the local ethnic group, the desired sample size did not depend on the size of the study population only but also on the variance of the variable (Mouton and Babbie, 2001). From this perspective, 64 respondents participated in the study as information-rich cases (Patton, 1990) and enabled the researcher to understand variations in conditions under which decentralization can improve the relationship between ethnic group and the state in Uganda.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents in Kampala and Jinja Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Kampala</th>
<th>Jinja</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members of Parliament</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4 Constituencies</td>
<td>4 Constituencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC (LC) III</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4 out of 5 divisions</td>
<td>3 of 4 divisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC II</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 of 10 divisions</td>
<td>6 of 8 divisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC I</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11 of 28 divisions</td>
<td>8 of 19 divisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Traditional Chiefs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>64</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 **Research procedure**

The researcher used an introductory letter and associated research instruments that were approved by the Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB). The letter was addressed to participants in their local constituencies where they serve as representatives in the National Parliament, appointed chiefs or as LG leaders, and secured their consent to be able to conduct interviews and collect primary data. This process is visualized by Creswell (1998) in the Data Analysis Spiral as shown in the figure below:

![Data Analysis Spiral](image-url)

*Source: Creswell (1998).*

**Figure 2: Data Analysis Spiral**
Creswell considers data analysis to begin with data collection, particularly during qualitative research. The investigator starts with data collected from immediate sources and progresses through other sources, using various methods in an analytic spiral that ends an explanation or account of the phenomenon being investigated. As explained below, the researcher followed these steps to generate the findings presented at the end of this study.

3. 4.1 Data collection

The researcher contacted each participant personally and conducted interviews face-to-face, and also used secondary sources to collect data. Sandole (2008) supports this approach, and states that interviews are clearly useful in exploring the perceptions, beliefs, and values of parties in conflict as a basis for determining what, if anything can be done about those conflicts. Druckman (2005) further adds that personal interviewing in which an interviewer interacts face-to-face with respondents is one of the best ways to elicit perceptions, views and ideas from people who may otherwise not respond to questionnaires, telephone or mail survey.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews in English language, although some of the respondents especially cultural and LC I leaders in Kampala and Jinja Districts mixed English language with either Luganda or
Lusoga languages respectively. This was common when they were responding to follow-up probing questions from the researcher seeking to gain more clarity about their opinions. The researcher is fluent in speaking, reading and writing both languages. Before each interview, the researcher secured the consent of each participant using a consent form, which they signed.

3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews.

Open-ended questions were used as initial questions to generate qualitative data, which also allowed the researcher to ask follow-up probing questions for participants to communicate their own perceptions and perspectives on the object and subject of study. Norman and Yvonna (2005) also argue that unstructured interviewing can provide greater breadth than do the other types, given its qualitative nature. Participants were given chance to read the interview script before they started to respond to questions and the researcher recorded all responses in a notebook. Norman and Yvonna (2005) further state that note taking is important since interviewing allows re-tooling amid interviews, to be able to consistently analyze data, to look for patterns or inconsistencies.

All interviewees responded to the same initial questions, as stated in the interview script in accordance with the research objectives. This was helpful to the researcher to compare all data collected to ensure its validity and reliability.
Close-ended questions were used with a 5-point Likert scale to obtain the degree to which respondents agreed with statements concerning decentralization in relation to their respective ethnic groups. The response options included: - Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree, and helped to generate data about aspects of decentralization where respondents found difficulty to express themselves (Druckman, 2005).

This method of interviewing was adopted because participants that represented the larger population in the study were very experienced and gave thoughtful responses concerning decentralization and ethnic groups in their local constituencies and communities. From a case study perspective, the method generated deeper explanations using respondents’ own words, which was also useful in validating data between respondents to further ascertain its reliability.

3.4.3 Key Informant Interviews.

The researcher invited experts as key informants from Kampala and Jinja districts to participate in in-depth interviews. They included two journalists and two academicians from Makerere and Busoga Universities. Responses from experts contained experiences, interpretations and insights that helped the researcher to broaden understanding, especially of the “relationships between systems and cultures in local social settings” (Janesick 2000:81) within which
decentralization occurs. Interviewees responded to the same questions as those in the semi-structured interviews.

During interviews, the researcher secured the consent of each respondent, took notes and audio recorded each indepth interview using a smartpen. The pen was used to take notes in a notebook and to take audio recording of the interviews that were later transcribed. Data from Key Informant interviews were triangulated with data from the initial semi-structured interviews to determine consistency or inconsistency between sources of data, to improve the validity and reliability of the study. During analysis of all data, audio recordings were revisited to verify emerging explanations using participants’ own words.

During these research activities, the researcher kept a log of field notes that contained descriptive accounts of his own observations from listening to respondents, comments in the media and personal stories as a result of interacting with a variety of people during the research.

3.4.4 Secondary data collection

The researcher reviewed existing data from a variety of sources, including news bulletins and publications on the Internet, academic papers and textbooks consistent with research objectives. The sources were purposively selected
based on their reliability, suitability and adequacy (Kothari, 2005). This depended on publisher and author, where and how the information was collected for publication, time of publication and how this relates to the research problem, and publishers of the data or findings. The sources included; The Ministry of Local Government of the Uganda Government, Buganda and Busoga Kingdom libraries, university libraries, previous research and survey results, academic and non-academic reports and writings, and other documents about the research problem.

3.4.5 Data Management

Each interview response was recorded in a separate new notebook, which was dated, labeled and kept in a secured document locker only accessible by the researcher. The Pulse smartpen helped to simultaneously write notes and audio record all interviews and discussions. The pen also took PDF pictures of the notes and were uploaded on password-protected computer and later transcribed for coding and analysis. During this process, participants’ names were replaced with special codes to keep them anonymous.

This elaborate system of documentation helped to keep a detailed case study database (Yin 2003), which made crosschecking and validation of data more organized and accessible. This system of documentation also made it possible
for the researcher to revisit categorized and tabulated data for verification. The process of listening, re-listening to audio recordings and re-reading interview scripts helped the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the data collected and to get ready for analysis (Powell and Renner, 2003). This formed part of the triangulation between data collected using qualitative and quantitative methods, to determine its validity and relevance to the study (Flick 2009, Willig 2008).

3.4.6 Data analysis

The study was largely qualitative, complemented by quantitative methods. Therefore data analysis included reading through the data collected, memoing, coding and classification, describing and interpreting emerging patterns and findings, to be able to make conclusions. All data was analyzed using content analysis (Busha and Harter 1980). This method of data analysis was appropriate because most of the responses were narrative data in form of words, phrases and full paragraphs of text (Powell and Renner, 2003). This approach allowed for systematic and objective identification of characteristics of each response to determine accuracy of the data, and facilitate uniformity in coding and tabulation to ensure consistency. The approach helped the researcher to develop themes, make inferences and interpretations (Holsti, 1969) of the data so as to find explanation to the research questions.
Coding involved identifying incidents, behaviors, actions, ideas, terms and phrases from open-ended responses and assigning the abbreviations to facilitate categorization into more coherent themes. This was done question-by-question, but separated between Kampala and Jinja Districts, to enable the researcher focus on how different participants responded to each of them, and “to indentify consistencies and differences” (Powell and Renner, 2003). Categorization involved organizing data into clusters depending on source and common characteristics that reflected a particular theme e.g. perceptions of Cultural Leaders towards LGs. According to Coffey and Atkinson (1996) categorization of data enables preliminary analysis, but the important analytic work lies in establishing and thinking about linkages. The researcher compared between categories to determine the relationship between them and how each responds to the research questions, objectives and explains the research problem.

Numerical codes were also assigned to facilitate qualitative analysis of data from close-ended questions, which was systematically collected to supplement narrative data using a 5-point Likert Scale. The Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) was used to analyze tabulated quantitative data from close-
ended questions. Descriptive statistics were generated and used “to identify patterns” (Druckman, 2005) associated with qualitative findings.

Triangulation between qualitative and quantitative findings was conducted and helped the researcher to generate confirmatory explanations to conclusively answer the research questions (Brewer and Hunter, 2006, Druckman, 2005). Conclusions were corroborated with particular responses from participants, in their own words as indicated below, which further reinforced reliability of the study. According to Norman and Yvonna (2005), “a case study is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry.” Similarly, a relationship matrix was developed to provide a visual representation of the findings from both cases, concerning how decentralization can or fails to improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.

3.5 Validity and reliability

Norman and Yvonna (2005) maintain that in the research community, case study optimizes understanding by pursuing scholarly research questions. It gains credibility by thoroughly triangulating the descriptions and interpretations, not just in a single step but continuously throughout the period of study. From this perspective, the above sequence and multi-level approach to data collection, documentation and analysis helped the researcher to maintain a chain of
evidence that is traceable from beginning to conclusion of the research and backwards. This enabled the researcher to follow up on new and emerging insights drawn from different sources of data to enhance credibility and reliability of the case study. The researcher also constantly compared and contrasted emerging with existing assumptions and findings to ascertain validity of the study (Willig 2000, Flick, 2009).

3.6 Ethical considerations

This involved protecting the interests of participants in a research process (Flick, 2009). The researcher secured informed consent from all respondents, who also signed a consent form. The form included information describing the purpose of the study interview, study objectives, welfare in terms of no physical, psychological risks or discomfort to come from participating in the study, and the right for a participant to withdraw from research activities anytime without prejudice. The researcher made certain that all participants’ identification and information collected were confidential, which is why names of research participants have not been used in writing this study. Authors quoted in this study were recognized through citations and referencing.
The researcher also developed a case study protocol that helped to “maintain consistency, ensure ethical, effective and standardized practices during the research (Yin, 2003). The protocol included:

- Procedures and guidelines to secure informed consent from potential participants, recording, time management and communication.
- Guidelines to follow-up questions to generate information about issues that participants may not have addressed, and to enable participants to be as informative to the research as possible.
- Pre and post interview activities e.g. label notebooks and codes to de-identify interview scripts.
- Documentation, data handling and storage.

In general, the researcher utilized Warfield’s (2002) guidelines to identify and deal with ethical dilemmas that emerged during the study, including: - (a) paying attention to any discomfort among participants and progress in research activities, (b) reflecting to determine how a research activity is making meaning, and evaluate personal and professional values, (c) identifying dilemmas in time, and (d) determining options and selecting the most ethnical course of action.

3.7 Limitations to the study

It was a challenging task to analyze information from highly informed
respondents, especially because of differences in knowledge about the subject of study and central positions of authority they occupy at various levels of the central government, LGs, monarchy and in the academia. There were also differences in academic, political and cultural backgrounds among respondents between both cases i.e. Baganda and Basoga. Therefore information shared by each respondent depended on his or her respective background and experiences.

To avoid misinterpretation and ensure questions were understood the same way, the questionnaire was tested on a number of individuals that were not participants in the research process. These included two University lecturers from different universities, two Cultural Leaders and two LC members from Buganda and Busoga regions respectively. The test revealed that the language and concepts used in the questionnaire were clear and understandable.

During the interview process, respondents were also encouraged to respond to follow up questions as freely and broadly as possible. The varying and subjective character of responses from research participants limited the predictive value of the study. However since the study was exploratory, subjective responses reinforced the explanatory quality of the findings to the research problem. This is because the study was concerned with the influence and not effectiveness of
decentralization on the relationship between ethnic groups and the state. Thus broad responses and experiences shared by research participants provided useful explanation to the research problem. Secondary information collected from documents, print and electronic media was useful to confirm or exclude emerging explanations during research, and improved validity of the study and reliability of findings.

Concerns over generalizability of the findings also limit this study, since decentralization is implemented differently in each country, for example, in each of the case studies referenced above. Ethnic configurations are also different between groups and within countries, in terms of their composition, cultures, salience of identity, influence and effect of colonial legacies etc. However the findings are expected to be generalizable between the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups and in other cases where decentralization is used to manage state-ethnic relations.

In conclusion, considering that decentralization was implemented uniformly in the country with 52 ethnic groups, the findings presented at the end of this study from Kampala and Jinja districts in Buganda and Busoga regions are not in themselves conclusive. But the study provides conclusions that can form the basis for further research.
Chapter Four

This chapter describes the broad categories of ethnic groups in Uganda, and how ethnicity evolved in the process of building the state. Each ethnic group, especially the Baganda and Basoga, went through different processes to construct culture and identity of their respective groups. These processes account for differences in the salience of group identities, estimations of group status, and unique demands from the state associated with the group’s culture and identity interests. Similarly, ethnic groups interact and perceive state power, especially under decentralization, to the extent that it functions to meet status, culture, identity and associated group needs.

4.1. Ethnic groups in Uganda

Ethnic groups in Uganda can be grouped into two broad categories i.e. the Bantu languages speaking people including Baganda, Basoga, Ankore etc, and Nilotic languages speaking people including the Acholi, Alur, Iteso, Langi, Karamojong, etc. Nilotics live mostly in Eastern and Northern regions of the country. Their communities are smaller compared to the Bantu languages
speaking people, and their members were organized mostly around chiefs and in chiefdoms.

The Bantu-speaking group forms the majority of Ugandans living mostly in the Central, Southern and Western regions, and includes the Baganda, Banyoro, Basoga, Banyankole and Batoro ethnic groups. Byrnes (1992:26) states that in Uganda “at independence, Bantu-language speakers made up approximately two thirds of the population.” Since the fifteenth century until colonialists introduced a unitary form of government in 1900s, groups that made up Uganda as a state with defined geographical boundaries were organized around Kings.

The endurance and salience of ethnicity in conflicts involving state power in Uganda is rooted both in pre-colonial tribal setup, and anomalies in the ongoing process of state formation, where Kingdoms function more as political entities than just cultural communities. The former was largely marked by construction of ethnic identities and consolidation of associated cultural, linguistic, territorial and organizational elements that helped to define and protect ethnic groups in the regions of Uganda. Under the latter, elites capitalized on the functionality of ethnicity to mobilize communities into political organizations and insurgencies to compete for control of state power and resources.
To analyze ethnic groups’ relationship with the state, I took a constructivist view because of the tendency by elites to mobilize Baganda identity to frame issues and grievances against the state, and to organize members to act collectively especially whenever hostilities escalate between the monarchy and the central government. From this perspective, for example, the salience of both Bagoga and Baganda identity as currently expressed appears a function of interactions between each group and the state. During these interactions, as Teshome (2008) maintains, ethnic groups give support (through belongingness) and solidarity to their members to counter balance the alienation prevalent in the modern state. However identities of both ethnic groups continue to be essentially portrayed in a primordial sense to enhance a favorable self-image of the in-group that emphasizes and preserves kinship, history, territory and culture (Korostelina, 2007, Okuku, 2002).

The study therefore recognizes that identities, as in the case of the Basoga and Baganda, are fluid with unstable boundaries that shift across time and situations (Korostelina 2007, Tilly 2005), and that although many conflicts are framed as identity conflicts, “identities themselves do not cause conflicts but can be mobilized to attract members into collective action” (Peacock et al 2005, Korostelina, 2007) over perceived shared grievances. Okuku (2002) further argues that, “the incorporation of different ethnic groups under the same rule
does not in itself lead to antagonism based on ethnicity.” However scholars and studies about the history of Uganda (Mamdani 1996, 1999, 2009, Mutiibwa 1992) tend to take a collectivist approach where ethnic groups are examined as total groups, especially situations involving the Baganda in the country.

4.2 The Baganda ethnic group

Members of Baganda ethnic group refer to in-group members as “enda yanakalaama” (born of the same ancestry), and “abaana ba kintu” (descendants of Kintu - believed to be the first human being, according to Ganda folklore). Ganda means ‘relation’, and Bu and Ba are Bantu speaking prefixes for state and citizens respectively. Therefore the Ba-ganda (related citizens) live in Bu-ganda (state of related citizens), and claims 400 years of existence and centrally organized under the King (Englebert, 2002). Members of non-Baganda ethnic groups in Buganda are collectively considered “bannamawanga” (people from other tribes) or “bagwira” (foreigners). Other factors that favor salience of the group include large membership, central geographical location in the country with the Capital City of Kampala, and very elaborate decentralized social and political systems around which the colonial and post-independence state structures were modeled.

The relationship between ethnic groups and the colonial state complicated structuring of post-independence governments, particularly in how they would
function to effectively respond to the needs of ethnic groups and interests of citizens. Power and resource disparities emerge between ethnic groups, as consequences of the divide-and-rule policy implemented by the colonial administration towards the end of the 19th Century. Antagonism between ethnic groups favored implementation of the divide-and-rule policy, and fed into the pattern of ‘collaboration’ and ‘resistance’ to colonialism that kept ethnic consciousness alive (Okuku, 2002). As Uganda moved in 1993 to ease the pressures of centralization of state power, legacies of disenfranchisement or accumulated influence, power and resources from resistance or collaboration with colonialists continue to challenge the decentralization.

The Baganda collaborated with British colonialists to establish a colony, and were rewarded with “indirect rule” (Mamdani, 1999:19). Here they were allowed to rule over their communities under the supervision of the colonial state, and gained a semi-autonomous status for Buganda Kingdom in 1900. This “generated favorable comparisons” (Korostelina, 2007) of the Baganda against other ethnic groups. Collaboration started in 1862 when the British arrived in Buganda Kingdom, and King Mutesa II of Buganda welcomed them and both became strong allies. The British pursued their economic interests alongside Buganda’s expansionist policy. Both were favored by modern weapons from the British and trained Baganda armies that fought and captured land from other
Kingdoms like Bunyoro, forcing them to submit to the colonial state. The Kingdom became the center of the colonial administration, with better schools, hospitals and other social services. British Christian and French Catholic missionaries were invited to teach religion, which “led to the creation of another cleavage” (Okuku, 2002) that favored the Baganda in this field. Thus at independence in 1962, Buganda was the symbol of state power, and the heart of social, political, economic and religious development.

Resistance to colonialism was contained through “direct rule”, where the colonial state exhibited centralized authoritarianism and controlled every aspect of the community. Baganda Chiefs were appointed by the state to rule over other ethnic groups on behalf of the British “in an institutionalized master servant relationship” (Volkan 1997). Through chiefs, the state dominated and restricted economic routes and markets, controlled the movements of native communities, access to resources and other opportunities like education, and even influenced family affairs to comply with dictates of the colonial state. For example, the strong Buganda army fought Bunyoro Kingdom for resisting British rule and Buganda annexed five counties of Bunyoro Kingdom’s fertile land. The Banyoro were dispersed, and some resettled in Buganda where they claim to have suffered discrimination and exclusion from community programs, e.g. village meetings, as inferior settlers.
Ethnic consciousness among members of different groups heightened and ethnic boundaries became more entrenched through shared experiences, particularly when collaborators and resisters were subjected to European and customary laws respectively. Mamdani (1996) maintains that collaborators gained citizen status (e.g. Baganda), while resistors remained customarily controlled subjects (e.g. Bagisu) confined in tribal structures led by traditional chiefs. Thus ethnic groups that came to constitute Uganda as a unitary state after independence were not only deeply divided but also antagonistic. This was exacerbated by the division-of-labor policy that created socio-economic boundaries along ethnic lines. Mamdani (1983:10) sums up this policy thus; “It became a truism that a soldier must be a northerner, a civil servant a southerner and a merchant an Asian, which threatened other ethnic groups, viewing themselves as locked into a permanent state of being servants and laborers.”

President Yoweri Museveni (MISR, 1987:20) also asserts “Colonial authorities had frequently found it expedient to divide in order to rule, dividing up Uganda into a society of contradictory and mutually suspicious interests. They made, for instance, the central area of the country, and to some extent, areas in the east, produce cash crops for export. In so doing they made one part of Uganda produce cash crops, another, a reservoir of cheap labour (western), and another of recruitment into the colonial army (northern)”. However according to Mudoola
(1993) the divide and rule also helped to keep different groups in check and under control. For example, he argues that not recruiting the Baganda ethnic majority in the colonial army constantly kept them in check and could not organize to fight the British.

Mamdani (1983) maintains that every institution touched by the hand of the colonial state was given a pronounced regional or nationality character. This was most evident in 1894 when the British named the colonial state ‘Uganda’, a Swahili language idiom for ‘land of the Baganda’. This decision predisposed the state to politics of entitlements and status that continues to challenge even the most decentralized system of government since independence. Kampala in Buganda became the center of administration when the British also declared Uganda as a British Protectorate. Members from Buganda royal families and handpicked leaders were sent to Britain to study and return to manage the state. The famous King’s College Buddo was a royal college built to educate the royal family and selected local leaders, Luganda language became the language of the educated and business people, missionaries produced an English-Luganda dictionary, copy of the Bible and other religious hymns were translated in Luganda language and published at Oxford University in the United Kingdom.
The status of the Baganda in the colonial state enhanced the group’s protection, confidence and privileged them to build a system of social relationships (Korostelina 2007), that attracted members of other tribes to move into Buganda in big numbers. Many non-Baganda settled and took on Buganda names, language, culture and others intermarried. These developments also contributed to reconfiguring the Baganda identity from its primordial myth of “abana ba kintu” (descendants of the first human being) into an expanded membership including those who were assimilated into the group.

Peacock et al (2005:62) argues that, “because identities are fluid, individuals may valorize their loyalty to one interactive community over another; therefore the successful resolution of such conflicts does not rest in elaborately crafted power-sharing arrangements but rather depolarization and re-intertwining of identities.” However, this study determined that power-sharing through decentralization can function to depolarize group identities and manage conflicts when it is perceived to function to meet needs of ethnic groups like in Basoga. In this way the system can improve their interactions with the state to achieve their interests. However this is not always the case in situations like in Buganda, where failure by the system to respond to demands for more power for self-rule and control of local resources is perceived to threaten culture and identity needs of the Baganda.
4.3 The Basoga Ethnic Group.

The Basoga as an ethnic group and their Kingdom were a creation of the colonial administration and not in any sense the consequence of pre-colonial trends (Nabwiso, 1990). One version of oral tradition states that the Omukama (King) of Bunyoro Kingdom migrated to the current Kamuli district in the 16th century. On his way back to Bunyoro he left behind five sons i.e. Wakoli, Zibondo, Ngobi, Tabingwa and Kitimbo, whom he allocated land where each formed a chiefdom. The five chiefdoms later combined and formed Busoga Kingdom. Another version is that the Luo from northeastern Uganda captured land in that region and established the ruling dynasties of that day. Some of the royal families include Ngambani, Ba-Ise-Ngobi, Ba-Ise-Wakooli, Ba-Ise-Igaga e.t.c (Balunywa, 2012). The versions explain why Basoga were not originally united under one leader, and conflicting claims to a common ancestry have failed to unite members to resist common threats including political influences within the monarchy.

Influence from the British colonial government and predominance of Buganda and Bunyoro Kingdoms in shaping Busoga culture combined to deny establishment of both a strong Basoga identity and Busoga Kingdom (Appendix 2). The Basoga make up about 8 percent of the population of Uganda, and Jinja District in Busoga Kingdom is home to Jinja town, which is the largest town in the country after Kampala City. The traditional territory of the ‘Ba’-soga (Soga
people, Singular is ‘Mu’-soga), is in southeastern Uganda, east of the Nile River and the Kingdom’s headquarters are located at Bugembe. Until today and like the Baganda, the Basoga are subsistence farmers and develop gardens mostly for domestic use close to their homes. A traditional Soga clan is organized around paternal descent, and functions to provide direction and to keep members united to preserve culture and gain economic prosperity. Membership is through lineage and marriage, but also carries obligations to ancestors. Fulfilling these obligations e.g. contributing to the economic wellbeing of members, also determines one’s status in society.

By the time colonial rule started in Uganda the Basoga existed in as many as forty-seven independent chiefdoms, each headed by a chief who was a member of a dynasty within a royal patrilineal clan (Nabwiso, 1990). Like the Baganda, the political hierarchy consists of abalangira (princes of the royal clan), abakungu (appointed chiefs) and abataka (elders recognized by the head chief or princes). Chiefdoms evolved gradually from many people of a common independent ancestry, where associations with land, successfulness of a leader in war and a dispenser of justice in times of peace, were some of the unifying factors of the members.

Britain declared Busoga a British Protectorate in 1895 with 11 traditional counties corresponding to 11 chiefdoms (Nayenga, 1981). In 1906 the colonial
government influenced the Basoga clan chiefs to form the Busoga Lukiiko (or legislative council) and all chiefdoms became counties. This was the first time the Basoga were organized under a single leader and established the Office of President of the Busoga Lukiiko. Nabwiso (1990) reports also that in 1919 the official title of the constitutional head of Busoga, “Isebantu Kyabazinga” which means “the father who unites all people”, replaced the title “President of Busoga Lukiiko” at the request of Basoga who wanted a vernacular title.

Because of this history, “Lusoga language is a union of dialects that were spoken in different chiefdoms” (Gulere, 2012). In February 1939, Wako E.T was elected the first Isebantu Kyabazinga (father who unites all people), and leaders who were members of a dynasty within a royal patrilineal clan represented each clan in the Lukiiko. Clan leaders were Balangira (members of the royal clan, singular is Omulangira). They then appointed Bakungu (chiefs) from among the Bataka (elders in a clan’s territory) to manage local affairs in clan communities within the chiefdom.

Brady and Kaplan (2000) maintain that out of the multiple possible identities that human existence presents to most people, political activities of various sorts play important roles first in creating many of those identities, and then subsequently in determining which established senses of membership command allegiance and shape values. The above developments in Busoga were largely political, and
helped to construct Soga as a political identity whose salience is largely associated with political formations and choices the Basoga made since colonialism. It is a colonial creation with loose cultural roots since Busoga Kingdom became a cultural institution through political arrangements between the colonial government and chiefdoms that were constantly at war with each other.

Green (2010:8) asserts that Busoga “failed to have a unifying myth of common descent, since some rulers in its northern and eastern parts were thought to have originated from Luo and Bunyoro, while other rulers and their subjects in the south were considered to be native to the region or from further east.” Balunywa (2012) argues further that Soga was an identity that was embraced by people living in present day Busoga, but they have never been united as a people, nor have they ever aspired to be. The strongest influence on Basoga identity was therefore political, and largely came from Baganda chiefs that were appointed by the British as rulers in the region. This was also made possible by linguistic and cultural proximities between the two ethnic groups.

Smith (1991:4) maintains that the characteristics of ethnic groups include “a collective proper name, a myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories,
one or more differentiating elements of common culture, an association with a specific ‘homeland,’ and a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population.” Buganda has maintained claims to all these characteristics consistently since before colonial rule (Green, 2010). However except the name and language, these characteristics remain very fluid and unpredictable in Busoga given influences from a combination of Luo, Bunyoro and Buganda culture on one hand, and political arrangements initiated by colonialists that continued in post independence governments on the other. Even Lusoga language is “split into Lupakoyo dialect spoken in north-east Busoga but related to Lunyoro (spoken in Bunyoro), and Lutenga dialect spoken in southwest Busoga but closer to Luganda (Fallers, 1964).

Ho-Won (2000) states that much of human behavior has profound social roots. Competing versions of the origin of the Basoga undermine the unity of members around a common ancestry, and instead opened space for political influences to add to the fluidity of Basoga identity. Nabwiso (1990) reports that even today, some people call themselves Balamogi, Bagabula, or Bakigulu instead of Basoga. It is not surprising therefore that since independence the state has remained central in how the Basoga mobilize their identity as a collective to contest for political power or challenge government.
For example since the death of Kyabazinga Henry Muloki in 2008, a conflict over succession is ongoing between Prince Edward Columbus Wambuzi son of Henry Muloki (former Kyabazinga), and Prince William Gabula Nadiope a grandson to Wilberforce Nadiope. Mufumba (2009), reports that government deployed the army to guard Prince Edward Wambuzi and on other occasions, to block his rival Prince William Gabula IV from accessing the official cultural sites. The NRM government is alleged to be supporting Prince Wambuzi, because his opponent Prince Nadiope is associated with the UPC that is an opposition political party (Bazibu, 2012). The conflict seems a repeat of past experiences in Busoga where governors of the colonial government, district commissioners and special district administrators were appointed by the state, which managed to subdue Busoga to the authority of central governments, even though the obscurity of post-independence nationhood curved out a pathway for disunity and deep socio-economic depravity in Busoga, (Balunywa, 2012).

The above discussion explains ethnic groups in Uganda, and discusses especially historical processes through which the Baganda and Basoga identities played both cultural and political roles in the process of state formation. Kauzya (2005:3) explains decentralization is “a process that provides a structural arrangement for democratic and peaceful development to be planned and implemented at local community level with the participation of the local people.”
From the above discussion, this study maintains that “local people” are communities whose history shaped cultural and political interests around power and resources that are unique to each group. The following chapter demonstrates that despite elaborate LG structures, groups maintain these interests through practices and traditional structures of power and authority that resonate and compete with LGs in Busoga and Buganda respectively. In turn this generates conditions under which decentralization can or fails to improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.
Chapter Five

This chapter explains decentralization as a concept and as a power-sharing system of government, and how different dimensions of the system were applied in Uganda. Various case studies on decentralization are also reviewed, including its evolution as a system of government in Uganda. The chapter also demonstrates how elaborate LG structures across the country function parallel to decentralized traditional structures, especially in Buganda and Busoga regions. LGs represent the mainstream power and authority of the state and fulfill devolved functions to deliver services closer to the people and/or citizens. Traditional leaders, on the other hand, represent an alternative form of authority that is critical in the protection of cultural and identity needs of ethnic groups.

5.1 Decentralization

Under decentralization some aspects of state power are transferred through elected LGs, as lower level structures through which state power is transferred in form of functions that locally elected leaders fulfill on behalf of the state towards local citizens. The leaders are accorded a level of autonomy (Fleurke and Willemse, 2004) to make decisions, control local resources, and implement
programs that respond to local interests. Local autonomy in this case refers to the capacity of local leaders to determine and administer their own affairs to meet the needs and interests of their constituents or communities. In this way decentralization is a form of “self-governance and independence” or “local home-rule” (Goldsmith, 1995), where locally elected officials undertake functions considered previously the responsibility of the state.

Pierre and Peters (2000), explaining the paradox of state strength, concluded that theories of governance put the traditional thinking about state strength on its head. They argue that institutional features of what traditionally identify strong states – insulated institutions, strong political culture and so on – in some way works against the broader societal exchanges which characterize state governance. On the other hand, what are often referred to as weak states – institutional fragmentation, communal structures and so on – appear to be better geared to coordinate governance than strong states because of the more developed points of contact within their environment. Under decentralization, elected LGs are self-governing structures with autonomous powers. In Uganda, these function as points of contact between the state and local communities cross the country at village, parish, sub-county, county, and district levels.
5.2 Decentralization as Power-sharing

Ideally all modern states, especially in Africa, can claim some form of representational or participatory governance (Oxhorn et. al., 2004), yet unequal distribution of state power underpins the incidence and recurrence of violent conflicts. Consociation (Lijphart, 1977) and integrative (Horowitz, 1985) theories take a ‘power-with’ approach to recommend decentralization as a system to manage such conflicts. The theories are the basis of various scholarly works and models on decentralization as a system through which state power is shared between the state and local communities. Lijphart suggests decentralization in form of “segmented autonomy with high levels of self-governance”, while Horowitz suggests “dispersion of territorial power to take the heat off of a single focal point.”

As Lijphart (1977) asserts, decentralization is a form of consensus building mechanism often preferred to guarantee political participation especially in pluralistic communities. Ulrich (2002) argues further that it is a form of consensus democracy, corporatism and representation, all of which are necessary in responding to state-based conflict situations. Successful decentralized systems of government and state power especially in the Scandinavian countries e.g. Norway, Sweden (Norris, 2005) drive the assumption that similar inclusive LGs can be replicated to produce the same results in ethnically divided societies like
in Africa. The system is presupposed to guarantee ethnic groups a role in government decision-making and policy outcomes, including fair allocation of scarce resources (Roeder and Rothchild 2005).

Villadsen and Lubanga’s (1996) comparative study of Uganda and Sweden is based on the fact that Ugandan leaders who were in exile internalized decentralization policies and applied them locally as government reforms after the 1980-86 civil war. The study revealed strong similarities in goals, basic functions and structures between decentralization systems in Uganda and in the Scandinavian region. On the flip side, the study also revealed disparities in institutionalization and allocation of resources for the system to function effectively. These can be explained by differences in ethnic configurations, enduring colonial legacies and the small size of Uganda’s economy compared to that of Sweden on other Scandinavian countries.

Lijphart (1969) proposed power-sharing though decentralization to counter highly centralized governments built on the principle of majoritarian rule, and associated conflicts that characterized Scandinavia countries during the 1960s. This condition is consistent with experiences from the militarized, majoritarian, centralized governments in Uganda between 1962-1993 (Tripp, 2010). Villadsen and Lubanga’s (1996) study thus focused on scope of government, citizen
participation and political leadership as important elements of power-sharing under decentralization (pg.106). These aspects informed this study to understand how the system can improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.

Ocampo (1992) argues that decentralization and local autonomy may be better understood against the opposite tendency of centralization i.e. the concentration of authority and responsibility in a central government. In such cases and as was the case in Uganda before the policy was adopted in 1993, self-governance and autonomy of local political structures is non-existent. Decentralization thus involves sharing of such authority and responsibility to make decisions and implement them. Ocampo however cautions that decentralization may require a certain degree of centralization and the two processes would have to be balanced in some optimal combination.

Porter and Olsen (1976) further affirm that such a balance may provide governments with sound arguments that support policies and programs of decentralization to promote participation, access and responsiveness, and efficiency in governance. In the case of Uganda for example, defense, security and law enforcement functions were retained by the central government. Districts are, for example, authorized to plan and implement a range of programs
concerning production, water, roads, social development, environment, and land sectors. To maintain the balance, Porter and Olsen (1976) further state that such delegated authority may sometimes be taken back or modified by the delegating authority at its own will. The challenge therefore is “to strike a balance between centralization and decentralization tendencies that satisfies the needs and aspirations of both central governments and local communities” (Kulipossa, 2004:88).

5.3 Studies on decentralization

Studies about decentralization mostly focus on how the state delegates, decongests and devolves its powers to lower level authorities to expand the scope of government, citizen participation and political leadership by electing local leaders. Little or no attention is often given to what happens to relationships, especially between aggrieved groups and the state, once policies and programs are implemented. Mehler (2009:12) also maintains that, “national peace and power-sharing accords are unlikely to trigger country-wide peace if they ignore local constellations of actors and their interests. Studies on the local level of power-sharing are nearly non-existent.”

As explained above, a various studies on decentralization do not explain how the system can improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state.
Particularly in multi-ethnic societies like Uganda where, for example, communities in which LGs function have unique demands, and separate identities whose benefits to members compete with those of the state in terms of status, self-esteem and security. Historical processes of forming group identities account for the historical, cultural, linguistic, and territorial advantages ethnic groups exploit to make unique demands from the state. Including claims of entitlement among the Baganda to, for example, control ancestral land in the region, which LGs are also mandated to control and collection of revenue from. Okuku (2002) locates the persistence of conflicts in such communities “in the need for groups to protect and preserve their identities.” In Uganda, issues of identity and entitlement feature predominantly in how governments change, insurgencies are mobilized, and both were central to the decision to adopt decentralization as a system of government in Uganda.

The Annual Progress Report for Financial Year 2009/2010 indicated that political, administrative and fiscal decentralization is very successful in delivering intended services to the local people in Uganda. The report is consistent with majority of studies on decentralization, although they do not explain if such success has also transformed historically negative relationships among groups that constantly claim to be deprived of their entitlements and the state. Many studies on decentralization also explain systems and structures necessary to address
problems of centralized governments. Scholars of power-sharing institutions and mechanisms explore how elite consensus can be generated and sustained through decentralized structures of government (Smith 2000, Bauböck 2000, Lake and Rothchild 1998). For example Nhema and Zeleza (2008) focused on the relationship between central and LG structures, electoral systems, legal frameworks, and how elites exploit them to craft political careers.

Monteux’s (2006) comparative case study analyzed decentralization as a tool to manage ethnic conflicts, after it was adopted through negotiation processes in Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia. The study concluded that decentralization in post ethnic conflict regulation enhances ethnic entrenchment rather than fostering appeasement through democratization. Ideally, parties negotiate because they want to create something new together to solve their conflict, which neither could do without the other (Minton, et al 1999). Yet in this case the system that parties adopted in each case failed to deal with interests and perceptions that drive ethnic tensions.

In Uganda’s case, decentralization evolved initially as a strategy to win popular support in rebel-controlled areas during the 1981-86 civil war (Kauzya, 2007). Soon after victory, the NRM government debated the policy in a Constitutional Assembly of elected delegates and the system was adopted in the 1995
constitution. Based on this view, the context and evolution of decentralization cases in Colombia and Ghana examined by Siegle and O'Mahony (2006) could be similar to Uganda’s experiences. The study mostly utilized civil war data to examine the effect of decentralization on conflict mitigation. However, a system that has been implemented for over 20 years has failed to respond to hostilities and violence between Buganda and the state, even though the situation in the region does not amount to a civil war.

Other case studies on decentralization discussed by Oxhorn et al (2004) also present different approaches and outline the goals of decentralization in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The studies point to enduring gaps that may explain the importance of examining relational functions of decentralization in each context of study. For example in South Africa where the system was adopted during the transition from apartheid, 90% of decision-making powers and financial support still come from the central government, with “centralist demands to local authorities to adhere to party discipline from the ANC-led government” (ibid: 23). They system also “takes a more regional approach to conflict mitigation than addressing what actually goes on within local communities” (Nhema and Zeleza, 2008:34).
Unlike in Uganda where decentralization was debated and adopted in a Constituent Assembly, in Indonesia the system followed the 1995 resignation of President Suharto. Nhema and Zeleza (2008:22) further observe that the “undemocratic process by which the system was planned, sequenced and implemented still undermines citizen participation.” The authors concluded that for decentralization to be more effective, “each situation has to be examined in its unique form and should include how the system influences relationships between stakeholders against the unique history and prevailing circumstances a particular state may find itself in” (Ibid: 23).

Decentralization occurs through LGs in which local citizens participate and undertake functions that would be a responsibility of the central government. In Uganda, given a history of highly centralized governments where different ethnic groups dominate each regime, the system generated great excitement and a promise to communities to be able to meet their needs and interests up to the village level. However this study determined that experiences from Buganda region suggest that LGs are perceived to be insufficient to respond to the groups’ interests and claims of entitlements. These interests include identity and cultural claims over power and control of resources, shaped during the formation of the pre and post independent state. The system is currently implemented uniformly across the country and has managed to respond to unique group interests in
some regions like Busoga, but has not produced similar results in Baganda region.

The tendency not to examine what happens to relationships under decentralization also appears first in Falleti’s (2005) study of the system in Colombia and Argentina. The study concluded that decentralization did not necessarily increase the power of local governors and mayors. But as is the case in Buganda’s demand for more power and autonomy, Falleti did not explain how much more power the leaders needed. Second is Ulrich’s (2002) comparative case study of success and failure of decentralization in the Balkans. The study concluded that, “political elites play a crucial role to sustain shared rule, but at the same time their behavior is shaped by the institutional arrangements themselves” (ibid: 203). In both cases, it is clear that decentralization is discussed in terms of state and elites that contest and estimate their power through institutional arrangements implemented under the system.

Sisk (1996) cautions however that such approaches “overestimate the difference communal groups pay to their leaders and underestimates the power and role of popular dissatisfaction.” This is confirmed by Brancati’s (2006) study, which concluded that decentralization has been successful in curbing ethnic conflict and secessionism in Belgium, India, and Spain, for example, but much less
successful in curbing ethnic conflict and secessionism in Nigeria, Indonesia, and the former Yugoslavia. Similarly in Uganda many ethnic Baganda elites serve in the central government and participate in decentralization structures like LGs, but fail to improve relationships between their members and the monarchy with the central government which they are part of.

The above discussion concerns the concept and practice of decentralization as a power-sharing system of government. A review of various case studies also reveals a consistent focus on structures and arrangements through which the system is implemented. It also demonstrates a little or no attention to explain how LG policies and programs function to improve or fail to improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state. The following section particularly explains how this is evident in the evolution and implementation of decentralization in Uganda, and why it is perceived more as an NRM system than for all people in the country.

5.4 Decentralization in Uganda

The current system of decentralization started as a network of Resistance Councils (Manyak and Katono, 2010) in the early days of the 1980-1986 civil war. Thus before it was adopted in the constitution, the system was a form of local governance in liberated zones. In areas that the National Resistance Army (NRA)
captured from government forces, local communities were asked to elect committees to govern their affairs, since there was no government. However, the principal functions were to collect intelligence about government forces and collaborators to alert the NRA, hence the name Resistance Councils (RCs) (Mugabi, 2004). Secondary duties included service delivery in areas of dispute resolution and managing the distribution of basic household necessities.

Upon coming to power in 1986, RCs existed in all areas the NRA had captured. This was the foundation upon which the decentralization policy was developed, and “Resistance Councils” came to be called LCs until today. The Mamdani Commission (1987) recommended these changes i.e. to convert existing RCs into LCs that would be coordinated through districts, while maintaining the central government. Decentralization reforms were launched by the President in the 1992 policy statement, the LG statute was adopted in 1993, and became part of the constitution in 1995. Official implementation of the policy started after the LGs Act of 1997, which is still in force.

Villadsen and Lubanga (1996) maintain that the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government that took state power in 1986 has undergone dramatic political and economic transformation. The most significant was enacting the 1993 Resistance Councils’ Statute, which contained the legal framework that
enabled implementation of decentralization as a system of government. The statute remained in force until the Local Government Act 1997 was adopted by parliament. According to the Act:

“The government of Uganda embarked on decentralization reforms with the aim of devolving functions, powers and services…intended to ensure good governance and democratic participation in, and control of decision making by the people.”

This followed a long period in which the institutional links between the center and locality had weakened to such an extent that neither could control the other nor ensure access to the other’s resources (Gertzel, 1988). This view is reflected in Okuku’s (2002) observation that all regimes in Uganda have used local administration to advance their political interests, with Museveni’s regime, since 1986, showing a slight difference due to its decentralization policy.

The Constituent Assembly (CA) of 1993–1995 produced the 1995 Constitution, which set the legal framework and terms for decentralization to be implemented as a system of government in Uganda. However, although traditional institutions with their decentralized structures and some properties had been reinstated in the same year, the constitution was silent on how the system would mediate between LGs and traditional authorities. The principals of LGs are listed as
follows in Chapter 7(176) of the 1995 Constitution, and these continue to guide implementation of the policy in the country.

1. The state shall be guided by the principle of decentralization and devolution of governmental functions and powers to the people at appropriate levels where they can best manage and direct their own affairs.

2. The system shall be such as to ensure that functions, powers and responsibilities are devolved and transferred to LG units in a coordinated manner.

3. Decentralization shall be a principle applying to all levels of LG and in particular, from higher to lower LG units to ensure people’s participation and democratic control in decision making.

4. The system shall be such as to ensure the full realization of democratic governance at all LG levels.

5. There shall be established for each LG unit a sound financial base with reliable sources of revenue.

6. Appropriate measures shall be taken to enable LG units to plan, initiate and execute policies in respect of all matters affecting the people within their jurisdiction.

7. Persons in the service of LG shall be employed by the LGs.
8. The LGs shall oversee the performance of persons employed by government to provide services in their areas and monitor the provision of government services or the implementation of projects in their areas.

The foregoing highlights how decentralization evolved from a network of Resistance Councils as part of the NRA war strategy, through a series of transformations that institutionalized this system of government. From the discussion, it is clear that decentralization was the backbone of the NRM regime, synonymous with movement politics. However the policy is silent on how LGs should respond to identity and cultural interests over power and control of local resources that affect relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.

5.5 Decentralization and Movement Politics

From the preceding discussion, decentralization evolved from being a civil war strategy through RCs, to a constitutional and institutionalized system of government currently implemented by LCs through LGs across the country. This path evolved jointly with movement politics in the country, directed by the NRM. The National Resistance Movement (NRM) was the political wing of the National Resistance Army (NRA) that organized the formation of RCs during the 1980-86 civil war. ‘Movement’ was then adopted as a political system after the civil war,
under which the country was governed from 1986 to 1995. Currently the National Resistance Movement (NRM) is the majority Political Party in the National Parliament, and the Chairperson is the President of Uganda.

From this history between decentralization and movement politics, LGs became designated and are perceived as movement political structures that helped to organize the post-civil war Uganda into a ‘no party state’ (Kakuba, 2010). This was the case until multi-party politics was adopted in 2005, after 20 years during which LCs and LGs functioned to implement the Movement’s political ideology.

This is unlike the current competitive political party situation where “various political office holders in local governments are drawn from a range of available political parties in the polity” (Kakuba, 2010). Sisk (1996) cautions therefore that attractive devices like LGs may be unwieldy and groups may feel insufficiently secure to submit to the deep uncertainties they contain. Similarly in Uganda, insecurity and uncertainty about the system in Buganda manifests in negative perceptions toward the LGs. The system is perceived as an instrument of patronage for political loyalists of the NRM regime (Okuku, 2002). From this perspective decentralization resembles the inductive system (Kabweygere, 1972), where the colonial elite (read LCs) were dependent on decisions made in the metropolis (read the NRM party), and the executive (read LGs) received
orders, and distributed them to officials for implementation.

Suffice to note here that a multiparty political system “was re-established in exchange for an agreement within sections of the parliament to remove the term-limit provision of the constitution that restricted President Museveni to ten years in office” (Barkan, 2005). The constitution was amended accordingly “after a number of Members of Parliament received huge amounts of hard cash” (Kurtz, 2006). Successful reforms, especially the decentralization system, were useful in making a case for removing the term-limits to allow President Museveni’s good leadership to continue. NRM’s domination of state power under a multiparty dispensation strengthened with opening the space for its leader to become a lifetime president for Uganda, and was fortified by the creation of LG structures around the country that highlight successful leadership.

From this observation, civil society groups cautioned that under multiparty politics, decentralization would function basing on emotions and not facts, leading to promoting party interests as opposed to meeting genuine local needs (Anti-Corruption Coalition Uganda - ACCU, 2006). The multi-party political system created opportunities for various political ideologies and competing interests to interfere with LG decision-making and implementation processes at national and local levels. Critical ingredients of decentralization, like political and
administrative participation at the local level, ended up being sacrificed to advance political positions and interests of, particularly, the NRM as the mother party of LGs in Uganda. According to Manyak and Katono (2010), this manifested, for example, in “the creation of new and often unviable districts to assuage local political interests, the recentralization of key LG offices and functions, and arbitrarily setting aside unpopular sources of local revenue.”

Multiple interests of competing political elites within and outside the NRM and of various ethnic groups created a complex context in the implementation of decentralization. Drawing from the NRM’s political program on coming to power, the assumption was that ethnicity with associated historical and contemporary grievances by different groups would be subdued by political maneuvers of the state, including decentralization of state power. However, Okuku (2002) asserts that, “mobilization of ethnic identities like tribe or religion to achieve group interests remains a thorny defining feature of communal and state conflicts for the last 50 years, and continues to permeate all aspects of relations.” Unfortunately, country reports about decentralization did not mention how the system deals with legacies of ethnic divisions and related social, political and economic disparities. These continue to form the basis of comparisons and estimation of threats to the security, culture and identity of ethnic groups in the country.
This is evident in the World Bank report that also ranked Uganda only second to South Africa among 30 countries known to implement decentralized governance in Africa (Kauzya 2007, Ndegwa 2002). The report is consistent with Oxhorn et al (2004), Monteux’s (2006), Tripp (2010), Kauzya (2007), and DPSF report of 2000, all of which outline achievements and benefits of decentralization in multi-ethnic societies. In Uganda, these include (i) free local managers to develop effective and sustainable programs, (ii) bring political and administrative control closer to the local people, (iii) promote people’s feeling of ownership of local programs and projects, (iv) improve financial accountability and responsibility, and (v) improve the capacity of local authorities to plan, collect taxes and manage service delivery. Figure 3 shows the extent of decentralization on the African continent and rankings of different countries.
However, reports from the World Bank and government of Uganda do not mention how decentralization has functioned to address negative relationships that continue to challenge organization and distribution of state power in Uganda. Frustration and negative perceptions towards the state in relation to living conditions in Buganda was also evident in a survey conducted by Afrobarometer in Kampala district (Sentamu, 2009). The study determined that an increasing number of people (53%) preferred being identified by their ethnic group. Particularly, 37% of Baganda in the region felt that their conditions are worse off than other tribes, compared to 29% in the northern and 16% in the eastern region including Busoga. However the study did not indicate whether decentralization contributed to this condition.
A study of Kampala district by Butagira (2010) also confirmed negative perceptions of the state in Buganda. The study reported that 65% of the local people felt that jobs and other opportunities are made in favor of candidates from the president’s home in the western region of Uganda. Findings from both studies are consistent with the 1993 Constitutional Review Commission findings, 10 years earlier, which revealed that over 90% of the Baganda prefer a federal system of government, compared to 65% in other regions. This underscored Buganda’s protracted struggle for more authority and autonomy from the central government. The report was produced one year after decentralization was announced in a Presidential Policy Statement of October 1992 as a system of government for Uganda (Asiimwe and Musisi, 2007). The preceding discussion demonstrates that despite decentralization, movement politics remained divisive as different ethnic groups compared their status and access to political and economic opportunities. In doing so the Baganda revived their historical claims, including a federal status for Buganda.

5.6 Dimensions of decentralization in Uganda

Literature on decentralization as power-sharing indicate that it takes three major forms, which inspite of conceptual clarity, practically overlap in most cases since one may not function effectively independent of the other (Rondinelli 1998, USAID 2001, Kauzya 2007). Schneider (2003) also states that dimensions of
decentralization tend to be treated as distinct and separable in each of the theories of fiscal federalism, public administration, and political science. However, while these dimensions are substantially different, they are interrelated in their causes and effects. Uganda’s case exemplifies this overlap and interrelationship between different dimensions of decentralization. This is confirmed by Gertzel’s (1988) observation that, “the trend towards devolution of power from central government to local authorities in Uganda aimed at increasing the extent of local participation in the policy-making process, strengthening local capacity for resource mobilization and power sharing in the provision of social goods and services.” Suffice to note that none of the four dimensions seeks to respond to perceptions, interests and patterns of interaction between ethnic groups and the state. These include:

5.6.1 Devolution.
This largely involves transfer of political authority to elected LGs at sub-national levels. LGs operate within clear legal geographical boundary lines, e.g. zone, and are composed of elected officials from members of local communities. In the case of Uganda, the majority of elected members of LGs in each region are from the dominant ethnic group in that electoral constituency. Thus ethnic groups, by reason of location of their members in legal geographical boundaries within which LGs are elected and function, exercise a high level of self-rule to meet group
interests. LGs function with a degree of political autonomy outside the direct influence from the central government, although they remain subjected to general policies and laws of the state. Using Performance indicators, Appendix 7 shows progress in implementation of political decentralization activities in Uganda, which had an average performance of 72% against an average target of 79% in 2009/10 (LG Sector Investment Report, 2010)

5.6.2 Decongestion.

This involves transfer of administrative powers to local offices. In Uganda, the central government appoints local technical officers like planners, accountants, education supervisors, but retains control over policies that govern these departments. Administrative services transferred by the central government include managing decentralized programs in health, school supervision and administration, road construction and maintenance etc. In doing so, LGs also coordinate special programs on behalf of the central government to respond to specific needs of society in a particular geographical area. Through such programs the state influences and controls implementation of government priorities at the local level in accordance with national goals. Using performance indicators, Appendix 8 shows the performance of administrative decentralization in Uganda.
5.6.3 Delegation.

This involves the transfer of managerial responsibilities to local authorities. Fiscal decentralization is also a term used to refer to the transfer of managerial functions including budgeting, revenue collection and spending to LGs. For example, while there may be common laws and policies within a state about taxation and management of land, the decentralization policy in Uganda authorizes LGs to develop systems, plan and employ staff to collect taxes or manage land affairs in accordance with local priorities. Through this arrangement, the system is assumed to empower local communities to develop, manage and maintain their own sources of revenue. This is considered a great incentive for revenue generation and improving resource allocation at the local level (Manasan, 1995). Using performance indicators Appendix 9 shows the performance of fiscal decentralization in Uganda, which had a 71% average against a target of 73%.

Decentralization is assumed to mediate state and communal processes in ways that optimize resource allocation at the national level and mobilization of citizens to participate in decision-making and governance at local levels. In the process, it is expected to improve service delivery towards development of local communities, thus improve government responsiveness to local needs and
interests. Figure 4 shows assumptions, expected outcomes and results from political, financial and administrative decentralization.

Source: Kauzya (2005)

Figure 4. Decentralization choices and outcomes

Kauzya (2007:80) further argues that although in many instances decentralization policies that promise success will include all the three dimensions above, stakeholders in the system also matter “because their interests are rarely the same.” In the case of Uganda the stakeholders include; the state and politicians,
whose will is necessary for decentralization to succeed, civil servants that facilitate technical processes of delegation, devolution and decongestion, and cultural, linguistic and territorial communities that exist and are recognized as ethnic groups.

5.7 LG and Cultural Leadership Structures

The District is the largest unit of administration under which LGs are organized up to the grassroots, considered the lower levels of government (Mugabi, 2004). In Buganda and Busoga Kingdoms lower levels of government function parallel to structures of traditional authorities led by chiefs that existed before decentralization was adopted as a system of government in Uganda. Traditional authorities are the effective custodians of culture, land and identity, around which local citizens of the state organize as traditional communities. The constitution and decentralization policy framework do not provide space for these traditional structures to complement LGs.

Lack of clarity on the role of traditional authorities, comparable to LGs, generates insecure and competitive conditions for both authorities to maintain influence over local communities and control local resources. According to Mamdani (1996), this condition persists because the bifurcated nature of the post-colonial state, inherited from colonialists, has never been dismantled. This omission in the
design and implementation of decentralization demonstrates a continuing disconnect between civil and customary systems. Both, for example, have different interpretations of power, interests, representation and participation in leadership or decision-making. These conditions make implementation of decentralization to meet local interests and deliver services closer to local people in the different regions of Uganda problematic.

Figure 5 shows the LG structure in Uganda where LCs are categorized into Rural and Urban, and are the key political organs in each LG from district to the village (Rural) or zone (Urban) level. A Local Council (LC) is composed of members that are directly elected by the community. The council also includes representatives of special interest groups, precisely persons with disabilities, youth and women (DPSF 2006).
A Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) leads a team of technical and professional officers, mostly appointed by District Service Commissions and District Executive Committees. At the technical level each district has a District Service Commission (DSC), composed of technocrats and politicians elected by LCs to manage recruitment of administrative teams to work at all levels of the society and set quality standards of service providers. The DSC is headed by a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) in each district and, together with civil servants recruited by the central government, works with other departments and committees of the district like District Land Board, Community Land Boards,
District Tender Boards, and Contracts Committees to provide a range of services to communities. Except at the technical level, e.g. recruitment of CAO who is appointed by the state from anywhere in the country, majority of political officers that serve in LGs at LC 1, II, III and V are from the indigenous ethnic group in each district. In this case and by virtue of their majority, most personnel in LGs in Kampala and Jinja districts are Baganda and Basoga.

A number of private companies and civil society organizations are also often contracted to provide range of services, including construction and maintenance of roads and other infrastructure, health education e.g. fighting of HIV AIDS, capacity building for management of LG projects, civic education e.g. to prepare voters for elections, etc. in each district. However, provision of these services is guided by LGs as empowered by the decentralization policy.

The functions of LCs are indicated in details in Figure 6 below. At district levels include management and supervision of:

1. Primary, secondary, and special technical education;

2. Supervision of trade, hospitals, dispensaries, aid posts and health centers other than hospitals that provide referral and medical training

3. Construction and maintenance of feeder roads
4. Provision and maintenance of water supplies, agricultural extension services,

5. Local revenues collection and sharing, where any LG division up to the grassroots retains 50% of the collection and 50% is transferred to the city or district. It is then redistributed along with other grants received from the central government in equal proportion to all divisions in the district.

6. Land administration and surveying.

7. Community development.

Functions of LCs at county, sub-county, parish and village level include: -

1. Monitor implementation of government and community programs

2. Initiate and implement local programs after approval of the council

3. Recommend persons for appointment on statutory/technical committees

4. Resolve local disputes and monitor security and law enforcement
The central government retained a number of services (Asiimwe and Musisi 2007), and these include: - security and defense, elections, banking, national parks, land, law and order, mining and water resources, foreign relations, taxation and citizenship. For example a LG Finance Commission composed of representatives from district councils, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of LG and urban councils advises the President of Uganda on the distribution and the allocation of revenue to LGs.
5.8 Resident District Commissioners

A Resident District Commissioner (RDC) is a district officer appointed directly by The President of Uganda, as head the district security and is a personal representative of the President in the district. Initially these were called District Administrators (DAs) and the main functions included “political education of officials and communities on the ideology and principles of the NRM (Inspector General of Government, 2008). RDCs add another layer of political appointments that functions to further ensure that recentralization of decentralization remains under the supervision of The Office of the President. RDCs work with committees of intelligence officers led by the District Intelligence Officer, also appointed by the Office of the President. These committees monitor implementation of policies and programs of the central government on behalf of the President, including:

1. Coordination of the administration of government services.
2. Monitoring and inspection of service delivery in the district
3. Publicizes and sensitize communities policies and programs of the government
4. Responsible for security in the district
5. Initiates investigation of special programs and cases involving civil servants in the district.
5.9 LG performance

LG performance involves the extent to which LGs fulfill the above functions to improve service delivery, political participation and accountability, thus make government more responsive to needs and interests of local communities. It is important to note that reports, studies and discussions about LG performance do not contain information on how decentralization functions to improve relationships between ethnic groups or communities and the state in Uganda. A survey conducted by Afrobarometer about governance in Uganda reported that, “decentralization is progressing successfully, giving Ugandans a sense of ownership and connection to the government, and producing real gains for communities” (Logan et al 2003). LG councilors at village, parish and sub-country level scored 92% compared to county level, which suggests that LGs at the grassroots are effective. Also 67% of Ugandans thought that LCs are more accountable countrywide, “a view more favorable than five years earlier” (Ibid). The findings indicate strong local identification with the system, but do not explain why grievances against the state persist in Buganda over interests the system is designed to meet.

According to the Uganda Poverty Status Report (2003), the Poverty Action Fund (PAF) contained in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) effectively transfers resources to districts to undertake development programs that alleviate
poverty. The report claims that Poverty reduced countrywide from 56% in 1992/93 to 35 % in 2003, and currently 70% of districts have the capacity to handle infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance. According to the Service Delivery Survey (1995) and the Uganda Bureau of Statistics Population Census Report (2002), 55% of the population can access healthcare facilities compared to 48% in 1995. Also 55% of the rural population has access to safe water compared to 18% in 1991.

However sharing of national revenue, especially through government grants to LGs, continues to raise communal discontent. This is particularly in eastern and central region districts that feel they were disenfranchised for many years before and after independence respectively, but before decentralization was implemented. Manyak and Katono’s (2010) study of decentralization and conflicts in Uganda also revealed that achievements from decentralization have not transformed communities due to persistent weaknesses in how the system is implemented. Consistent with findings of this study in Buganda and Busoga, Katono observes that while the LG system was initially well accepted, Ugandans now appear increasingly disillusioned with the corruption, mismanagement, and politicization of the system to meet interests of the ruling NRM Party. These weaknesses generate negative perceptions towards LGs and raise questions concerning appropriateness of decentralization as a viable system of government
for Uganda. The weaknesses also underscore the corrosive impact of social conflicts found in LGs due to poverty and illiteracy. In Buganda, this is further complicated by claims of entitlement and demands over access to more power and control of local resources. Katono’s study concluded that the LG system appears to be falling short of its founders’ expectations that decentralization would improve the capacity of LCs to deliver services and be more responsive to citizens’ needs.

Mamdani, (1999) and Okuku (2002) both argue that post-colonial political programs and government practices reproduced the kind of ethnicity that marked the colonial state. Some forms of local governance existed during early post-independence governments until a decentralization policy was adopted as a system of government in Uganda in 1993. However as explained in the following chapter, the state has still not escaped the claim of an ethnic curse and its influence on how ethnic groups perceive and interact through LGs to achieve their interests.

5.10 Decentralization in Buganda Kingdom.

The Buganda Constitution (1962) laid out the decentralization of Buganda Kingdoms’ political and administrative structures and their function of collecting taxes. The structures continue to exist until today and, like the decentralization
policy of the central government, the Buganda Constitution emphasizes the Ssaza (district) as the largest administrative unit.

While administratively the chiefs collected taxes, traditionally they ensure that culture, identity, and local resources, including ancestral land, are well protected, preserved and benefit their members. This was also the case among the Basoga. Some of the functions, especially tax collection, control of land and resolving local disputes, have been taken over by LGs in their areas of jurisdiction. As explained later in this study, the functions of Baganda chiefs are the same as those of Busoga regions because Baganda chiefs were a big influence in the formation of Busoga Kingdom.

This administrative and political structure is described in Buganda Constitutions as follows:

1. At the head of each Saza (District) in Buganda there shall be a chief who shall be called a Saza Chief and who shall be responsible to the Katikkiro (Prime Minister) for the administration of his Saza and for the collection of the taxes he is required to collect by the Katikkiro.

2. Each Saza shall be divided into Gombololas (Sub-county) and each such Gombolola shall be in charge of a chief who shall be called a Gombolola Chief.
3. Each *Gombolola* shall be divided into *Miluka* (Parishes) and in each *Muluka* (singular), there shall be a chief who shall be called a *Muluka* Chief.

4. *Gombolola* and *Muluka* Chiefs shall assist *Saza* Chiefs performing their duties.

The political and administrative structure of Buganda Kingdom was modeled around the social structure of the Baganda. The structures function to fulfill the traditional function of “keeping the bundles together” (Sentongo and Bartoli, 2012:15) by preventing conflicts over representation, access to power and resources. Findings from this study determined however, that failure to reconcile traditional and modern forms of decentralization, especially in Buganda region, also contributes to negative perceptions and estimation of threats from decentralization structures of the state by the monarchy. Particularly where systems and interests of traditional authorities conflict with the way devolution functions to fulfill the goals of the system and interests of the state.

In Buganda Kingdom, political power is decentralized through rotation of Kingship where all clans have a chance to produce a King. Administration of the Kingdom is decentralized by appointing chiefs at village, parish, sub-county and county levels, and assignment of complementary roles to all clans within the monarchy. During the 1940s and 1950s the monarchy functioned through this structure as a federal state. According to Buganda Kingdom (2002), the system was legislated
into the 1965 Laws of Buganda LG Councils, including election of LG officials and representatives of all counties to the *Lukiiko* (supreme council of leaders) or Buganda parliament. Figure 7 below shows the social structure of the Baganda clan. The arrows point in upward direction because leaders at each of the levels, including the *Kabaka*, draw their authority from their subjects through inheritance. Downward arrows indicate the *Kabaka* as the supreme authority in a social-political structure where he delegates his authority to appointed leaders up to the grassroots. In this way the structure functions to keep members together up to the grassroots.

**Figure 7. Structure of a Baganda Clan**
Figure 8, as shown below, shows the relationship between the social structures on one side, and the political and administrative structure of the Kingdom. Both structures converge at the top level to demonstrate that the politics of managing the Kingdom and culture of the people reinforce each other. For that matter, any form of power in Buganda, including decentralized power of the state, must reinforce culture and identity of the people. Promoting or emphasizing one at the expense of the other is considered dangerous and aimed at disintegrating Buganda and the Baganda.

Source: Researcher

Figure 8. Relationship between the social and political structures of Buganda Kingdom
Rotation of kingship across clans mitigates conflicts over access to power. This is because no single clan can dominate kingship in Buganda, instead each clan has a chance to produce a king from amongst its members. This is made possible by the patrilineal system where each Muganda takes on the totem of the father’s clan, is named accordingly at birth, and it is taboo to marry anyone from the same clan. However only the *Kabaka* takes on the mothers’ totem and clan, therefore all Baganda Kings marry from different clans other than their mothers’ clans.

Therefore each time a succeeding King marries, the heir to the throne or a new *Kabaka* will come from the Queens’ clan. In that way power rotates between clans depending on how different kings choose their wives, and no clan can dominate power or control of resources in Buganda. For that matter a Baganda ‘Royal Family’ is made up of different clans where members have blood links to a current or former *Kabaka*. But those members cannot claim a right to the throne because the heir to the throne will always be a son of the preceding *Kabaka* but from a different clan. This tradition continues and has influenced the understanding of power in Buganda as something that has to be shared and inclusive, without losing the superiority and influence required to keep the Baganda together. This view is unlike successive regimes in Uganda since 1967,
where domination of state power by particular ethnic groups marked each government.

For example, Kabaka Edward Mutesa II was of the Nte (Cow) clan and married from the Nkima (Monkey) clan. His son, the current Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Mutebi, is therefore of the Nkima clan as was his mother. In 1993 Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Mutebi married from the Musu (Edible rat) clan. This automatically indicates that the next Kabaka of Buganda will be from the Musu clan. As a result of this system, Kiwanuka (1993) observed that the absence of a royal clan, a permanent aristocracy, and the equality of clans, facilitated the building up of a system whereby a young man of humble birth could enter the civil service at court and sometimes rise to a position of considerable importance.’

The method has effectively ensured the continuity and stability of Kabakaship in Buganda, where no clan is known to have claimed discrimination or exclusion from access the throne. Between 1966-1993 kingdoms remained banned and Buganda could not coronate a Kabaka to the throne, no clan claimed the throne because the Kabaka was alive in exile and would return to rule his people. Top-level leaders of the Baganda social structure, Abataka (custodians of ancestral clan land or clan elders), took on political roles during this time. They provided leadership and tapped into the symbolic role of Kabakaship to mobilize members
to preserve culture and history of the group. This included rallying the Buganda to support and participate in the 1980-86 civil war, following a promise by the rebel leadership that Kingdoms were to be restored and the Kabaka who was living in exile will return.

Decentralization in Buganda Kingdom also occurs through the distribution of roles and particular responsibilities in the administration of the monarchy between clans. Easton (1990:34) has argued that the “functioning of a state can only be derived from its relationship not to a class but the whole society.’ Buganda proved to function as a state through distribution of administrative responsibilities between clans and appointment of chiefs to lower political structures of the monarchy as supervisors. The chiefs supervised tasks and organized members to fulfill decentralized functions of the monarchy e.g. health, defense or road construction and maintenance, in their localities etc. In this way the monarchy would become fully functional, when each clan fulfills its tasks.

Legend holds that after the Bataka reached a consensus to appoint King Kintu as the first Kabaka of Buganda, subsequent kings distributed responsibilities to clans as the kingdom increased in population and expanded its territory. This resembled the devolution and delegation of the state under the modern system of decentralization, with a goal to keep the Baganda united. In this way group
identities marked by totems and family relationships were reinforced with role identities (Korostelina, 2007). This included assigning clans particular social, political, economic and organizational roles necessary for the Kabaka to serve all his people and for the Kingdom to function effectively.

Deutsch (2000), in his theory of cooperation and competition, argues that goal interdependence affects expectations and interactions between parties to a conflict. He maintains therefore that positively interdependent goals correlate with cooperation, yet with negatively interdependent goals, one’s success correlates with another’s failure. In Buganda Kingdom, although roles assigned to each clan are different, they complement each other for the Kingdom to function effectively and to underscore the interdependence between all clans. Failure by one clan to fulfill its role would mean failure by the monarchy to function effectively, and can attract displeasure from the Kabaka and disgrace to the group. The system was most effective in the protection of Baganda identity and culture, including when Kingdoms remained banned between 1967-1993.

In this way, rotation of Kabakaship, assigning clans with complementary roles in the administration of the monarchy, and appointment of chiefs from country to village levels ensured that all people were served equally and participated in managing the monarchy. For this reason there is no seniority between clans of
Baganda in accessing power, recognition within the monarchy, or access to local resources necessary for a clan or family to fulfill their roles within the monarchy. Huffman (2009) states that “conflicts are triggered and inflamed by identity concerns, and identities are created and transformed in the waging of conflicts”. Similarly in the conflict between the Baganda and the state, devolution is appreciated or resisted in part depending on how the system contributes to meet identity and cultural interests, especially over power and control of local resources in the region. Under the decentralization system, Buganda’s social and political structures continue to influence the way the group estimates its power, status, or control of local resources, as part of protecting culture and identity of the group.

5.11 Decentralization in Busoga Kingdom

The appointment of Semei Kakungulu (from Buganda Kingdom) by the colonial government to rule the Basoga, also introduced decentralized political structures accountable to a central authority. During this time each of the 11 chiefdoms adopted the political structure of Buganda Kingdom, where the central authority of Clan Head Chiefs was decentralized to lower levels of the society, but mostly led by royal family members. However Clan Head Chiefs appointed a few of the local elders as leaders too. Local administration was also divided into areas of Butongole (official areas of jurisdiction) and Bwesengeeze (personal estate –
where the ruler could demand personal tribute in form of produce and labour from the peasants) Nabwiso (2008). The Busoga Lukiiko, under the influence of the colonial government, resolved to have the Kyabazingaship “rotate between five royal families, but through elections and not through inheritenc” (Bita, 2009). This is unlike in Buganda Kingdom where Kingship in inherited but between different clans.

Nabwiso (2008), reports that “by 1913 when Kakungulu had ceased to be the President of Busoga Lukiiko, the Colonial Government introduced this rotational presidential system. Each of the hereditary rulers was expected to spend three months at Bugembe (the Busoga government headquarters) to preside over Busoga Lukiiko meetings and Busoga court proceedings. Until today the Kyabazinga is elected but as a titular head of Busoga Kingdom, where real authority to rule remained with the Head Chief of each clan who also appoints lower level chiefs from the members of the royal clan. In this way, and as shown in Figure 9, traditional authority in Busoga remained decentralized through a political chain of command consisting of the Kyabazinga as a titular head, Clan Head Chiefs, Members of Royal Families, ministers and elders.
Source: Researcher

Figure 9. Decentralized structure of Busoga Kingdom

The *Lukiiko* is at the helm of Busoga political structure, composed of leaders from each of the 11 traditional clans. Unlike in Buganda where chiefs are appointed based on proven record and ability to keep the Buganda together (Sentongo and Bartoli, 2012), Busoga chiefs were appointed from among royal family members. Elders among commoners were only appointed when it was clear that “they were not potential usurpers of power” (Fallers, 1953:54). If a leader “failed to govern within the limits set by custom in the chiefdom, other leaders and princes would combine in support of a rival prince and drive him from his position” (*ibid*).

Centralization of power in the pre and post colonial governments also affected the power and status of Busoga in unique ways. Firstly the independence
constitution of 1962 that named Buganda a federal state, renamed Busoga as a territory and not a district as was the case just before independence. Busoga Kingdom thus “acquired a semi-federal status until the 1967 constitution abolished all Kingdoms” (Nabwiso, 2008:11). Buganda has been consistent in fighting for its federal status in the post-independence state until today. However the Kyabazinga and the constitutive chiefdoms of Busoga Kingdom became weakened after Kingdoms were banned in 1967, due to conflicts between the different chiefdoms. Even at independence in 1962, “the Bagosa were already divided over who should be the Kyabazinga between William Wilberforce Nadiope and Henry Muloki” (Fallers, 1953:18). These conflicts made the region susceptible to frequent political influences from the state, since it was already a major player shaping the power of Kyabazinga and how the monarchy was ruled.

According to Nabwiso (2008) this decline started in the 1930s with the absorption of hereditary rulers into the LG Civil Service, as county chiefs. This marked state’s takeover of the power of the Kyabazinga and clan heads. Nabwiso (2008:18) further explains that, “often illiterate chiefs were replaced by the young literate ones; the government started transferring them from their home areas to other areas, the power of hereditary chiefs began to grow weaker, and so the President and the Lukiiko came to be regarded as just centers of the traditional power.” He adds that, “the position of the rulers was further undermined by the abolition of the bwesengeeze system and busulu (a kind of land rent) from which
they were getting a lot of wealth” (Pg, 19). The salary scheme introduced in 1926 also put Kyabazingaship in a weaker economic position, because after having been absorbed into the civil service, “chiefs were required to carry out the duties of the government and not to pursue their own demands or those of their people” (Pg, 22).

Post-independence centralization of state power catalyzed Busogas’ loss of power for self-rule to the state, as the new 1967 constitution consolidated all state power under the central government. In Buganda, the Kabaka fled into exile in London where he continues to protest government policy to abolish Kingdoms. The Kyabazinga on the other hand was “sent to prison for 18 months in 1970 for allegedly obtaining money from the American British insurance company by false pretence” (Nabwiso, 2012:22). Many key political leaders from Busoga were also sent to prison on flimsy charges.

Political alliances between monarchies and political organizations marked the resistance and collaboration that ethnic groups mobilized to access state power. This expanded the space ethnicity occupies in national politics and in the functioning of the central government, where the Baganda and Basoga supported opposing parties. For example, during the first elections of 1964, the Kabaka of Buganda allied with Uganda People’s Congress (UPC) to defeat the Democratic Party. The Kyabazinga allied with the Democratic Party (DP) to defeat UPC. The
DP lost the elections, and the victorious UPC government replaced Wako with William Nadiope as the Kyabazinga because he was pro UPC. Busoga gained prominence in the central government and national politics, when parliament elected Nadiope the fist post-independence Vice-President, and the Kabaka of Buganda the President of Uganda.

President Idi Amin overthrew the UPC government in a military coup d’état, and renamed Busoga a Province in 1973 with three districts namely Busoga North, Busoga South and Busoga. After the overthrow of Idi Amin in 1979 the districts were renamed Kamuli, Iganga and Jinja Districts respectively. During this time the Basoga offered most of their political support to DP, UPC or NRM. For example Nabwiso (2012:20) reports that “in 1980 DP won nine seats out of 11, compared to UPC which had eight out of nine seats in 1962, and several new political leaders emerged from Busoga 1986-1995 including Dr. Speciosa Wandira Kazibwe who became the first female Vice President of Uganda and on the African continent” under the NRM government.

Like Kabakaship in Buganda, Kyabazingaship of Busoga re-emerged in 1993 with Henry Muloki as the Kabazinga after his reign from 1955-1962 was interrupted by the 1966 crisis and 1967 constitution that abolished Kingdoms. Nabwiso (2012) further argues that, while in 1962 Busoga had nine parliamentarians, today the number has increased to 32. Also, in 1962, Busoga
was just one district, but today it has 10 districts, with one more in the offing.” Disappointedly though, “Busoga is now considered to be the most impoverished sub-region in Uganda” (ibid).

This is the context in which the decentralization policy and LG structures became popular and most preferred in Busoga. The system re-opened opportunities for status and political power hitherto lost by chiefs during the early post-independence governments. Decentralization restored for chiefs in Busoga and their members what had been lost in the process of forming a unitary state in Uganda. This was unlike in Buganda considered to have been “a well-established, centralized, territorially based state with a long continuous history, a subject population conceived in terms of shared descent and characterized by relative linguistic and cultural homogeneity” (Karlstrom, 1997). Since this was not the case in Busoga, decentralization succeeded where centralized regimes failed and by reorganizing clan settlements into LG zones, and provided space for members to once again look into their clans for leadership, thus resembling a deflated traditional chieftaincy system in the region.

LGs, considered a challenge to traditional authorities in Buganda, were consistent with the traditional Busoga chieftaincy system. In Busoga LCs function alongside traditional village structures that exist as kinship institutions where most residents belong to a lineage group. Traditionally the headmanship
of a village or sub-village is inherited through a patrilineal line and is controlled through a succession lineage. LCs did not only reinforce recognition of such kinship in their areas of jurisdiction, but also belongingness to a political community where elected leaders are also clan members. Election of political leaders to LCs is also consistent with the traditional practice of electing the Kyabazinga or local chiefs from families that inherit such authority. This is unlike in Buganda where the Kabaka appoints traditional chiefs regardless of clan influences. Decentralization boosted the influence of clans in the political affairs of local communities in Busoga, despite continuing conflicts between elected authorities that compete for power and control of local resources. For example, all land in Kirumbi sub-village in Bulamogi County is “owned” by a lineage of Ba-Ise-Ngobi royal clan. LC I officials at the village are also relatives to one another and members of the whole village. The village headman is also the clan leader, his brother and other cousins live in three nearby farmhouses, and all speak of themselves as descendants of the same ancestor. The ancestor was buried in the village and the grave is well marked by a large slab of concrete with his names inscribed. While the LC I political leader is also the cultural leader, during elections different individuals compete for power and to control resources. However such competition tends to be localized, in traditionally controlled conditions that mitigate escalation of hostilities and conflict.
In such contexts and as is the case in Busoga region, decentralization of state power reinforced traditional authority with political authority and made local leaders become more influential in their areas of jurisdiction. Due to family lineages among residents in LG zones, locally elected leaders tend to come from family and clan members. In this way implementation of the decentralization system became intimately connected to traditional rule in Busoga. Findings from this study also revealed that decentralization is more appreciated in Busoga because it reinforced organization of citizens around their preferred traditional clans and territories. In this way the system boosted the esteem of individual leaders and status of clans, especially when decentralization enables members to elect family or clan members as political leaders.

As indicated in Figures 1 and 2, this study recognizes the demographic composition of Buganda and Busoga regions to be of various ethnic groups. However, it emerged during the study that such composition was not a factor in how LGs were perceived or functioned to influence interactions between ethnic groups and the state to achieve their interests. Instead historical processes of forming identities of dominant groups in each region, during which unique interests over power and control of local resources emerged accounted for how LGs were perceived differently between Baganda and Basoga.
The current population structure in Buganda and Busoga regions emerged through years of internal migration and intermarriages, but the descendants of such migrant ethnic groups are currently considered ‘sons of the soil’ (Green, 2012:10). Although population census report tribal origins of each individual, ‘sons of the soil’ maintain their belonging and identity as Baganda and Basoga by speaking and practicing local languages and culture. While examining the link between conflict and demographic change in Sub-Saharan Africa, Green observed that post-colonial population growth and low levels of urbanization encouraged internal rural-rural migration that produced ‘sons of the soil’ in traditional native communities. For example, this is the case of Busoga Kingdom where members of other ethnic groups migrated to the region in large numbers that currently compare highly with the indigenous Basoga.

Although decentralization was implemented the same way across the country, differences in demographics in Buganda and Busoga regions did not influence how decentralization functioned to manage conflicts in Jinja and not in Kampala. According to the DPSF (2000), the state sought to expand the scope of government by increasing political leadership through LGs in which local citizens participate, and to bring administrative control to local people to manage service delivery. Nonetheless LGs interact with deferent histories of identity formation,
levels of identity salience, interests and perceptions over power and control of local resources in Bugand and Busoga regions. This is despite the history of rural-to-rural or rural-urban migration that has produced the ethnically mixed demography (Green, 2012) in each region that also includes ‘sons of the soil’ from migrant ethnic groups.

Communal conflicts between “sons of the soil” and natives notwithstanding e.g. over land (Englebert et al 2002), over the years both groups have interacted in complex to produce standard cultural norms that sanction legitimacy, obedience and cooperation to pursue group interests in each region (Chayes and Handler, 1995). For that reason despite the ethnic mix in demography, Buganda and Busoga Kingdoms remain strong traditional institutions that culturally continue to welcome members of other ethnic groups in their regions.
Chapter Six

Saunders (1999, 2005), Scott (2004), and Robinson (2003) argue that ‘relationships’ is an analytical concept. This chapter explains interests, perceptions and interactions that mark the relationship between Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups, and the state in Uganda. Kabwegyere (1972:305) also asserts that, “any agent of change alien to the people whose way of life this agent is determined to change radically, always uses violence as a main means to bring about the change.” This chapter argues that structural violence manifests when devolution fails the promise by government that it would meet local interests, including in Buganda and Busoga regions.

As stated by Hogg et al (1995), differences in subjective belief structures explain the differences in how decentralization is perceived among in Buganda and Busoga ethnic groups. Perceptions, in this case, are concerned with how the system functions to deliver services to citizens, and to fulfill culture and identity needs of communities as ethnic groups. The study reveals that negative perceptions that emerge when LG policies and actions are perceived to deny
Buganda its entitlements account for the frustration and hostile interactions between members of the group and the state in the region.

6.1 Decentralization and relationships

Mamdani (1999), while examining Uganda’s history, accounts for the impasse in democratization as due to a persistent contest between civil and customary systems, where custom is always the winner. In Buganda, customary beliefs remain salient in the modern state, including under the decentralization system. According to Neumann (1992:11) this is possible because of the need by “social groups to establish a positively valued distinctiveness from other groups in order to provide members with a positive identity”. The view lays emphasis on the critical importance of examining how decentralization enables ethnic groups to achieve such positively valued distinctiveness. The system functions through LGs, where political leadership and participation in decision-making by local citizens help expand the scope of governance and service delivery at lower levels of society. This study maintains that this becomes more effective when cultural and identity needs of ethnic groups are also met, to improve perceptions and interactions with LGs and the state.

According to Skocpol (1979), the above view by Mamdani on the persistent contest between civil and customary systems represents “a class struggle
emanating from political contradictions within the state.” This is particularly the case in the context of decentralization, where the forms of power, authority and status that Buganda desires contend with the devolved powers of the state and authority of LGs. The monarchy and state exercise traditional and modern forms of decentralization, respectively. Both delegate and decongest traditional authority and state power to communities that still define themselves as tribes, and at the same time citizens.

Foucault (1981) argues that power should be studied “at the point where its intentions are clear and completely invested in real and effective practices…at a point where it is in immediate relationship with its objective, target or field of application.” Individuals and groups are the points of contact that receive and exercise decentralized power of the state and in the process both interact to achieve their interests. Therefore studies that limit decentralization to structures and processes through which state power is transferred would be more comprehensive if they examine its relationship with the people that receive and exercise it. This expands understanding of how the system functions to manage conflicts.

Monteux (2006:166) cites Seymour (1983) to argue that, “to achieve a stable democratic system, decentralization systems should encompass cross-cleavage
politics and should also foster, if not in the short term at least in the long term, a non-ethnic basis.” This study takes this approach to study decentralization of state power, to identify relational functions the system can fulfill to deemphasize ethnicity and improve relationships between citizens and the state. From this perspective the study examined power (a) as a change agent in historically negative relationships, where (b) decentralized state power is assumed to enable ethnic groups and the state are able to get what they each want, and (c) both are able to achieve common ends (Boulding, 1989).

Grindle’s (2007) study of thirty small municipalities in Mexico examined competition in local elections, public sector entrepreneurship, public sector modernization and civil society activism under decentralization. At a more micro-level of the society, which is the focus of this study, Grindle discovered that good relations between communities and the state existed between particular groups that often mobilize only to extract short-term benefits from government. However, inspite of numerous national and LG efforts to encourage citizen participation, say, in decision-making, “citizens were less able to initiate participatory and accountability related tasks linked to decentralization, except during election time, and only in some locations.” Griddle attributes this condition to years of authoritarianism and clientelism within the government of Mexico. The study did not explain why decentralization, which was adopted to replace bad forms of
government, did not improve relationships between citizens and the government except during elections, and how groups that did not get benefits during elections but participate in decentralization relate with the state.

In such cases, Foucault (1981) recommends to examine the “self” (individual, family, groups or citizens) as reference points to understand the limits, effects and excesses of power’s objectives and subjection.” This study recognizes the objective effects of decentralization of state power to include expanding the scope of government, increasing political leadership and citizen participation in government. It therefore sought to examine the subjective effects of decentralization; particularly how these elements influence the relationship between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.

Kriesberg (1998) explains that a social conflict exists when parties manifest in the belief that they have incompatible objectives, or where there is a perceived incompatibility in goals (Sandole 1999, Fisher 2009). As explained below, this study was particularly concerned with how decentralization of state power is perceived to enable ethnic groups achieve their interests, and to improve interactions between them and the state. The following explanation focuses on interests of Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups and the state, and perceptions
that generate patterns of interactions between them that mark the success or failure of decentralization to meet their interests.

6.2 Interests.
Saunders (2005:36) maintains that, “relationships begin when parties are drawn into the same space by their interests”. Similarly in Uganda, relationships between ethnic groups and the state became more formal in the 1960s when the idea of a unitary state was introduced and 52 ethnic groups were forced under a centralized system of government. Each ethnic group continues to be marked by distinct linguistic, cultural, historical and geographical characteristics, organized as a monarchy or chiefdom. At independence in 1962, all ethnic groups were subjected to the central authority of the state guided by a constitution, but did not lose the ethnic cleavages such as a group’s identity. As Hogg et al (1996) maintain, since then the behavior of identity groups has often been influenced by the categorical structure of society via the mediation of social identity and accompanying processes of self-categorization. These processes include demands involving identity and cultural interests, and continue to unfold under decentralization in the modern state.

The political organization of the state and social organization of tribal groups mark the context in which decentralization is implemented to achieve the
interests of the state and ethnic groups in Uganda. As is the case in other countries, in Uganda the state is the highest form of political organization that draws its power from the constitution. Decentralization of state power is thus concerned with organizing and empowering citizens through elected LGs to meet their needs, but without undermining the central authority of the state. On the other hand an ethnic group or tribe is a major unit of social organization, very often, with influences that permeate political and administrative institutions and activities of the state. Therefore the state and the tribe are entities that have direct and often conflicting interests in how power is exercised under decentralization, to satisfy interests of citizens and tribal communities.

Smith (2004:301) asserts that, “people’s beliefs that they owe primary allegiance to some political membership, along with the conviction of others that they are likely to hold such beliefs, have major consequences for how people understand their interests, how they act, and how others act toward them on a range of politically significant matters.” Similarly in Uganda, the struggle over the status of Baganda in relation to other ethnic groups in a unitary state, and power of the group to control local resources in the region compared with that of LGs or the state mark the conflict between the group and the state. This condition is consistent with Nye’s (2008:391) view that status and resources are a form of “hard power”, which is at the center of most civil wars, electoral disputes, and
increasing demand for power-sharing. Saunders (2005:42) maintains however such struggles “underscore the interdependence between parties, where neither party can achieve their interests without the other.” Thus study argues that in Uganda, the struggle between ethnic groups and the state led to the adoption of decentralization as a system of government to enable local communities and the state to achieve their interests.

Saunders (1999:77) argues that interests are not only defined in analytical terms by government, but also in the body politic reflecting what citizens value.” Similarly while the interests of the NRM led government was articulated in form of the Ten Point Program, Buganda and Busoga’s interests are articulated under the traditional concepts of Ebyaffe and Ebyaiffe, respectively. The Ten Point Program launched immediately after the 1980-86 NRM civil war articulates the key interests that the state sought to fulfill, under an NRM led government. These included to: (i) establish real democracy as the basis of a decent standard of living so that ordinary people could resist the blandishments of unprincipled politicians, (ii) eliminate state-inspired violence through local democracy, a politicized army and police, and absence of corruption at the top, (iii) consolidate national unity by eliminating sectarianism and politics based on religious, linguistic, and ethnic factional issues, (iv) developed independent priorities based on Ugandan interests to stop the interference of foreign interests domestic concerns, (v) construct an independent, integrated, and self-sustaining national
economy that would stop the leakage of wealth abroad, (vi) restore basic social services, clean water, health dispensaries, literacy, and housing, particularly in the areas ravaged by the wars, (vii) eliminate corruption, particularly in the public service in order to attack economic distortions effectively, (viii) resolve land and resettle thousands of people displaced by mistaken development projects and land seizures by past governments, (ix) cooperation with other African countries, particularly its neighbors, in order to create larger markets and a more rational use of resources, and (x) maintain a mixed capitalist and socialist economy.

The interests of the NRM, articulated as a political program, were silent on grievances over cultural and identity interests for which political parties, civil wars, military coups and communal riots were organized to change governments before the NRM. Neumann (1992) explains that such political mobilization seeks to fill a psychological need for identity, to bring about concerted political action since individuals share a common political identity. Similarly, the NRM assumed the political program would construct “a national identity around which the masses would be mobilized” (Dalby, 1990:10) to redress disparities that particularly led to the 1980-86 civil war. Initially, decentralization seemed to live up to this assumption when the system generated unprecedented participation of the masses in government through LGs to implement NRM’s political program across the country.
However the program left open the enduring contest between civil and customary systems, citizenship and tribalism, or political and traditional authorities, which continue to challenge the decentralization system. Under decentralization, a number of political and economic programs and projects were implemented to fulfill the interests of the NRM government, but also undermined the authority of TLs, including that of the Kabaka. People’s committees were elected as Resistance Councils (RC) and District Administrators (DAs) were appointed by the President to explain to the masses and implement the Ten Point Program. As explained earlier, RC and DA were the backbone of decentralization until 1995 when they were renamed Local Councils (LCs elected by local people) and Resident District Commissioners (RDC appointed by the President) respectively.

There was no mention in the decentralization policy framework (1997) of how the system should function to accommodate or mediate between contending group-specific interests with those of the state. The NRM government assumed and intended that traditional institutions be purely cultural, so there was no consideration of how the institutions fit into the state structure and how territorial boundaries of ethnic groups would help organization of LG zones. Oloka-Onyango (1997) observes that “such matters were simply brushed aside in the haste to secure political support for the restoration of Kingdoms” particularly from Buganda to benefit the NRM.
Saunders (1999) maintains that citizens inject their own domestic needs and personal values into the definition of national interest. Probing that human dimension of interests reveals the deep-rooted fears, hopes, wounds, values and perceptions that form people’s sense of what is threatening and what is vital to protecting their identity. Similarly, despite decentralization, the Baganda continued to perceive their valued needs and vital interests violated by the state, and are contained in the traditional notion of “Ebyaffe” (our entitlements). As Festinger (1962) maintains, the discrepancy felt in Buganda was that the Baganda expected the system to enable Buganda achieve their entitlements, but actually did not. Instead through LGs, the state is perceived to violate highly valued needs and interests.

Hogg et al (1996) expounds that a group that believes its lower status position is illegitimate and unstable, and that a different social order is achievable, will show marked solidarity and will engage in direct intergroup competition. This view is reflected in Buganda Kingdom’s proposals to the Constitutional Commission of (1993), which articulated the Buganda’s highly valued needs and interests. The proposals demonstrate Buganda’s commitment to fight its interests, including (i) a federal system of government where the monarchy would have more power for self-rule, control of local resources e.g. ancestral land, collect taxes, etc, (ii) executive powers to the Kabaka to, for example, appoint local leaders in Buganda including the Prime Minister of his government, (iii) return to the
monarchy 9000 sq miles of land and other properties confiscated by the state in 1966, many of which are still used as LG offices around the region, and (iv) amend the Constitution of Uganda (1995) to restore the status of Kampala District as part of Buganda, which currently is not the case. Ikuya (2011) explains that *Ebyaffe* is the convulsion by a nation state seeking to restore itself after it had been rudely colonized. The proposals indicate the kind of liberation, access to power or nature of devolution the Baganda prefer. Ikuya concludes therefore that *Ebyaffe* is typically a political demand and the legitimate way of dealing with it lies in earnest political debate among Ugandans rather than seeking to shelve it under a cultural attire.

Galtung (1996) explains structural violence as systemic differentiation or unequal access to the means to reduce the gap between the preferred (what is expected) and actual (what is experienced) state of affairs. According to Mulwanyamuli (2011), a former Prime Minister in Buganda Kingdom Government, government promised the monarchy that decentralization would accommodate Buganda’s interests (*Ebyaffe*), which is not the case as the system evolved. Thus the gap between what Buganda preferred or expected from the decentralization, and what they actually experience concerning *Ebyaffe* continues to widen. Galtung and Höivik, (1971:74) further argue that SV can also be measured more appropriately through “the number of years lost.” As demonstrated above, in Buganda the gap between the Baganda and their entitlements in the modern
state has persisted since 1966 continues to widen even after more than 20 years of decentralization in Uganda.

At the group level Social Identity theory maintains that the need to acquire a high social status and positive identity through membership in socially prestigious groups is the basis for the formation of intergroup prejudice and can lead to conflict (Tajfel and Turner 1979). According to Neumann (1992), the space for such identification exists in the individual’s life-world and in the domestic political process. Both views explain why Buganda’s appreciation of political processes in the country, including decentralization or the NRM Ten Point Program, is in terms of Ebyaffe considered to represent the group’s cultural and identity interests. The Baganda expected decentralization would improve their status compared with other ethnic groups, including reinforcing the group’s historical, cultural and geographic cleavages explained earlier in this study. The cleavages made the Baganda a socially prestigious identity group and influenced its dominance of colonial political processes, and expected decentralization to enhance a similar special status and privileges.

On the other hand, Busoga’s expectations from the state and the decentralization system were more economic seeking to fight poverty and improved service delivery in the region, without associating these expectations to culture and identity of the group. As Semakula (2013) explains, Busoga was formerly the
industrial hub of Uganda, teeming industries that provided employment, but this turned into history when the facilities collapsed, leaving the locals wallowing in poverty. However, Migereko (2009) explains that through decentralization, the NRM government implemented a range of programs that have spurred development in the region, especially in critical sectors like health, education, water, agricultural production and processing, roads, industrialization and changes and advancements in technology that have reduced the incidence of poverty. This has improved interactions between the Basoga and the NRM and the central government. For example according to the Media Center (2012), a senior opposition leader from Jinja resigned from her party membership and opted to align herself with the NRM government which she says is the only party that can bring services closer to the people.

As part of self-enhancement of a group, Hogg et al (1996) state that in-group norms and stereotypes are used largely to favor the in-group during social categorization processes. Over time, Baganda identity has been reinforced by stereotypes that collectively describe non-Baganda as aliens, foreigners, primitive, backward, inferior etc. During colonial rule the stereotypes served to project Baganda in-group purity and boost the self-esteem of its members. In the context of decentralization, stereotyping in Buganda seems to indicate frustration from failure of the system to recognize and accord the group Ebyaffe. On the other hand, oppressor and oppressed stereotypes that emerged against
Baganda chiefs as agents of colonial administration still persist among non-Baganda, but to justify entitlement to resource and political opportunities that the Baganda enjoyed as a privileged group. These and other stereotypes and narratives are well reported in history books (Mamdani 1999, Mutibwa 1992), indicating the perceptions and prejudices that shaped the political context within which decentralization was implemented.

Such stereotyping increased the consciousness, awareness and separateness of identity (Cosers, 1956) between ethnic groups, which decentralization sought to neutralize by expanding the scope of government, increase political leadership, participation in decision-making by local citizens. However, Buganda’s unique and exclusive interests influence how the Baganda perceive and interact with LGs. Nevertheless, as Mugaju (2000) argues, this study does not suggest that the Baganda, Basoga or other ethnic groups act as a “uniform undifferentiated mass.” However, the conflicts that group demands and competing interests have led to are “vivid, fresh and still unfolding” (Ibid) even under decentralization. The study instead recognizes, as Neumann (1992) argues that processes of identification are often marked by manipulative possibilities, and stereotyping is one way that elites continue to manipulate Buganda’s interests for political ends. Yet still, such “manipulation cannot proceed wholly arbitrarily because it has to stay within the parameters set by the idea of group identity against which
members measure appropriateness” (Ibid: 14). This condition makes managing and mediation of interests of ethnic groups and the state difficult by the decentralization system, as is currently structured to function in Uganda.

For example, self-definition of the Baganda as a special identity group, with a special status in a multi-ethnic unitary state, partly emerged from the special powers the colonial government granted Buganda as a federal state. This was contained in Schedule 7 of the 1962 Constitution of Uganda. The Baganda still demand for these powers, which the current decentralization system is not designed to offer. The powers included to legislate for (i) Kingship in Buganda on obligations and duties of the Kabaka and the Kingdom’s Ministers, (ii) Public Service management in Buganda, (iii) The Lukiiko (Buganda Parliament), (iv) on traditional and customary matters relating to Buganda, (v) taxation and related matters, (vi) establishment of LGs, and (vii) regulation of mailo land tenure system in Buganda. Although Ankole, Bunyoro, Toro and Busoga Kingdoms were also granted federal states, and other small kingdoms district status, only Buganda was given such powers. For example, districts did not have power to legislate on control of land or public management of local affairs. Buganda was granted these powers and had a Police Department to enforce the laws of the federal state.
According to Horowitz (1985), such putative ascriptions account for the special difficulties ethnic conflict poses for democratic politics, and makes inter-ethnic compromise so difficult in divided societies. Similarly in the context of decentralization, the powers of LGs in Buganda region are estimated in comparison with the powers granted to the monarchy by the 1962 constitution. Tajfel (1982) and Korostelina (2007) affirm that such estimation of status and power is critical to in-group pride, satisfaction of needs, interests, and to gain favorable comparisons as the locus of self-esteem to group identity.

The concept of *Ebyaiffe* (our entitlements) also exists in Busoga and corresponds to Buganda’s *Ebyaffe* because the languages are almost similar. After the restoration of Kingdoms in 1993, according to Kisambira (2003), Busoga’s interests were articulated as *Ebyaiffe* also seeking to restore the Basoga’s status in comparison with other ethnic groups in the country. These included (i) restoration of private ownership of land, (ii) powers to traditional chiefs, (iii) return of properties confiscated by the central government in 1966 to the monarchy, and (iv) tax exemptions to cultural leaders by the Government. Busoga’s interests were also articulated in a memorandum submitted by the *Kyabazingaship* to the Constitutional Review Commission (1993).

For example the Basoga proposed to have tax exemptions and allowances for cultural leaders. The proposal sought to restore their status as part of the civil
service, which was the case during the colonial administration. Nabwiso (1990), reports that the Kyabazingaship of Busoga was boosted in the 1930s when hereditary rulers were absorbed into the LG Civil Service as county chiefs. A salary scheme was introduced in 1926 that remunerated chiefs and appointed elders in leadership positions on a monthly basis. Nabwiso argues further that this however indirectly weakened the power of hereditary chiefs and later reduced the Basoga Lukiiko to only the centre of traditional power in Busoga. This was because as civil servants, Basoga chiefs were required to carry out the duties and fulfill the interests of the colonial state, and did not pursue their own interests or those of their subjects. Historically therefore, LGs in Busoga were part of and remunerated by the state since the colonial days and decentralization resorted this status. The difference in this case, is that in Busoga chiefs were part LGs that were under the central government, while in Buganda LGs were under the monarchy and not the colonial state. LG in Buganda Kingdom also collected taxes in the region, but as an entitlement over which the monarchy makes the decisions and not for the state.

Saunders (1999) argues that as people come closer and closer, we also see interests as a function of relationship and the making of interdependence. The interests of the NRM and Buganda converged during the 1980-86 civil war, where the former sought to gain control of state power and the later to gain
Ebyaffe. This time Ebyaffe included return of the Kabaka who was living in exile in Britain. The NRM was founded by Yoweri Kaguta Museveni but chaired by a prominent Muganda and monarchist Prof. Yusuf Kironde Lule. The NRM claimed that Uganda People’s Congress (UPC) of Milton Obote rigged the December 10th, 1980 elections, and launched the civil war to fight and remove the UPC government from power. The Baganda dominated Uganda Freedom Fighters (UFF) allied with the NRM to start the civil war in Luwero District in northern Buganda region. A number of Baganda joined the struggle, which was also perceived as a fight against Obote for ordering the military to attack Buganda Kingdom Palace on 25th May 1966. Museveni (1993) also confirms that the group that supported the bush struggle was composed mainly of Baganda, not exclusively, but mainly.

Then Prince Ronald Muwenda Mutebi, who became the 36th Kabaka of Buganda in 1993, himself visited and spent 16 days in areas that had been captured by the NRA to offer his support and mobilize Buganda to join the struggle (Sserunjogi, 2010). Prince George William Jjuuko Walugembe, a brother to Prince Mutebi, was also deeply involved in the struggle and attained a military rank of captain. Such maneuvers did not only legitimize and raise Buganda’s commitment to the NRM struggle against Obote’s government, but also offered Baganda an
opportunity to revive claims of *Ebyaffe*. The NRM won the war in 1986 and *Kabaka* Ronald Muwenda Mutebi was coroneted in 1993.

Hogg et al (1996) explains that identity theory views the self not as an autonomous psychological entity but as a multifaceted social construct that emerges from peoples’ roles in society, and variation in self-concepts is due to the different roles that people occupy. Baganda’s claim for *Ebyaffe* seems to emerge from roles that Buganda as a group played in establishing Uganda as a state and even during the NRM struggle. For example due to their central role during the NRM civil war, prominent Baganda were appointed to senior government positions including Vice President, Foreign Ministry, Attorney General etc. All of them were central in organizing the return and coronation of Prince Mutebi as Kabaka of Buganda. The NRM benefited with millions of votes during subsequent elections, and was able to use its majority in parliament to keep opposition political party activities suspended for almost 20 years. Mamdani (1995) concluded thus NRM’s promise to return “Buganda’s *Ebyaffe* was meant to check the operation of political parties in Buganda”, because, as Oloka-Onyango (1997) maintains, it is the single factor that could secure alliance of the Baganda across virtually all religious, sectoral, class and ideological lines to support the NRM.
Bardhan (2005:8) explains decentralization as a way to “diffuse social and political tensions and ensure local cultural and political autonomy.” Where “LGs are autonomous entities that seek to, among others, respond to local interests across the country” (DPSF 2006). From this perspective, decentralization was assumed to respond to group interests and reduce political tensions including these in Buganda over demands for *Ebyaffe*. Most especially among local communities that elect autonomous LG structures in which they participate to meet their needs. Elected political leaders in LCs are from local communities in the LG zone, and therefore part of a group that shares a common language, culture, history, and territory. In this way the system would ensure political and administrative leadership to be in the hands of local people (The World Bank 2003), and their participation in service delivery is expected to be in accordance with their interests.

However Saunders (1999:68) has argued that, “the stakes over which ethnic conflicts are fought are often not objectively defined interests, but interests defined in human and political terms in which identities are at stake and historical grievances drive groups to passionate crusades.” From this perspective, the challenge to decentralization is the belief and need, among ethnic groups like Baganda, to establish a positively valued distinctiveness from other groups in order to provide members with a positive identity (Neumann 1992). The
persistence of hostilities between Buganda and the central government underscores this challenge and reflects failure of decentralization to effectively respond to this need in Buganda. Thus, the demand for more autonomy in the region than what the system provides in its current form. Simba (2010) has further argued that, “Buganda’s thirst for knowledge, its social and cultural organization and cohesion, language, people’s thriftiness and aspirations to achieve, cultural centers as potential sources of tourism revenue, all hold it in good stead for development. What’s lacking is a political arrangement and degree of autonomy to enable them achieve their potential in order to transform their people.”

However, Buganda’s interest to remain a ‘state’ within a state is to a great extent marred by the monarchy for over emphasizing the tribe as the basis upon which the central government should make decisions concerning Buganda’s interests. The leadership has often missed important opportunities to rally the country around its agenda or influence important landmark events, by upholding belonging to the tribe as more paramount than to the state. This weakness dates back since 1955 when Kabaka Muteesa II returned from exile. Mutiibwa (1992:43) observed that:

“Kabaka Muteesa should have toured Uganda to express his gratitude to all who had contributed to his return, demonstrate that he
realized that the cause of Buganda was the cause of Uganda as a whole, and to show that if all tribes were to unite, the struggle against British colonialism would end in victory…instead he chose to stay cocooned in Mengo (Buganda Palace Headquarters), surrounded by conservatives and isolated from the mainstream of modern politics and popular nationalism. In doing so, Muteesa missed the opportunity to unify Uganda behind his leadership and instead became the prisoner of a conservative oligarchy bent on secession.”

This experience confirms opinions from the central government, that Buganda’s interests are sectarian and inconsistent with the modern state since they continue to be framed and articulated on a tribal basis.

According to The World Bank Group, “the type of decentralization selected within a country will depend on its design, which depends on the political structure and administrative issues of that country” (World Bank Group, 2008). In Uganda, the post-colonial structure of the state and the current structure of LGs seem modeled around the structure of Buganda Kingdom, despite growing out of the NRA’s system of governing liberated territories during the 1980-86 civil war. However the policy as is implemented uniformly around the country is not designed, and its structures are not empowered, to meet particular interests of groups as those articulated by Buganda. For example, the policy does to
recognize the role and position of the *Kabaka* as a symbol of status, identity and culture in Buganda, where LGs are also elected and function. The policy does not also explain the role of traditional chiefs in relation to LGs, for example, on the contentious issue of managing land.

Decentralization functions to expand the scope of government by ensuring citizen participation in LGs to control and influence social, political and economic affairs on behalf of the central government at the local level. However in Uganda, this does not include defining the power and traditional authority of Kings and their chiefs in LG areas of jurisdiction. In the absence of clarity about what remains for the *Kabaka* in terms of power and control of local resources, once LGs are established with delegated powers of the state, the whole idea of decentralization remains an imposition in Buganda. Instead LGs are perceived as an extension of the state and implementers of its imposition on the culture and identity of the group, for example, where they assume the powers of the Kabaka and his appointed chiefs to control land, collect taxes, etc. On the other hand, the state remains the organizing principal around which ethnic groups compare and estimate their status and positions. From this perspective the Busoga, Bunyoro and other Kingdoms seem to be focused on the distribution of state power across regions. Yet Buganda continues to challenge the very existence of the state in
which its status and interests are not recognized and privileged (Oloka-Onyango 1997).

Control of ancestral land in Buganda region will be discussed below as one of the expressed interests of the Baganda, which LG are also mandated to manage on behalf of the central government, but as a public good. Brancati (2010) maintains that decentralization decreases ethnic conflict directly by giving groups control over their own political, social and economic affairs, but increases ethnic conflict indirectly by encouraging the growth of parties that reinforce ethnic identities. This occurs when, for example, legislation that favors certain groups over others is produced, and groups that are threatened are mobilized to defend their interests. In Uganda, the decentralization policy treats all LGs in the country equally, a position that Buganda contends. This is clearer where the policy gives LGs power to manage land and collect land dues on behalf of the central government, which in Buganda is a traditional function of Kabaka’s appointed chiefs. In this case decentralization did not help to reduce the threat posed by the state to the monarchy, when LGs were mandated to manage land in their zones. Instead both continue to “compete for influence within local communities to control local resources” (Kaufman, 1996:140).
In Buganda land is largely considered ancestral and part of identity. Information about a clan’s ancestral land (Obutaka - where ancestors are considered to have originated) is rehearsed and narrated by members during traditional ceremonies e.g. marriage, funerals etc. However the state has a constitutional responsibility to regulate the acquisition, ownership, use and disposition of land and other property in furtherance of social justice. Under the decentralization policy such responsibility is delegated to LGs to make local laws and elect statutory commissions to manage land in the district e.g. the District Land Board.

Muller and Seligson (1978) maintain that where conditions of land ownership are equitable and provide viable living for peasants, a revolution is unlikely. However in Buganda perceptions of inequality about control and distribution of land influence much of the hostility between Baganda and the central government. Through successive political regimes, a number of policy reforms increasingly shifted control of land from traditional authorities to the state, under the claim to extend equal rights to access and own land to all citizens and to free unused land for development.

The 1900 agreement between Buganda Kingdom and the British divided land in Buganda between the Kabaka (Ssabataka - Supreme custodian of ancestral land) and colonial government using square miles as the unit of measurement.
The system was retained in the independence constitution of 1962. The agreement granted the monarchy lots of powers to legislate over mailo land (miles of land that were demarcated to belong to the Kabaka). This made the customary system dominant in how land came to be owned and passed on in Buganda, i.e. through the monarchy and not the state. The state retained total control of land in other parts of the country, some of which was called freehold land where, until today, government has a right to allocate pieces of that land to, for example, religious groups.

Galtung (1969) has argued that, “violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance.” In Buganda, subsequent policies adopted by the state were violent as they increasingly shifted control of land from the Kabaka to the central government. These included the 1969 Public Lands Act under President Milton Obote, the 1975 Land Reform Decree under President Idi Amin and the 1998 Land Act under the NRM government. For example the 1975 Land Reform Decree declared all land to belong to the government. In Buganda this was in contradiction with the 1962 constitution that granted legislative powers to the monarchy over all land in the region. A Land Commission was established to implement the policy, which in section 3(2) also abolished the need to seek consent from landowners before leasing of customary (mailo) land. Subsequently
prime plots of Kabaka’s mailo land were allocated to government and senior military and political leaders, on the claim that land is a natural resource that all citizens must access to develop. This was favored by the fact that Kingdoms and their activities remained banned during this time, so monarchies could not defend their land. The consequences of this policy continue to undermine the mandate given to LGs to manage land in their areas of jurisdiction especially in Buganda region.

The LGs’ mandate to manage land notwithstanding; policies that guide this mandate originate from the central government with no input from traditional authorities. In Buganda, the monarchy finds it difficult to buy into the decisions of the central or LGs land, because the policies do not contain their views. Hogg et al (1996) maintains that, “identities positioned higher in the salience hierarchy are tied more closely to behavior.” During the 12th April, 2007 communal riots, the Baganda behaved as a collective because government was selling Mabira Forest land to a foreign investor (Tenywa et al, 2007). This was because according to the 1900 agreement with the British, all forestland in Buganda including Mabira forest, was retained by the Kabaka (Kalungi, 2011).

Buganda Kingdom established a Buganda Land Board (BLB) to manage that part of estate returned to the Kabaka of Buganda. The board also mandated to collect
rentals from the central government for use of land and other properties belonging to Buganda Kingdom, and manages the tenure of land in Buganda through traditional chiefs. Thus LGs and traditional chiefs at district, country, sub-county and village levels are caught into cyclical interaction patterns (Galtung, 1969), where each claiming autonomous powers and right to control and manage the use of land in Buganda. For that reason, anyone purchasing land in Buganda is required to have approval from the LC at the village and the area traditional chief.

In the traditional Busoga society on the other hand, land is a matter of status and power, controlled by chiefs and is not under the centralized control of the Kayabazinga. This is unlike in Buganda, where land is a central part of identity around which ancestry, belongingness to the group and clan leadership are defined. Under the 1900 agreement, more than half of land in Buganda was retained by the Kabaka (Pratt, 1960), as the Ssaabataka (Supreme custodian of land), and around which Baganda identity is organized. However when Busoga became a British protectorate in 1895, Basoga chiefs negotiated that they continue to settle on their land “to ensure survival of their political power” (Nayenga, 1979:191). Thus, while in Buganda the agreement ensured permanent ownership of much of the land by Baganda through the Kabaka, in Busoga the
arrangement made land ownership contingent to political power and influence of individual chiefs.

From these two perspectives it is clear that, although LGs function uniformly around the country, they contend with differing traditional views about land ownership from local communities in Buganda and Busoga. In the case of Busoga, the central government also confiscated some properties from the Kyabazinga in 1966, including land and buildings previously used by colonial governors and administrators. Musinguzi (2012), reports that Basoga chiefs were working with NRM government and the President to ensure the return of these properties to Busoga. These include reclaiming some of the prime land around Lake Victoria that the colonial state allocated to British and Indian businesses to grow especially sugar and cotton. During this time indigenous Basoga communities and their chiefs were pushed inland to continue with their subsistence farming until today.

However although there are problems with ownership and management of land among the Busoga, associated claims are not framed as group grievances towards the state. According to Nayenga (1979), this is because since the pre-colonial days control of land in Busoga was not only as a means of production, but also conferred prestige and authority to land owners. Initially chiefs controlled
land until 1936 when they became salaried officers of the colonial administration. As civil servants, they implemented state policies that included allocation of especially prime land in the region to the state and foreigners. This was more evident in how, for example, two Indian families, Muljibhai Madhvani and later Nanji Kalidas Mehta, increased land for their Lugazi and Kakira Sugar Factories from 800 acres in 1918, to 22,750 acres by 1945 (Madhvani and Foden 2009). Currently, according to Migereko (2009), existing grievances over land in Busoga perceived as resulting from pressure being exerted through fragmentation due to population growth in the region, and not government interference in how land is managed.

On the other hand, Buganda claims government has refused to return their properties to the monarchy, and owes over 20 billion Uganda Shillings in rental arrears. Buganda Buganda Kingdom government stated that, “the buildings for which Mengo (the seat of the Kingdom) is demanding rent arrears include Kigo prisons, Mengo court, various district buildings and sub-county headquarters.” The arrears accumulated over many years under different regimes during which Kingdoms remained burned until 1993. The monarchy claims governments deliberately withhold this income from the monarchy with the intention of holding back a number of development programs in Buganda.
This background is important because, as McAuslan (2003) observes, the history of Uganda’s independence has been a troubled one and at the heart of the troubles has been the land question. By participating in political leadership and decision-making, autonomous LGs appeared most appropriate to respond and manage issues of land distribution and ownership. However, as in the case of Mabira Forest, selling of ancestral land by government, considered ancestral and belonging to members of indigenous ethnic groups, contributes to negative perceptions towards LGs. The 1993 Traditional Rulers Restitution of Assets and Properties Act seemed to return control of ancestral land and properties confiscated during Milton and Amin regimes to the Kingdoms. The state also recognized that cultural institutions hold such land and other properties in trust for their subjects.

From this viewpoint, it is proper to conclude that development of the decentralization policy was not comprehensive, failed to cater for power and resource interests framed around cultural, history and identities of some ethnic ethnic groups. Makubuya (2011) also observes that BDLs are enjoined to take into account national and district council policy on land in the performance of their duties – but these do not exist. Therefore in the absence of national and district land policies, it becomes difficult for LGs to claim to be managing land in their areas of jurisdiction in the interest of the local people.
The central government has argued that Buganda monarchy does not have the capacity to manage land and other properties to satisfy its entire people. In the process however, wealthy and influential leaders in government and businesses exploit existing laws to unscrupulously purchase or forcefully occupy prime land in the region. This is a matter that threatens power to achieve interests and protect the identity (Fearon and Laitin, 1996) of the Baganda. For example, the Government has allocated land in the region to businesses like the Metha Group of Companies to grow sugar, and to Bidco Company to plant palm trees for oil production, but without consulting the monarchy. As Makubuya (2011) further maintains, much of what government has done only promises to protect these investors at the expense of all other tenants.

Muller and Seligson (1978:62) have argued that, “inequality-based discontent significantly increases the possibility for dissent and collective aggressive action.” On July 18th 2008, the government arrested Buganda Kingdom Officials for inciting the Baganda against the 2009 Land Reform policy. The officials included The Minister for Information Hon. Charles Peter Mayiga, his Deputy, Hon. Medard Lubega Ssegona, and the Chairperson of Buganda Civic Education Central Committee (CECC), Mrs. Betty Nambooze Bakireke. The arrest followed President Museveni’s letter of December 18, 2007 to the Kabaka expressing
dissatisfaction that the monarchy was causing disaffection against the central government (Muyodi, 2008).

The letter was responding to, among other things, deployment of Kingdom officials by the monarchy to conduct public rallies around Buganda to educate people about the views of the monarchy towards the 2009 Land Reform Bill. The President claimed that the officials were crusading against especially Sections 31, 32 and 35 of the Land Reform Bill. The sections, among others, prohibit eviction of tenants from land and allowed compensation only if a tenant is willing to vacate and after a very elaborate court process. Considering that most of such settlements were in Buganda and many of the tenants were non-Baganda, the bill does not only threaten ownership but also identity of the Baganda.

Makubuya (2011) observed that the proposed land reforms were offensive to the principle of devolution of governmental functions and powers to the people, because it shifts powers of LGs to the Ministers of Lands, Minerals and Natural Resources. The bill therefore recentralized management of land back to the central government, which in Buganda reinforced threats to ownership by the Baganda and control of ancestral land by Kabaka as part of their identity. For example, the law required DLBs around the country to set ground rent within 30 days, which was technically impossible considering that most LGs lack
appropriate capacity to effectively determine the value of land in their districts. To date some districts do not have land boards because of funding and capacity reasons, while others are simply too poor to even begin setting rent in their areas e.g. Kooki, Kyaggwe, Ssingo and Kabula in Buganda region. According to the policy, failure to meet the deadline, the Minister had the right to set and collect land taxes from tenants and landowners, which powers the decentralization policy gives to elected LC leaders.

From the above discussion, it is clear that decentralization promised to meet interests of the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups and the state, but remains inadequate to sufficiently address Buganda’s demands. Historical processes of forming the state and group identities, during which unique interests emerged account for the difference in how LGs function to meet them while delivering services to local people. During this time, and as explained below, perceptions that were generated influence relationships between the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.

6.3 Perceptions.
According to the DPSF (2006), the decentralization policy is an instrument of shifting perceptions among citizens by increasing their participation in decision-making and improving service delivery through LGs. The preceding discussion
reveals that failure by the system to respond to Buganda’s demand for *Ebyaffe* accounts for the persistence of negative perceptions towards the state. This is unlike in Busoga where the system is perceived to reinforce the power and influence of especially traditional authorities in the region. Perceptions do not only influence conflict (Volkan 1997, Tajfel and Turner 1985), but also contain points of analysis to understand relationships (Saunders, 2005) between actors in the decentralization process. Oxhorn et al (2004) also argue that, “decentralization should be viewed as part of a larger process of the social construction of citizenship, where who participates and who does not matter.” These views underscore the importance of examining perceptions of how decentralization functions to meet interests of ethnic groups influences the relationships between them and the state in Uganda.

Tajfel (1982) maintains that antecedents associated with negative group behaviors include social differentials in status, rank, privileges or access to recourses, especially when social organization on which these differentials are based loses its perceived legitimacy. In Buganda, the monarchy perceives decentralization as a system of control by the state and through which the state uses LGs to influence the political space to deny Buganda *ebyaffe*. The monarchy perceives the system illegitimate, to the extent that participation by members to elect local leaders and LG decision-making does not enable
Buganda to achieve their entitlements.

Hogg et al (1996) explain that when a specific social identity becomes the salient basis for self-regulation in a particular context, self-perception and conduct become in-group stereotypical and normative, perceptions of a relevant ‘Other’ become out-group stereotypical, and group behavior acquires competitive properties to varying degrees depending on the nature of relations.” In Uganda, Buganda is the salient identity against which the Baganda perceive the state as the relevant ‘Other’ that threatens the groups’ interests in the region. Negative statements from the state concerning Buganda’s interests confirmed the threat. In the letter written to the Kabaka on December 18, 2007, President Museveni reprimanded Kabaka’s government for “unprincipled intrigue” and “partisan politics” (Muyodi, 2008). He stated that, “officials from the monarchy were taking on the role of elected LGs and Members of Parliament as leaders elected directly to represent their people.” This was in reaction to public rallies that Ministers from Buganda Kingdom government organized to campaign against reforms in the administration of land in Uganda. The President insisted this was against the constitutional provision that “a person shall not while remaining a traditional leader or cultural leader, join or participate in partisan politics.”

The same letter confirmed negative perceptions by the state towards the
monarchy. The President claimed that the monarchy was using members of opposition political parties to “tell incredible lies” through “a hate campaign” to “incite” people against the government. Incitement in this case included telling the Baganda that “Ettaka ligenda” (The land is going), seeking to “cause disaffection for the NRM.” The President branded Buganda’s actions as sectarian intended to deny non-Baganda access to land in Buganda, consistent with the “historical marginalization of the non-Baganda communities in the region including the Bakooki, the Baruuli, Banyala, Banyoro and Banyankore.”

To further confirm Buganda’s negative perceptions towards the state, the Kabaka responded to the Presidents’ letter on December 29, 2007. He stated that it is his customary, cultural and traditional duty to engage in public debates about grabbing of land, restoration of a federal system of government, and struggle against the poverty crisis that affects the majority of his people (Ssendaula, 2007). Dillon (1989) has argued that such self-categorization causes self-perception and self-definition to become more in terms of the individual's representation of the defining characteristics of the group, or the group prototype. In the same way, Kabaka’s articulation gives emphasis to Buganda’s dissatisfaction with the system of government, including decentralization, perceived to threaten the group’s status, power for self-rule and control of local resources in the region.
Perceptions within government that Buganda was exploiting *ebyaffe* to undermine the state prompted adoption of the Traditional and Cultural Leaders Bill (2010) into law by parliament. Government argued that the law seeks to regulate the conduct and activities of traditional and cultural leaders (Okurut, 2011). According to Lumu (2011), some government officials from outside Buganda strongly proposed the complete abolition of these ancient cultural and traditional institutions if they are disturbing. Under the law cultural leaders must seek permission from government to deal with any foreign government, and are personally liable for prosecution for any civil wrongs or criminal offences committed by them or their agents. The law also proposed leadership of a cultural institution to rotate annually, where there is more than one traditional leader in a regional government. In the case of Buganda, for example, the leader of the breakaway *Banyala* chiefdom that government recognized amid protests from the monarchy would one day be the *Kabaka* of Buganda Kingdom.

Ikuya (2011:31) argued that, “by its nature, culture is a very broad concept, involving social behavior, language, arts, morality, and family relations, etc, including direction of economic pursuits. The food we eat and how we prepare it is cultural. Thus the proposition that no cultural leaders or their subordinates ought to take part in political discussions of any sort can be callously
misconstrued to muzzle very many legitimate concerns”. On 18th December 2012, the Buganda Parliamentary Caucus adopted a bi-partisan resolution, rejecting the new law “which they believed targets their king.” The Caucus argued that the law was unconstitutional and resolved to reject it because it goes far beyond the constitutional provisions and touches matters that were never envisaged under Article 246 of the Constitution.

Hogg et al (1996), state that identity groups are not only descriptive and prescriptive; they are also evaluative. They furnish an evaluation (generally widely shared or consensual) of a social category, and that of its members, relative to other relevant social categories. The Baganda evaluate the state negatively, with perceptions of betrayal that influence the negative interactions between the monarchy and the central government. Betrayal is in consideration that the 1980-86 civil war that got the current government to power started in Buganda, and in which many Baganda participated. Tendo (2011), reports further in response to many of the positions taken against Buganda by government, that they are references to folk stories about a wizard that gave a young man a piggy-back to cross a swamp but sucked blood out of the young man on getting to dry land. To this, the President also responded that the Baganda can use Local Governments to air out their grievances (Ssendaula, 2007).
President Museveni (2009) has also commented that, “Kingdoms failed to defend their sovereignty, and colonization was a vote-of-no-confidence to tribalism and culturalism.” This view supports the claim that the modern state is a form of liberation thus can monopolize authority and is a legitimate mediator between national and group needs and interests (Anastasiou, 2009). However the comment was perceived in Buganda to indicate an agenda by government to pitch Baganda against fellow Baganda over their interests versus those of the state. For example the Kabaka stated that government has a clear intention to abolish mailo Land ownership in Buganda, where the King’s subjects will be resettled in camps or urban slums under a resettlement policy to make way for industrialization and commercial farming (Tendo, 2011).

Tajfel (1982:24) has argued that during inter-group behaviors “even a minimal social categorization exerts its discriminatory effects because it provides a way to enhance positive in-group distinctiveness”. Hogg et al (1996), explain this view further that such categorization sharpens boundaries by producing group-distinctive stereo-typical and normative perceptions and actions. Likewise demands for Ebyaffe continue to intensify in Buganda. This is against the perception that in addition to LG that compete with traditional authorities at the local level, there is a hidden government agenda to discriminate against the Baganda and undermine the monarchy. This was confirmed when RDCs were
issued with a map which demarcates Uganda into 15 economic zones including Ankole, Busoga, Lango and Acholi, amongst others, but ominously splits Buganda into four zones called Kampala, Central, Luweero, and Lake Victoria Basin (Ssendaula, 2007).

The Baganda argue that redrawing map of Buganda into LG zones and economic zones suggests new boundaries in which they would become ‘emmomboze’ (wage slaves) to foreign interests in their own land, on the way to annihilating the group. The fears were exacerbated by government policies that, “parcel out and/or condone the depletion of forests, forest reserves and wetlands in the region without adequate regard to the interests of the Baganda born and unborn” (Ibid).

The above discussion underscores the negative perceptions between the central government and the Baganda. In the context of decentralization where LGs are perceived in Buganda as an extension of and designed to serve the interests of the central government, these views explain the hostile and often violent patterns of interactions between the Baganda and the state in Uganda.
6.4 Pattern of interactions

Saunders (1999) maintains that continuous and reciprocal patterns of interactions between policy-making and policy-influencing communities produce a body of experiences useful to understand the nature of relationships. Dugan (1996) also states that interaction patterns of the parties and their feelings towards each other generate problems in their relationship. Both views highlight the need to examine interaction patterns between the state, and the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups to understand the relationship between them. The following discussion examines interactions that take place mostly at the policy level to create new districts, government recognitions of breakaway chiefdoms from Buganda, concerning the status of Kampala City, and through forming political alliances.

Galtung (1969) maintains that, “in all systems there is interaction, and where there is interaction, value is somehow exchanged.” From this perspective, decentralization can be argued to be a value-distribution system as ethnic groups and the state interact with each other through LGs to achieve their interests. Neumann (1992:222) has further argued that during this interaction, “ethnic groups continuously seek to protect identity, and through a shared identification, individuals are linked and will act together to preserve, defend and enhance their common identity.” Although LG are considered to be autonomous and operate in
demarcated zones, the Baganda are known to act together over Ebyaffe especially when hostilities escalate between the monarchy and the state. Examining interactions in the context of decentralization therefore helps to reveal purposes, intentions and values that condition actions, and also reveal points of friction and consensus (Saunders, 2005, Scott 1985) between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.

As stated by the SV theory (Galtung 1969), government dominates interactions between ethnic groups and the state in a linear ranking order i.e. at both policymaking and implementation levels through parliament and LGs at the grassroots respectively. However traditional authorities continue to provide unique services and conduct a range of functions to meet identity and cultural interests of their members at the grassroots. In this way, both LGs and traditional authorities, especially in Buganda, claim to satisfy interests of local people. Local leaders also claim to implement programs by the central government or the Kingdom at grassroots (Mayiga, 2009) respectively.

Fisher (2009) states that in conflict situations, there is always a mix of objective and subjective elements, with the latter increasing in importance and effect as the conflict escalates. As LGs and traditional authorities function to implement policies of government or the monarchy in the same communities, hostilities are
generated as they compete to influence local communities and control resources. This is particularly so, when LGs facilitated and accountable to the central government, overwhelmingly overshadow the authority of traditional authorities appointed by Kabaka.

As Galtung (1969) explains, this condition establishes a correlation between levels and centrality in the decentralization system, especially where the state that initiates and develops policies, also dominates interaction networks at all levels of policy implementation from the district to village levels. This is through LGs that are facilitated and therefore accountable to government. While doing so, the state also increasingly erodes the power and influence of traditional authorities over local communities. The situation got worse when the state exploited the decentralization policy to justify over-decentralization (Asiimwe and Katorobo, 2007), i.e. subdividing old districts into smaller units with numerous LG structures. Influence of the state expanded manifolds in Buganda region as the number of LG units continues to multiply.

On the other hand the monarchy seeks to consolidate its territory into a federal state based on the 1962 constitution, and argues that it has always opposed fragmentation of the Kingdom. According to Kato (2009), the monarchy cautioned Members of Parliament from Buganda to think twice before they back unpopular
policies. Kato asserts that the new districts are created for political purposes and because they are unviable, they become more vulnerable and dependant on the government after they are created, leading to political interference. In a related observation, Mutahindukah (2012) also appealed to Parliament to realize the dangers the state may face with numerous concaves of poverty-stricken communities turned into districts. Where economically most districts are in shambles with barely any education/health institutions or roads, and socially people are becoming more divided and are being left to fend themselves.

From this discussion, it is clear that expanding the scope of government is often undermined by political interference in the implementation of decentralization. For example Kakonge (2011) observes that,

“Uganda is now quasi-unitary state whose object is to serve one man – President Yoweri Museveni...he creates political constituencies that would vote for the NRM presumably to create jobs for the local people. The need for effective service delivery, as a central point of their creation, has been abandoned in favour of patronage and farce. The result of this frenzy is that these districts cannot serve without the Central Government support and cannot even form statutory committees.”
Kakonge further concluded that districts are useful during the bogusly-hyped democratic elections. They make it easy to rig by setting up polling stations that cannot be easily traced, as they are too numerous for the opposition parties to monitor. Instead, only the NRM is in the position to do so while abusing state funds for its own interests. Political influence was also evident in 2010, when government established the Kampala Capital City Authority to manage Kampala District, but under the direct supervision of the Office of the President.

According to Nalugo (2012), studies in Uganda have shown that creation of new districts does not improve delivery of services to local people. Instead, as Foucault (1975) argues, such structures are mechanisms and modalities that only change to maintain control. For that matter in July 2012 the parliamentary Public Service and LG Committees blocked the creation of 25 new districts proposed by government. The Committee demanded to know the rationale and justification of creating more districts, and required an assurance from government that it is not creating a big problem for the country (Nalugo, 2012). Some members on the committee referred to the new districts as electoral constituencies, with an eye to get the 2016 general elections skewed in favor of western region where 12 new districts were created compared to 2 in the eastern, and 5 in the northern regions. In terms of resource allocation through government grants to LGs, the western region, which is the president’s home
region, will also get more resources because of more districts even though the central region of Buganda is the most highly populated.

The decentralization policy framework also outlines a number of functions formally conducted by traditional authorities as responsibilities and functions of LGs, including managing land, local tax collection and dispute resolution. Such outbidding generates negative perceptions and frustration of TLs towards LGs in Buganda, and feeds into violent confrontations that target government, which gave rise to the outbidding (Brubaker and Laitin, 1998, Fearon and Laitin, 1996).

Government recognition of breakaway regions from the traditional territory of Buganda Kingdom, resembles the creation of new districts, both perceived by Baganda and the monarchy as direct attacks to the territorial integrity of Buganda by the state. These processes are marked by a series of actions and reactions between the state and Buganda, in a power-over relationship where the state influences and dominates every interaction. Buganda’s demand for more authority for self-rule was thus justified by the state’s use of its power to limit or constrain Bugandas’ opportunities to remain a unified territory where members can organize collectively to achieve their interests.

Fears of the Baganda that the state was exploiting its policies to undermine
Buganda escalated into violence when the central government recognized the breakaway of Bunyala chiefdom from Buganda Kingdom. Matovu (2009) reported that, “sections of the Baganda accused the government of being behind the creation of these breakaway chiefdoms.” The Banyala ethnic sub-group migrated from Bunyoro in the late 1800s and settled in one of the counties of Kayunga in the North Eastern part of Buganda Kingdom. They speak Luganda language and practice Kiganda culture, yet claim to be the indigenous people of Kayunga district. In 2008, the central government recognized the newly formed chiefdom as a cultural institution independent from Buganda Kingdom.

In spite of this recognition, in September 2009 Baganda monarchy organized to celebrate the Youth Day in Kayunga District. However, the central government stopped Prime Minister of Buganda and the Kabaka from travelling to Kayunga District “unless he got the consent of the local leaders of the Banyala community.” The monarchy argued that the Kabaka did not need permission from any individual or government entity to travel to any part of the country, more so to an area which is part of his Kingdom, (Ssendaula, 2007).

Blocking the Kabaka from traveling to any area in his Kingdom was considered an attack by the state on the Kabaka and Baganda identity. It resembled the 1966 attack on Kabaka Mutesa II and subsequent “forceful occupation of
Buganda Palace by foreigners” (Buganda Kingdom, 2010), since the central government was dominated by northern region tribes. The UPC government converted the palace and the Kingdom’s administrative headquarters at Bulange into a military barracks until 1993.

Violent communal riots ensued when millions of Baganda demonstrated throughout Buganda region against the decision by government to stop the Kabaka from travelling to part of his territory. In response, the state deployed thousands of army and police officers to clamp down on the violence, where 26 youths were shot dead and 1,031 were arrested. Five radio stations including Buganda Kingdom’s Central Broadcasting Station (CBS) were closed, allegedly for inciting riots, and the Attorney General of Uganda listed 50 cases against the monarchy in the courts of law (U.S Department of State, 2009).

In the end, the large number of these new units in the region overwhelmed the capacity and increased the cost of managing traditionally large areas of jurisdiction under Kabakas’ appointed chiefs. Their power and influence drastically diminishes as the new structures become more accessible to local people than to chiefs. For example, the number of districts around the country has increased from 33 in 1986 to currently over 136. In Buganda region the number increased from 13 in 1986 to 36 by 2011. Kato (2009) also reports that
the 9 new districts created in Buganda in 2009 increased public expenditure but have very slim taxable resource as sources of revenue. Two of the districts; Gomba and Buvuma, have 100,000 and 30,000 people, respectively. Majority of the people in these districts are very poor and without even a local small town to function as district headquarters.

On the other hand according to Migereko (2009), Busoga was also one of the 18 post independence districts that Uganda had. By 1986 it had 7 districts, and to date it has 10 districts. However, Migereko argues further that this has been for purposes of development and has improved service delivery, infrastructure, created employment and other opportunities for household income improvement, than being deliberate efforts by the state to undermine and weaken the Basoga.

Coser (1956) explains that a social conflict is a struggle over values and claims to scarce resources, in which the opponents aim to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. The monarchy considers the creation of new districts under the decentralization policy the same as the state’s recognition of breakaway chiefdoms. Both undermine the power and influence of the monarchy over its traditional territory and ability of the Baganda to control local resources. Particularly since most of the new districts are often unviable units that are dependant on the central government. However government claims that
subdividing districts is part of expanding the scope and reach of government, to spur growth by taking services closer to the people, especially in areas previously far from District Headquarters.

Threats to Buganda from the creation of new districts and recognition of new chiefdoms by the state are exacerbated by long term grievances over the status of Kampala City in Buganda. According to the 1967 and 1995 Constitutions of Uganda, the declared Kampala Capital City in Buganda region is not part of Buganda. The monarchy maintains that continuing exclusion of Kampala from Buganda is a serious anomaly because the district houses the most important, cherished and sacred traditional and cultural sites of the Baganda. The sites include Kabaka’s Lubiri (Palace) at Mengo, Bulange (the seat of the Kingdom’s government), burial grounds for the Kings of Buganda, and many more. The decentralization legal and policy frameworks notwithstanding, it becomes difficult to consider such symbols of Buganda’s history, culture and identity located outside the Kingdom.

From this perspective, LGs and LG Councils in Kampala District, whose membership are mostly from the indigenous Baganda ethnic group, are technically not in Buganda. This raises major contradictions considering that the monarchy expects political participation and decision-making by local Baganda communities to also preserve culture, identity and history of the region. The
historical importance of Kampala district to Baganda dates far back during the time of the very first Europeans that came to Buganda. Kampala was the first stop by Speke, Stanley and many other Europeans. In Kampala, they met and interacted with the Kings of Buganda, organized to expand their influence in forming the colonial state, planned and fought battles, signed agreements, and later named the country Uganda with Kampala as the administrative center of the state.

The fact that various facilities and institutions of government are in Kampala as the Capital City has been at the heart of the campaign to keep Kampala outside Buganda, for fear that Buganda would one day evict government from the city. However the monarchy argues that location of Central Government institutions in any part of Uganda does not mean that those areas should be outside the traditional cultural boundaries of a region. For example, Gaddafi Military barracks, the Owen Falls Dam and Source of River Nile, are located in Jinja District in Busoga region but Jinja is not considered to be outside Busoga.

The increasing population of non-Baganda in the district also exacerbates Buganda’s grievances over the status Kampala City not being part of Buganda. The Population Census of 2002 revealed that each of the 52 ethnic groups in Uganda has some of its members settled in Buganda region, particularly the
Capital City Kampala. According to Nyakaana et al (2007), the population of Kampala City increased from 330,700 at independence in 1962 where almost all people were Baganda, to 1,811,174 in 2004, and expected to be 2,400,000 by 2015 with approximately 40% non-Baganda. The size of land, political and economic opportunities available to indigenous Baganda continues to reduce, but with increasing threats to culture through which the Baganda perceive, produce and structure interactions (Avruch and Black, 1993) with other ethnic groups and the state in the region.

Buganda’s interactions have also included forming political alliances. Galtung (1969) points out that influence is not only negative through punishing what the influencer considers wrong, but can also be positive by rewarding what the influencer considers right. As stated earlier, Baganda expected their alliance with the NRM during the civil war to lead the state, as the initiator of policy, to reward Buganda with powers to achieve Ebyaffe. Instead the group feels punished, because the system that promised to respond to demand of Ebyaffe functions to undermine the same demands. Mulwanyamuli (2011) also confirms that decentralization was “a compromise” following intense demand by Buganda for a federal status. He stated that, “we were told that decentralization would meet the tenets of a federal system, but as it turned out, the system ended up
creating jobs for Movement supporters where local priorities and decisions made by elected leaders are not consistent with expectations of Buganda.”

Black (2003) stresses that deep-rooted identity and complex grievances, shaped over time, may explain why identity groups are always and everywhere the main constituents of political struggle. Buganda’s struggle for a federal system of government represents the kind of autonomy and authority the group perceived would achieve Buganda’s cultural and identity interests. During the 2011 presidential and parliamentary elections, a Baganda pressure group called Suubi (hope) was formed. The group made an alliance with a coalition of opposition parties to advocate for this system of government. This echoed Buganda’s alliance with UPC in 1964, where UPC was believed able to deliver on the promise of autonomy for Buganda (Tendo, 2011), but did not.

Dollard (1939) argues that frustration usually results in aggression, which occurs when committing acts of aggression depends on perceptions of deprivation for a long period of time. Frustration and aggression mark the interaction patterns (Galtung, 1969) between Buganda and the central government. The key point here is that culture and identity are the lenses through which the Baganda explain their interactions and frustrations with the state and LGs. However “the main causes of conflict are more likely to be understood in systems of inequality”
(Avruch, 2009:73), measured against how the system enables Baganda to achieve *Ebyaffe*. Perceptions of inequality also led to the 1966 crisis, when Buganda insisted on maintaining a status where the *Kabaka* was the cultural and political head of Buganda. During the crisis, the then Prime Minister Milton Obote is reported to have said that:

*The tribe has served our people as a basic political unit very well in the past. But now the problem of people putting the tribe above national consciousness is a problem that we must face, and an issue we must destroy,* (Hansen, 1974).

Experiences in Buganda show that the state has not managed to destroy the tribe. In more contemporary terms, Muliika (2010), also a former Prime Minister in Buganda Kingdom, contends that the 1995 Constitution was and still is a regime constitution. This observation enhances the view that even decentralization, which was adopted in the 1995 constitution as a system of government for Uganda, functions to serve the interests of the NRM regime and citizens. Muliika’s view is confirmed by the 1995 Constitutional Review Commission report, which stated that 65% of Ugandans and 80% of Baganda were in favor of a federal system of government. Thus Muliika further argues that even the scientifically researched findings of the Commission were not put into
consideration because the constitution and all systems and institutions contained therein seek to serve the interests of the NRM Government and its leader.

Such claims of frustration by the state in Buganda are unlike in Busoga where, for example, clan leaders unanimously cleared government of blame over the Kingdoms’ woes. Particularly, this was in connection with ongoing battles between two royal families over succession of the deceased Kyabazinga in 2008 (Muzaale 2012). In 2012 the state blocked Prince Edward Columbus Wambuzi from ascending to the throne after eleven hereditary chiefs from five royal clans elected him, as required from the Busoga constitution. Kirunda (2012), reports that on February 13 2012, the police chief dismissed the enthronement of Prince Wambuzi and upheld a rival prince to continue keeping the office. Despite such interference, Busoga clan heads defended the government against accusations that it is to blame for the kingdom’s failure to elect a substantive leader in the last three years (Ibid).

The above discussion explains a range of interactions at group and state levels, influenced by perceptions that are formed as they interact to achieve their interests. The following are findings from this study conducted using various research instruments (Appendix 10), to determine how decentralization can improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda.
Chapter Seven

This chapter presents findings about how decentralization failed to improve relationships between Baganda and the state, yet managed to improve the relationship between the Basoga and the state in Uganda. This is despite the claim by Decentralization Secretariat (1994), that the system promotes popular participation, empowers local people to make decisions, enhances accountability and responsibility, delivery of services, and makes development more responsive to the needs of the local people.

Tajfel (1986) explains social identity as a form of collectivism connected with intergroup relations, characterized by a differentiation between “we” and “they”. In this study the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups are examined as a collective, where differentiation between “we” and “they” occurs between each ethnic group and the state. During interviews, the phrase ‘members of your group’ was used on the questionnaire to refer the members of Baganda or Basoga ethnic groups as a collective. This is because all respondents from Kampala and Jinja districts were members of Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups respectively.

7.1. Study Findings and Analysis
There are many studies on decentralization reform, with recommendations on how the system can spur development and political participation of citizens in LG. Findings from this study confirm that to improve relationships in conflict situations, decentralization should function to also transform perceptions between ethnic groups and the state as they interact to achieve their interests over power and control of resources. The findings were generated from a comparative case study of Kampala and Jinja districts in Buganda and Busoga regions.

According to the research questions, the first section deals with understanding of decentralization; the second section deals with how decentralization can or fails to improve perceptions, interests and interactions between the Baganda and the state. Each section also contains a discussion of respondent’s views on how decentralization can be re-margined to improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state. This discussion also continues in the concluding section, where I present recommendations and areas for further research.

7.2. Understanding decentralization:

The way ethnic groups understand decentralization is important in how members perceive and interact with the state through LGs to achieve their interests. Differences in histories including how each group participated or was treated during processes of state formation, explain the differences in expectations and...
perceptions of the system between the Baganda and Basoga. The following views emerged on how respondents understand decentralization:

i. Comparison with past systems of government.

Some respondents understood the current decentralization system in comparison with past forms of government where political, economic, administrative, and other affairs of the state were controlled by the state. During pre and post colonial periods, centralization was also associated with domination of power and control of national resources by particular ethnic groups. The following statements were expressed in Kampala and Jinja districts in relation to this view:

“Decentralization gets basic services closer than was the case during especially Idi Amin’s time”

“Decentralization is genuine government by the people themselves, unlike where everything was controlled by government like during colonial days.”

“Decentralization programs may not mean much, but the system itself is different from previous governments that were influenced by colonialism.”

“The concept of decentralizing state power is good for the people, and regardless of what they received at the end of the day, it may be similar to what democracy is about.”

An expert from Kampala also stated that:
“Previously, leaders at any level and the decisions they implemented were made by the Central Government. Those who were referred to as local leaders were appointed by the state even when it was clear that they could not deal with local problems.”

ii. A system of sharing and accessing power.
Some respondents understood decentralization as a system of sharing and accessing power and services to meet local interests. A LC II leader in Kampala district stated that:

“For our people, decentralization is a system where leaders elected by the people into government give some of their power back to those who elected them.”

A LC V leader in Jinja district mentioned that:

“It is a system where we the leaders in government now make ourselves accessible to the electing local communities to work with them on local issues.”

From these views, the system is perceived as giving power back to the people, but also an opportunity for local people to interact with and access government to address local issues.

Other views in this regard included:
“Sharing leadership with the local people”

“Giving power to local people to do what they want for themselves.”

“Making government accessible to local communities”

A LC 1 leader from Jinja further pointed out that:

“Now it is our own people who elect us depending on what they know about us, to work with government to develop our communities.”

The above views showed that state power is perceived as localized when locally elected leaders exercise it to manage local affairs and address local issues. In conditions where decentralization functions in local communities with strong group identities like Baganda, this also involves dealing with cultural constructs and expectations over power and control of resources. Respondents used terminologies like “leadership”, “transfer” and “access” in relation to resolving local problems, collecting taxes, managing land ownership and local elections, as some of the services rendered by LGs.

iii. Similar to the structure of Buganda Kingdom

Volkan (1997) argues that decentralized governance is not new to Africa. Cultural leaders generally rejected the idea that decentralization was a new system of government. Respondents especially from Kampala stated that LGs perform many functions that traditionally belonged to chiefs of Buganda Kingdom. This
understanding is a consequence of the long history Buganda enjoys as a Kingdom and its role in the formation of Uganda as a state. Whose structure was modeled around the structure of Buganda Kingdom and by independence Baganda were the appointed political leaders in non-Baganda regions (Sentongo and Bartoli, 2012). From this perspective respondents perceived the state to duplicate a system that existed for hundreds of years, to draw and gain control over communities and local resources through LGs in which all people participate. An expert commented that:

“Regions with well established Kingdoms like Buganda find decentralization strange, may be as an extension of the centralized state just like in the colonial days, because they have had something similar for many years and it is not new.”

Views from TLs in Buganda also refuted the claim that decentralization is “part of the liberation that gave power back to the people”, as claimed by the NRM government. A chief from Kampala district argued that:

“Our ways of leadership were violated by the modern state after it served the Kingdom for hundreds of years. What is happening now is to influence people against their monarchy and to serve the interests of those in
power.”

Another chief contended that:

“The state could not have created and given power and authority to the people because both already existed in Buganda. This is part of our culture and these are the *Nnono* (traditions) of our local people.”

From these views TLs understand decentralization as a maneuver that the state, spearheaded to usurp culture and local traditions, and to control their members to serve the interests of the state.

In Jinja district TLs understood elected LCs as facilitating extension rather than a reproduction of power and influence of the Kyabazinga of Busonga in the region, who is also elected by the Busoga Lukiiko from five original Basoga chiefdoms.

A TL in Jinja commented that:

“This is how we have always lived, like families.”

A LC chairperson also commented that:

“Local Council chairpersons are like our chiefs because they are mostly members of known families especially in the suburbs and rural areas.”

Underlying this understanding is a common practice to elected chiefs in Busoga that members of related families, often organized into territorial chiefdoms that resemble LG zones, accepted as both a cultural and civil practice. Therefore
devolution found more acceptability in the region because it reinforced social and territorial boundaries of chiefdoms, made of clans and families, with political boundaries and power in form of LG zones and LCs respectively. For that matter political leaders elected into LCs also tend to be members of the same clan and lineage, especially in semi-urban and rural areas. In this way devolution reinforced the influence of traditional authorities with political power, which also strengthened the monarchy in Busoga.

A local chief also concluded that:

“The system forced cultural leaders to become more involved with politicians to organize our communities, which was not the case before, and through this many of our people have gone on to become very important in Government.”

However, chiefs from both districts stated that they were not involved in conceptualizing and structuring of decentralization as a system of government in Uganda. Therefore the views expressed by chiefs on how they understand decentralization are limited to the extent of their participation in LGs in areas where the stay, and also as residents and members of those communities.

Views in this regard included the following:
“We heard about decentralization in LC meetings.”

“I knew about RCs introduced by the NRM, and then parliament changed the name to LC but with the same responsibilities.”

“I heard that LGs mean governing ourselves but in the end it is the national government.”

“During meetings we were told this would work in the long-term, until now I don’t know how the system is supposed to work.”

7.3. Decentralization and relationships.

LG fulfill devolved functions of the state to deliver services to citizens, and influence how ethnic groups perceive and interact with the state to achieve their interests. In the following discussion these elements were not segregated because, in spite of their conceptual clarity, practically they influence each other and combine to shape conflict or cooperative relationships. Devolution is also used to refer to political, financial and administrative forms of decentralization that are implemented in Uganda. According to respondents, decentralization influenced relationships between Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups and the state through the following ways:

1. Dual authorities of traditional and LG leaders,

2. Problems of autonomy and mandate,

3. Citizen participation,
4. Re-centralization of decentralization.

7.3.1 Dual authorities

Traditional authorities continue to provide an alternative but influential form of authority that competes with LG authorities. The former persists despite the overwhelming number and influence of LGs in affairs of grassroots communities around the country. Communities interact with both traditional and LG authorities to access a range of services to meet local needs, yet in doing so, both authorities seek to achieve competing interests of a cultural and political nature simultaneously. During interviews, interests of LG were perceived by respondents to be oriented towards political interests of the state. By virtue of their historical roles and appointing authorities, traditional authorities were perceived oriented towards cultural and identity interests in the control of power and local resources. Views from respondents also highlighted flaws in how devolution occurred without regard to historical processes that shaped group identities and cultural roles of traditional authorities, also entitled to power and influence over their subjects. This problem manifests through:

i. Competing power and authority of CLs and LGs.

ii. Competing interests of traditional and LG authorities.

Competition power and authorities of CLs and LGs
Matsiko (2009) maintains that dangerous ethnic issues of power and leadership are always near to the surface in LG decision-making. In Buganda, part of this is due to dual systems of authority where LGs and CLs draw their power and authority from the state and the monarchy respectively, both functioning in the same communities.

A LC III leader from Kampala district asserted that:

“Traditional chiefs and LC leaders do not see power in each other, they see threat and each would use any influence to undermine the other.”

An expert from Kampala commented that:

“It is common for traditional and political leaders to portray each other as competing authorities, where each would have more power to influence local communities and control of local resources if it weren’t for the other.”

During interviews respondents were asked where local people tend to seek help in case of a problem in the community, 83% of respondents from both Kampala and Jinja districts indicated LGs, 15% indicated both, and 2% indicated traditional authorities. The results generally reflected the overwhelming coverage and influence of LGs and confirm that under decentralization, the central government expanded its scope within reach of most communities at the grassroots.
However views from Kampala district showed a stronger influence of traditional authorities (21%) compared with 7% in Jinja district.

Figure 10: LG and traditional authorities - Kampala District

Figure 11: LG and traditional authorities - Jinja District

This finding, especially from Kampala district, is consistent with findings from a survey of 40,000 respondents from 15 countries in Africa including Uganda, conducted by Afrobarometer (Logan, 2008). The survey concluded that although many people interacted more with politicians, cultural leaders, chiefs and elders
clearly still play an important role in the lives of many Africans: only religious leaders are contacted more frequently by ordinary Africans in their efforts to solve their problems or express their views. The study further concluded that in many situations traditional authorities also play a pre-eminent role as mediators of violent conflicts. In the context of decentralization, the above results indicate a diminished but persistent influence of the power and authority of CLs in local communities that compete with LGs.

When respondents were asked to explain what makes people choose between LGs or traditional authorities, views in favor of CLs indicated they were less likely to judge according to status, wealth or political affiliation. Views that indicated LCs argued it is because LGs have power and political support of the state to act on the problem. From this perspective, LGs are perceived to solve problems based on status, power and political influence, at the expense of local interests and justice, perceived to be the focus of traditional authorities. This finding is also consistent with “Tracing the Voice”, a study on decentralization in Uganda conducted by OXFAM GB (2008). The study concluded that there is a need to develop new relationships between LG and local people, because of the low level of trust in district administration (28%) and LCs (40%).

Underlying the competition for power between LGs and traditional authorities is
the fact that the TLs enjoy “uncontested authority over their communities” (Mijiga, 1998). In Buganda, this has persisted for over 400 years. Such a history leverages the influence of traditional authorities in making demands around culture and identity that challenge the “contested” authorities of LG. The dramatic shift in influence over local communities from “uncontested” to “contested” elected authorities notwithstanding, the finding also indicated that LGs are not about to substitute traditional authorities in serving local communities. This is partly because the power and influence of LGs functions within a regulated policy framework, that remains insufficient to meet the broader cultural and identity interests of communities. This promises to remain the case, until LG service delivery is complemented by CLs’ vital role in affirming that genuine interests of the people have been met.

A local chief in Jinja stated that,

“Many times people that come to us are often at a loss in deciding which issue can be addressed where, so we help LCs in many ways that they cannot even understand.”

Another chief in Kampala commented that,

“Politicians often come to us for guidance and endorsement, and make promises before they get elected or make decisions, even though after they win elections they come back with notices and
orders from government.”

Muhumuza (2008:22) also confirms this view, and observes that, “politicians have used tribal links for personal advantage.” In this case, this includes manipulating their association or personal relationships with CLs as custodians of culture and symbols of group identity to gain political support from their subjects.

Competing interests of CLs and LGs in local communities

Tajfel and Turner (1986) argue that the need for a positive identity is often linked to constructions of out-group negativities. CLs and LG compete against each other, where CL are perceived to represent culture and identity interests that are much more deep-rooted and often expressed differently than political and administrative interests that are the focus of LGs on behalf of the state. CLs from Kampala highlighted these interests with reference to the 1962 constitution that, as Mutiibwa (1992) also argues “entrenched the largest, best educated and wealthiest ethnic group as a federal state.” Respondents stated that CLs draw on culture and identity in valuable ways to keep Bu-Ganda (bundles) together, and influence members’ demands for power and resource interests contained in the traditional concept of Ebyaffe from the state. These interests account for the challenges decentralization experiences in Buganda compared with other regions in the country. An expert from Kampala stated that:

“Decentralization as it stands at the moment does not have
space for traditional authority and cannot respond to claims articulated by monarchies, because it is still by and large centralized and influenced by government not the people.” Logan (2008) maintains that, “traditional institutions are both malleable and adaptable.” Similarly, traditional authorities in Buganda continue to adapt to changes in how the state shapes and exercises its power, but to keep culture and identity interests central to the group’s relations with other ethnic groups and state. This includes under the decentralized system of government, which is theorized to be effective in responding to conflicts in ethnically divided societies (Lijphart, 1977) like Uganda.

A survey conducted by the Afrobarometer (Logan, 2008) revealed that, “popular evaluations of traditional and political leaders are strongly linked.” Similarly, in Buganda LGs and CLs continue to be linked because they serve and operate within the same communities from village to district levels, even though their interests are evaluated to be in competition, as articulated in the decentralization policy and by monarchies, respectively. An expert from Kampala observed that, “The work and interests of traditional chiefs and Local Government leaders can be complementary, yet they continue to fight for the same limited space, each with very big but different ideas on what leadership and serving local needs is all
Other views about competing interests of LGs and CLs included:

- LGs personnel meet public interests according to the decentralization policy, while CLs pursue communal interests based on traditions and cultures of our people.
- LGs represent government to help communities access basic services but CLs provide non-political services according to our culture.
- In a customary way responsiveness of CLs to local needs is limited to relational issues within family and communities, guided by culture, but LCs are more political just like the government.
- LGs can only improve service delivery, but CLs have used culture and traditions of our people to maintain our communities for hundreds of years.
- LGs are political structures fulfilling interests of leaders and government.
- LGs maximize the influence of the state to achieve decentralization goals, while CLs maximize culture to serve the needs of their communities.

Logan (2008) has cautioned however that such evaluation could be based on individual cases of leaders within each institution than being an institutionalized approach to decentralization or traditional rule. For example, strong views in favor of LGs from Jinja district may indicate favorable perceptions of individual
leaders in the NRM government for restoring the historical relationship between
the state, local chiefs and the Kyabazingaship.

Manyak and Katono (2010:2) argue that, “frequent failure of political and
administrative personnel to provide local citizens with honest and effective
leadership is a source of conflict in LGs.” According to the monarchy in Buganda,
honest and effective leadership of LGs also includes achieving Baganda’s
entitlements e.g. self-rule under a federal system of government and the control
of ancestral land in Buganda. And as Burton (1993) has argued, Baganda’s
claims are basic needs to the group and continue to prevent members from being
socialized and coerced into behaviors convenient to the state. An expert from
Buganda commented that,

“Full implementation of decentralization requires reconciling LCs and
the Kabaka’s appointees and their interests, if presently influential
traditional authorities and the Baganda in general are to stop feeling
threatened by elected authorities in LGs or parliament.”

This view recognizes the competing interests CLs and LGs represent, and aims
to alleviate challenges associated with the problem of dual structures among
grassroots communities. To improve this aspect of decentralization, views from
respondents suggested that:
• CLs should have meaningful representation in decentralization structures.
• LG accountability should include responsiveness to group entitlements at local levels.
• Programming for decentralization should create opportunities for partnerships between TLs and LCs in LG programs.

Therefore decentralization processes through which communities share state power, mandated to LGs through elections of local leaders, seems to be irresistibly influential in affairs of communities. However, as indicated above, honesty and consistency are some of the qualities respondents indicated that make the influence of traditional authorities endure. These qualities make TLs more appropriate to represent and handle more deep-rooted power and resource interests associated with culture and identity, as those articulated by the Baganda. It emerges therefore that the dual authorities of LGs and TLs represent different forms of understanding and exercising power, and attract different value judgments that still need to be captured by the decentralization system in Uganda.

7.3.2 Challenges of autonomy and mandate

Under decentralization, state power is considered shared when autonomous LG authorities fulfill devolved functions of the state to respond to local needs and interests. Clear structures and functions of LGs notwithstanding, in Buganda the
system did not manage to respond to Ebyaffe despite participation of Baganda communities in local decision-making and election of political leaders. However, LG in Busoga are perceived to be adequately empowered to make decisions and function to respond to local needs despite lack of capacity by leaders.

Respondents perceive lack of mandate and autonomy of LG to deal with or engage the state on Buganda’s interests as a key problem that undermines interactions between LGs and CLs, or the monarchy and the state in Kampala district to respond to their demands for Ebyaffe. Frustration from this failure was demonstrated during the 2009 violent communal riots against “government action to control the freedom of movement of the traditional royal leader of the Buganda people” (DeCapua, 2011).

During interviews, 51% of respondents from Kampala indicated that members of their group, represented in LGs through elected LCs, have inadequate or no authority and autonomy, have to make decisions about local interests, compared to 20% from Jinja district.
Leaders from Kampala, especially at LC II and I were dissatisfied that;

“Our people do not even own in the decisions that politicians in government make concerning local interests and how they should be met.”

“There are no instances when LCs conducted meetings to discuss Buganda’s issues, but all the time focus on policies and programs of the central government.”
“We can hardly fulfill our mandate with the limited powers we have, we would be over stretched if we also got involved in Buganda’s issues which are outside the policy.”

A LC III leader stated that,

“Local communities expect us to be part of the solution to clear any grievances in the community, but we mostly provide political solutions that do not have the support of everyone. We instead become part of what causes the problem.”

The above views do not suggest lack of authority by LGs to serve local communities. But lack of mandate and inadequate autonomy to make decisions, manifested in the inability of LGs to adopt tailored local policies and programs to, for example, enhance ownership and control of ancestral land by the Baganda themselves in the region. A local chief stated that,

“When it comes to complaints from the Baganda demanding from government to return our land, Local Governments disappear and no one knows where they stand on these issues.”

This view explains the negative perceptions towards the state and LGs in Buganda, unlike in Jinja district where most respondents perceived communities as more empowered to make their own decisions under decentralization. A LC II in Jinja district stated that:
“There are no issues as far as where power and authority lays in our zones; I am doing my work as expected and at times with politicians or chiefs to help our resolve issues in our community.”

However, partnering between chiefs and political leaders seems to get into problems in Jinja where issues about distribution of income from local resources are concerned. Even though with less tension than in Kampala district. An official from the Office of Kyabazinga mentioned that,

“Our biggest problem is some politicians who collect revenues from the Kingdom’s resources like land and other facilities yet the monarchy remains impoverished.”

Another chief added that,

“Busoga is known for growing and producing sugar and much of the commercial growing is on land belonging to the Kyabazinga, but the monarchy does not get any income from the growers because the district administration collects it from them and uses it all.”

Thus unlike in Kampala district, negative perceptions among the Basoga in Jinja district are mostly intra-group other than towards LGs or the state, and concern the distribution of local resources as benefits and not entitlements like in Buganda. This may explain why LGs are considered more autonomous and acceptable in Busoga, to the extent that poor service delivery does not
necessarily make interactions between communities and LCs confrontational or
draw communities into demanding more authority.

7.3.3. Citizen participation

Citizens’ participation is a revered indication of successful decentralization
systems, marked by involvement of especially grassroots people in LG to elect
political leaders and set priorities including by-laws to help achieve meet local
needs. The level of citizen participation in LGs can therefore indicate how citizens
perceive devolution responds to their needs. For example at the onset,
decentralization was simplified and explained in public meetings for people to
understand how the system is structured and functions. Such outreach created
opportunities for communities to identify with devolution and participated in
implementation programs, which improved perceptions of the state by citizens. In
the context of territorially defined ethnic groups, like the Baganda in the Central
and Basoga in the Eastern regions of Uganda, such outreach connected LGs
with communities as members of ethnic groups in ways that promised more
responsiveness to group interests.

During interviews, respondents perceived the system as politically exploited by
the state to implement decisions that favor government at the expense of local
interests, thus unwilling to respond to group interests like Ebyaffe in Buganda.
Respondents also indicated that limited awareness of how the decentralization policy currently functions is a problem that affects citizens’ participation in LG programs. The following observations were associated with low citizen participation in LG:

i. Loss of interest by communities in LG activities.

ii. Decentralization as political influence.

iii. Management of land under decentralisation.

Loss of interest by communities in LG activities

In general, respondents indicated that local citizens take initiative to participate in LG activities when LCs invites them. For example a Member of Parliament from Kampala observed that:

“The Local Government Act of 1993 generated record involvement of grassroots communities in LG discussions about their development priorities”.

A LC III official from Jinja also stated that:

“In the early days of decentralization, local leaders were more effective knowing that people had to come to meetings and could challenge their decisions or remove them from office if they fail to perform.”
To this extent, LGs were participatory enough to assure groups and communities that the decentralization system serves and seeks to respond to their needs and grievances. However respondents indicated that one-sided decisions from government towards LGs, lack of awareness through training, and failure by local communities to influence LG decision, account for the loss of interest in LG activities by communities. This in turn makes LGs unable to effectively identify and respond to local priorities.

During interviews, 82% of respondents from Kampala district indicated communities had no or inadequate authority and autonomy to set local priorities, while 94% indicated they had no or inadequate authority and autonomy to influence LC actions.

![Figure 14: Set local priorities – Kampala District](image)
Views from Kampala district were consistent with findings by OXFAM GB (2008) on decentralization in Uganda. The study revealed a low level of awareness and participation in public sector development programs among Ugandans i.e. Local Government Development Plans (35%) and Poverty Eradication Action Plan (34%). Almost half of the respondents during the study also “felt that the distance between them and their leaders had increased” (Ibid). The loss of interest by communities in LG activities can also be partly explained by failure by government to articulate decentralisation policies and choices to communities. A LC III official in Kampala commented that:

“There is a big difference in how we understand the system and how government interprets decentralization. This creates a problem in working with communities, especially when people hear that government is not supporting certain programs that they sometimes like.”
Another LC I leader from Kampala stated that,

> “Initially local councilors were trained and they in turn taught their people what was involved in decentralization. Every body participated knowing what their roles, expectations and priorities were. Now the system involves explaining government policies and people have become less interested.”

This observation was expanded by a LC I leader, who stated that,

> “We are unable to influence decisions of our political leaders in government on a number of issues. So when government decides, say to allocate land to an investor and displaces people in the process, we also share the blame when people become dissatisfied.”

With little participation of people in devolution programs, it becomes difficult in regions like Buganda to prioritize how LGs in the region can help achieve *Ebyaffe*. But ensure that the Baganda remain focused on Buganda’s interests, the monarchy exploits boundaries that separate between us from them (Tilly 1978) to keep the demand for *Ebyaffe* linked to identity, culture and history of the Baganda. In such situations and with little participation of communities in LG, devolution, as is currently structured, seems unable to improve positive self-evaluation, self-esteem, and self-representation (Tajfel, 1987) of the Baganda or
give them control over local resources and land, thus, the demand for more authority and autonomy for self-rule. Identity and cultural boundaries set the perimeters and act as the lens through which the monarchy contends with the state for more autonomy and authority, and also estimates its influence to achieve Ebyaffe. Matsiko (2009:71) concluded therefore that, “it is apparent Buganda has not accepted it is under the Ugandan state. For that reason, it has failed or rather refused to submit its ethnic ‘nationalism’ to the Uganda nationalism. It is the driving force behind her demand for administrative and political autonomy from the central government.”

To improve positive self-evaluation, self-esteem, and self-representation of the group, where decentralization has failed, Buganda insists on keeping clear boundaries between the ethnic group and the state. For example all Baganda sing two anthems before any public event in the region i.e. the National anthem and the Kingdom’s anthem titled Ekitiibwa Kya Buganda (Buganda’s Honor). The monarchy also organizes annual inter-clan and inter-county sports tournaments including traditional wrestling, football and netball. The Ministry for Youth and Culture of Buganda Kingdom Government also runs Nkobazaambogo Association, with branches in secondary and tertiary institutions in Buganda and others around the country. The Kingdom’s Radio Station broadcasts daily programs to promote Kabaka’s plans for his subjects, and host talk shows with
regular panelists where listeners call in to comment and share opinions on issues that concern Buganda.

Symbols like the Buganda Kingdom flag, tombs and other special places of ancestral worship, monuments and memorials, tribal-war veterans associations etc. further reinforce Baganda’s consciousness of boundaries that define the group. The boundaries serve as “shared reservoirs” (Volkan, 1997) often invoked to improve self-evaluation and self-esteem of the Baganda. This includes when making collective demands for more administrative and political autonomy of Buganda. The symbols become markers of intra-group virtues, culture, identity and history (Turner, 1987, Tilly, 2005), whenever hostilities escalate between the monarchy and the state. They reinforce self-representation and justify demands for a special status for the Baganda in the region. As Kaufman (2006) argues, such boundaries and symbols tend to be reinforced by ethnic mythologies, as part of the symbolic politics and explain the emotional processes that drive resistance to decentralization and the state in Buganda.

The preceding discussion explains the underlying perceptions of the Baganda towards devolution, and the difficulty LGs experience concerning claims involving culture and identity as areas of interest in Buganda. During interviews, a number of respondents indicated perceptions of threat when comparing political interests
of LGs with identity and cultural interests of the Baganda. Such views included the following:

“Uganda is here where I stand (meaning Buganda) and they (meaning, ‘those in government’) do not want to accept that.”

“Top leaders are not from here (referring to non-Baganda in Buganda).”

“They think the region is already rich so we must give to poorer regions, but our land is ours and we must benefit from it first.”

“True the region is more developed but is not the richest, may be our politics has been wrong all the time and we need to begin to fight for us as a group.”

On the other hand, views among the Basoga from Jinja district were stronger concerning authority and autonomy to set local priorities (87%), and authority and autonomy to influence LC actions (60%).

![Figure 16: Set local priorities – Jinja District](image-url)
Despite strong interest in LG activities indicated in Jinja District, a LCIII official also commented that:

“Government has not been able to convincingly explain to the people many of the decentralization choices made by parliament, or cases in the district involving corruption, abuse of office and poor service delivery, so a number of people tend to get frustrated by our LG work.”

Decentralisation as political influence

Creation of new districts under the decentralization policy was perceived in Buganda as political influence from the state to undermine the Kingdom and the Baganda, in favor of smaller political units as voting constituencies for the NRM. A number of respondents also perceive decisions to expand the scope of government by creating new districts to be in the interest of politicians than local
people. Particularly because majority of new districts lack the minimum resources, structures and systems necessary for citizens to effectively participate in LGs. Respondents perceived a number of problems associated with political influences by the state in LGs, including:

- Inconsistency and lack of comprehensive guidelines and criteria on the creation of new districts.

- Lack of means to level off resource disparities and to address weaknesses in capacity to plan and program for service delivery between new and old districts.

- Perceptions that new districts are promised government funding and better services in return for votes for candidates of the ruling NRM party at local and parliamentary levels.

Citing political influences from the state, all respondents from Kampala strongly indicated they had inadequate or no authority and autonomy to set and collect taxes, while 98% indicated they had had inadequate or no authority and autonomy to control local resources respectively.
This was also evident when His Excellence the President, unilaterally, abolished Graduated Tax during the 2006 Presidential campaigns. Although Graduated Tax generated approximately 85% of LG revenue in each district, the president claimed that its collection was inefficient. The decision increased the state’s influence on the authority and autonomy of LGs and LGs, as government became a major funder of decentralization despite the mandate of LGs to levy and collect local taxes to fund local projects. According to the Local Government
Finance Commission (LGFC) report of 2007 the decision was political, intended to outbid the rival Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) Party that had proposed to do the same in its campaign manifesto. Kampala district, which is the most highly populated and where most of the taxes are collected in the country, suffered the biggest loss of revenue, yet the people require more services than in any other part of the country.

According to Mutahindukah (2012), NRM repeated the same mistake colonialists made by dividing people, in this case into numerous smaller and weak political units as districts, while consolidating power at the center. This occurs through political influences that also weakened LG responsiveness to local needs and interests that include creating job, health, education, and addressing other infrastructural problems. In turn citizen participation and responsibility of LCs to their constituents is undermined in favor of consolidating the NRM regime. According to a study by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) (2008), Graduated Tax used to encourage men to work and become more connected, involved and responsive to their LGs after they have paid their Graduated Tax. Instead, as the JICA (2008) further reports, currently communities want a free ride with the government paying for everything.

During the study, it was discovered that in 1930 the British created this Tax on
personal incomes, payable by employed women and adult males regardless of employment status (Majiga, 1998). In 1958-59 budget estimates by Buganda Kingdom Government, the Katikkiro (Prime Minister) reported an expected collection of $2,224,617 from graduated taxes, compared to $1,999,200 during the 1956-57 financial year (Kabaka’s Government Draft Estimates 1958-59). Graduated tax was therefore a major source of revenue for the government of Buganda Kingdom. From this perspective, views from Kampala towards collection of local taxes contained a reference to these powers, which the monarchy lost due to centralization of state powers after independence. Despite the decentralization policy, the situation remains unachievable due to political influences from the state over LGs. Instead, the system is perceived as a ploy by the state to draw resources from Buganda to develop other regions in the country. Responses in this regard stated that:

“Governments in Uganda including the current one constantly adopt policies that derail development in Buganda.”

“Government drains our wealth and resources to improve services elsewhere.”

“It would be fine to allocate that much money to other regions if they were productive.”

“We can hardly be self-reliant because government invests very little
here compared to what is collected from businesses, land and other establishments.”

When asked why they gave these views, respondents stated a number of reasons that draw attention to political influences of the decentralization system, which also influence the conflict between Buganda and the central government. According to Adenekan (2010), “the conflict started before independence when Buganda kingdom sought to become independent from Britain and a separate state from Uganda.” In spite of decentralization, the monarchy maintains the same demands over Ebyaffe as has been the case under different regimes since independence. The above finding is consistent with Horowitz’s (1985) observation that communal movements of differentiation in Africa fused cultural demands into post-colonial politics, to condition political support for the state on recognition of the group.

To compensate for the loss of revenue to the state through the internal collection systems of the state and LGs, the monarchy often fundraises to be able to offer services to the Kabaka’s subjects. The services provided include health, agriculture, education, culture, sports etc. For example the Kingdoms’ treasury department annually sells Buganda Kingdom Certificates to every Baganda family and “attracts other voluntary contributions to fund the social, educational and cultural projects.”
During interviews, respondents from Kampala acknowledged that the revenue base for LG is narrow, countrywide. However, most respondents perceived the increasing cost of decentralization in the country as responsible for the low income generated by traditional authorities, because LGs collect taxes from the same communities. Views in this regard included:

- “I am my tribe before I vote, yet I see many districts allocated money from our local collections to cover their expenditures outside Buganda.”
- “It is unclear under decentralization how the monarchy is supposed to earn.”
- “It is impossible to align funding for LG with CLs because they have different mandates, yet it must be done because they all service our people.”
- “A small percentage of the total local collection is returned to the district, the monarchy should have special consideration because they cannot be part of this share.”
- Special considerations would have worked to fund traditional authorities, if it weren’t for making the total cost of decentralization more difficult to meet.

Respondents from Kampala also implicated political influences in the unfair allocation of LG contracts to provide services in the city, which adds to the loss of
revenue for the indigenous people in the region. An expert observed that,

“Many of the decisions tend to benefit non-Baganda from outside the region, who do not understand or mind about interests of the indigenous people and what is best for them.” He added that contracting processes “are marred by corruption which affects the way services are rendered and how people relate and associate with LGs.”

Buganda government already collects Obosuulu (land tax) from tenants for use of land belonging to the Kingdom; but the money is too little to spur any development in Buganda. A local chief stated that:

“Money collected for the monarchy is not LG money; it is too small for anyone to do big things with it.”

Another stated that:

“It is discouraging to see that we (the monarchy) have money among our people but cannot collect it. The Kingdom developed faster because we collected our taxes and used it well, and did not to give it to government to decide what we should do with it.”

An expert commented however that:

“Tax collection and allocation is not a LG issue. The national budget should balance generation with allocation between
districts when it comes to revenue collection and grant allocation,
if Buganda is to retain its lead in development.”

To improve understanding of how government gets involved in LGs among traditional authorities, and to address especially capacity concerns and operational challenges between the monarchy and LGs, respondents recommended the following:

- Modify ancestral claims that challenge control of especially local resources and administration e.g. land and taxation, to be consistent with the policy.
- Reconcile interests of the monarchy and the state, as a way to bring traditional forms of influence and authority into building the state and improve effectiveness of LG.
- Management training to traditional authorities to acquire skills and technical knowledge to fit into decentralization structures as advisers, experts or employees.

Skills in this case refer to ability of CLs to be able to harness human and non-human capacities and resources under their influence to support devolution, in ways that improve LG service delivery and support culture and identity needs of local people. Concerning technical knowledge, respondents indicated that this contained ability of traditional authorities and LG leaders to recognize all actors in
the system during planning processes and to link cultural and LG programs in complementary ways, especially at the communal level.

On the other hand in Jinja district, these views were different. While respondents indicated that over 74% of members of their group had inadequate or no authority and autonomy to set and collect taxes, 76% indicated they have adequate authority and autonomy to control local resources e.g. land.

![Pie chart showing set and collect taxes in Jinja District]

**Figure 20: Set and collect taxes – Jinja District**

![Pie chart showing control local resources in Jinja District]

**Figure 21: Control local resources – Jinja District**
In spite of strong responses on autonomy and authority to collect these taxes and control local resources, many respondents from Jinja acknowledged poor revenue collection by their members, leading to poor service delivery. But this did not undermine perceptions of the Basoga towards LGs or the state.

A LC I leader mentioned that:

“In my zone, there are only 8 shops, this year I stamped and signed one agreement to sale land and 4 passport forms. The dues collected from here cannot even pay sitting allowances to member of my executive. And some of these fees are set by the district council or government.”

A LC III respondent further stated that:

“People think we collect and keep the money but all revenue goes to government. We are only allowed to keep a minimal percentage that cannot even cover sitting allowances for members of the local council.”

An expert from Jinja concluded that:

“The revenue base in reducing day by day in Jinja, so poor collections greatly contribute to poor service delivery at the grassroots, but this is more of a management problem than political influence.”

Strong responses from Jinja District also reflect Busoga’s historical relationship
with the state, since the creation of Kyabazingaship in 1902. Nabwiso (1990) reports that during this time, the monarchy consented to the colonial state's control of local resources in exchange for protection from the influence and expansionist policies of Buganda Kingdom. From this perspective, involvement of the state in affairs of LG in Busoga region is perceived consistent with this history.

Management of land under decentralisation

Decentralization expands the scope of government through participation of local people in managing their affairs and local resources, including land, through elected LCs and District Land Boards (DLB). However in Buganda, this is a function of the Buganda Land Board (BLB) and chiefs appointed by the Kabaka at country, sub-county, parish and village levels. Although according to the Constitution (1995) “land belongs to the people”, respondents indicated that this remains unclear in Buganda where both DLBs and BLB have powers and authority over land in Buganda. Management in this case involves planning, mapping and surveying, change and allocation of ownership, and setting of rates associated with land use.

In Busoga Kingdom different chiefs from the five original that the colonial state brought together to form the kingdom, originally owned all land in the region
between themselves. However in Buganda all ancestral land belongs to the Kabaka as the *Ssaabataka* (supreme custodian of ancestral land), and holds it in trust for his subjects. Such shared myths and associated cultural practices (Eriksen, 2001), explain the difficulty LGs find in dealing with control of ancestral land in Buganda.

Respondents shared the view that administratively, decentralization managed to put in place land management systems useful to respond to land disputes especially during change of ownership e.g. within family or between non-family members or businesses. However a number of respondents from Kampala indicated that LG leaders:

“Lack the necessary knowledge of the ancestral status of land in Buganda”

“Lack the mandate to effectively deal with land question on the region.”

An expert further observed that:

“That is why many cases about land drag on for years and in the end, they remain unresolved.”

In Kampala District respondents perceive government to be politically influencing control and ownership of land in Kampala, without consideration to Baganda’s
interests. Views from respondents in this regard included the following:

“The Central Government allocates money depending on election patterns, but this land belongs to us and no money can take that away.”

“The president’s word is often an order and when you do not elect him he orders against you, this would be different if we controlled our resources.”

“Local Governments are resourced to work for the Central Government, land is all we have and it must benefit us and not the government all the time.”

An expert from Kampala also observed that,

“Currently decentralization feels like government is contracting LGs to keep people off their land and to maintain it in power, they do not help people to build on or benefit from local resources because this would make communities more independent from the influence of the state.”

### 7.3.4 Re-centralization of decentralization.

Decentralized powers of the state were re-centralized when LGs, formerly RCs, became political structures of the NRM and administrative structures controlled by the state. For example, the Public Service Commission (PSC), under the
central government, recruits senior LG officers for each district as technical staffs to ensure policy and political priorities of the state are met and to manage district programs. This undermined the consensus building (Lijphart, 1969) or integrating (Horowitz, 1985) functions of LG, because state power cannot be considered shared when LGs and LCs are not free from political biases or state influence. In the context of territorially defined ethnic groups with unique interests and demands, recentralization takes away the hope that what remains of decentralization may respond to local interests.

Respondents reported a number of problems associated with re-centralization, including:

i. LGs promote state and ruling party interests at the expense of local interests.

ii. Multi-party political competition favors recentralization.

iii. Recentralization encourages favoritism and corruption in LGs.

**LGs promote state and ruling party interests at the expense of local interests.**

The state is perceived to use LGs to promote interests that benefit government and politicians from the NRM party, at the expense of expressed interests of groups and communities at the grassroots. During interviews, respondents from Kampala district indicated that politicians (53%) and the central government (35%) benefited most from decentralization, while only 12% indicated local
communities. This finding is consistent with Kabaka Mutebi’s (2012) comment that “existing LG committees do not serve Buganda but interests of those in government.”

On the other hand in Jinja district, respondents indicated that the central government (60%) and communities (37%) benefited from decentralization.

![Figure 22: Benefit from decentralization - Kampala District](image)

![Figure 23: Benefit from decentralization - Jinja District](image)
Re-centralization of decentralization benefits the state when LGs function to promote political interests of the ruling party, and implement programs of the central government as a condition attached to financial grants and appointment of LG administrators. For example RDCs appointed directly by the President from among senior NRM cadres to supervise LG programs in each district and report directly to the Office of the President, who is also Chairperson of the ruling NRM. But according to Mulindwa (2012), “RDCs are not LG experts but politically appointed officers that represent interests of the president in each district.” Some RDCs are former fighters during the NRM’s 1980-86 civil war, appointed to reward them for their role during the struggle. Others are NRM strong men and women that get appointed after failing in electoral politics to become MPs, yet others have been appointed from opposition political parties to mitigate anti-government criticisms.

A few RDCs use such special positions to make meaningful developments in areas of security and resolving local disputes. However, respondents implicated a number of them as instigators of political influences in affairs of LGs to favor NRM supporters, constituencies and government policies at the expense of local interests. This is common during award of tenders by district councils, staff recruitment, and management of land ownership by LGs at district and sub-
county levels. Such influence is made possible due to the considerable disparity in power and influence in favor of the Office of the President and against LGs. Particularly since the Office of the President, as the Chief Executive, also oversees the allocation and setting of conditions for financial grants that cover more than 93% of budgets in each district.

At the same time the Public Service Commission (PSC) appoints senior technical staff to work at each district to manage government grants and district programs in accordance with priorities and programs of the state in each district. Most often appointees are not from local communities and government posts these appointees to the districts. In this way, powers to appoint appropriate senior LG staff to decide on and implement devolved functions of the state remain centralized, yet endorsed by communities when they elect LCs through which they function.

Manyak and Katono (2010) maintain that decentralization was recentralized when parliament amended the LG Act in 2005. The Local Government Act (1997), Part II: 64 (1) states that, “There shall be a Chief Administrative Officer who shall be appointed by the District Service Commission” (who was previously appointed by locally elected political leaders of the District Council). The position is important because a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) heads and directs all
devolved functions of the central government in each district. Under the Local Government Amendment Act (2005), Section 63 (1) changed for the CAO to be appointed by the PCS, under the Ministry of Public Service. LCs as elected representatives of local communities do not participate in this process, in contradiction with the 1995 Constitution. In this way the state took back the most important powers of LG administration.

Due to recentralization, groups, communities and their elected leaders lack the power to determine and influence decisions about staffing, funding and other local priorities. Technical staff like the CAO control district plans, budgets and administer local programs. Since the state finances over 93% of LG budgets in each district, it also sets priorities and policies that the CAO and his team of appointed administrators implement up to the village level. In the context of competing interests between Buganda and the state, it follows that LGs can choose to ignore group interests or participation of traditional authorities in decision-making, in favor of state interests as the initiator of policy, funder and appointing authority.

The African Peer Review Mechanism APRM (2007) observed that Local Government Officers e.g. the CAO, can remain neutral and possibly serve as mediators between the state and citizens. However in Buganda region, their
ability to mediate between the Baganda and the state over *Ebyaffe* seems compromised when they are perceived to represent interests of the state and not citizens. An expert from Kampala stated that,

“It has become difficult to separate policies of the state from priorities of LG because the latter depends on the former in major aspects of decentralization including staffing and finance.”

This view is in harmony with the APRM (2007) report, which stated that recentralization effectively changed the working relationship between legislators (LCs) and administrators appointed by the state. Influence of devolution by the state makes prioritizing group interests like *Ebyaffe* in Buganda difficult, lest districts lose their share of resource allocation, staff appointments can be terminated, and other forms of punishments. The President also often remarks that “*Mwalonda bubí*” (you voted unwisely), when responding to complaints of poor service delivery, as a punishment to districts that vote for opposition party members to LCs or National Parliament.

Due to recentralization, LGs are perceived to be part of machinery that functions to keep government and the NRM party in power. During interviews, a number of respondents from Kampala and Jinja districts also acknowledged that, “processes to elect local leaders and appointment of administrative staff by the
PSC are politically influenced.” Such influence is not often based on merit and fitness of candidates to serve local communities, which in Buganda include *Ebyaffe*, but on using decentralized powers of the state to achieve party and state interests and strength. This aggravates the disconnection between communities and the state, especially in Kampala when appointed LG administrators are non-Baganda. Some of the views from respondents where non-Baganda were recruited by government to work as LG staff included the following:

“He is never going to understand what Buganda is.”

“She is an agent of the state and those tribes and so cannot serve us with one heart.”

“Government will never like what we achieved for ourselves so they are determined to frustrate us through their agents.”

“Those are westerners employed by government to frustrate Buganda, but they found us here and will leave us here.”

Multi-party political competition favors recentralization.

Respondents indicated further that under a multi-party political system, as is the case in Uganda, re-centralization becomes inevitable as LGs become party structures that promote patronage and nepotism. From this perspective, resource allocation and staff recruitment by the state are perceived to benefit the ruling
party. Respondents indicated that even at grassroots levels, LG performance seeks to achieve party strength and to reward voting constituencies, at the expense local needs and interests.

During interviews, a LC 1 official from Kampala stated that:

“I was elected on a political party ticket and much as I love my kingdom and Ssaabasajja (the Kabaka), if I lose the support of members of my party I also lose this position.”

A LC II leader also argued that:

“We have never sat down with Buganda government officials as we do with our parties to tell us what they want us to do and how we should do it. There is no law to guide such consultations.”

Both views depict locally elected political leaders as agents that seek party strength, besides recognizing that communities as ethnic groups have unique interests that need to be addressed. From this perspective, political participation and representation of a community in LG may have nothing to do with that community using decentralized power of the state to achieve group interests, e.g. Ebyaffe in Buganda. It follows therefore that political moderation, argued by Horowitz (1885) as an outcome of integrating ethnic groups in government through decentralization, fails when locally elected leaders are political party candidates and not representatives of group-specific interests. A LC III leader in
Buganda stated that:

“We also identify with the issues raised by Buganda to the Central Government, but it is wrong to expect us to fight and resolve them simply because I won an election.”

An expert also argued further that,

“Many issues raised by Kingdoms to government are not achievable within a multi-party political system, and the system of decentralization cannot help resolve much, because currently it functions to maintain the NRM in power at both local and national levels than a process to mediate group and state interests.”

From these views, it becomes clear that in the context of a multi-party political system, LGs become responsive to party goals and interests than structures that function to manage conflicts and respond to especially group interests. The system fails when elected leaders exploit decentralized powers of the state to maintain electoral constituencies, particularly, where leaders pursue cultural and other group-specific interests to the extent that this enhances political careers or interests of the state. In a direct contradiction to consociation theory (Lijphart, 1969), an expert from Jinja observed that,

“LGs in Uganda do not function on consensus over power to meet local needs, but competition between leaders to retain positions and
maintain their tribal or voting constituencies, thus cannot serve common interests of an ethnic group.”

This view is consistent with Manyak and Katono’s (2010) observation that, “power struggles by President Museveni to maintain control of Uganda at the Central Government level pose challenges that impact the LG political environment.” Part of this struggle is marked by a history of rivalry between Buganda and the central government over Buganda’s Ebyaffe.

Favoritism and corruption in LGs

Respondents perceived favoritism and corruption to undermine the effectiveness of LG to respond to local needs and interests. Instead, both reinforce re-centralization and patronage by the state, when government recruits members of the ruling political party or ethnic groups that dominate control of state power, to work with district LCs as senior LG staff. A LC II in Kampala District asserted that,

“The system has become so corrupt from top to bottom in favor of relatives, political and business associates, so much that you have to be ready to be considered corrupt in the same way if you are to get on the inside and begin to change it.”

An expert also argued that,

“ Majority of LGs are concerned with formation and maintenance of
political alliances, and government favors its own cadres in collecting and administering revenue or local programs to remain influential. Many important issues tend to fall off LG agendas when they are politically less attractive or not profitable economically.”

Respondents’ views on corruption and favoritism were consistent with findings from a study by ACODE on Local Government Councils in Uganda (Tumushabe, et al 2010). The study concluded that, “corruption, unresponsiveness to the needs of the poor, and the inaccessibility and impenetrability of public institutions are the principal reasons for the growing disillusionment with local governments.” Manyak and Katono (2010) also maintain that decentralization in Uganda is affected by “increased fiscal constraints being placed on LG by politicians seeking to mollify the demands of citizens.” Similarly a former LC1 officer from Kampala commented,

“Many resources and goods from the Central Government intended for grassroots people never reached our offices. They were often hijacked at district or sub-county level and we often got to know about them after they were already allocated to supporters or diverted to families and associates.”

Other views from Kampala district on patronage under decentralization stated that,
• “LGs work for the NRM especially during elections, not for the people”,
• “Political intrigue increased and killed the transparency LG enjoyed at the beginning.”
• “We discussed real issues in public meetings when the system started, until leadership became an investment for politicians in government to rip the benefits all the time.”
• “Currently there is very little connection between what LGs do daily and attending to local interest, for the leaders it is all about political survival and of their parties.”

On the other hand, views from Jinja district seemed to appreciate re-centralization e.g. when the state recruits LG staff to work with locally elected LCs, despite shortcomings that tend to raise performance concerns within communities. Some of the views included the following:

“There is always a discussion between us and government through our technical staff all the time on how government can help our communities, and we often find our views being discussed in policy circles.”

An expert from Jinja also stated that:

“LC leaders are expected and work with technical staff to address
local priorities, including implementing government programs as required by policy. But tend to get limited by resources because our people are still very poor and this is why some of them remain frustrated.”

View from CLs included the following:

“The government renewed our glory and worked a lot to see the revival of the monarchy materialize.”

“Our people have to return the favor that government gave to support the revival of the monarchy including in local elections”.

A retired civil servant also asserted that,

“We have only been let down by self-interested leaders in the district because they seek to play politics and have not helped the monarchy generate income to become self reliant. Currently, the monarchy is not collecting any revenue from facilities like the football stadium and resources like land that Kakira Sugar Factory uses to grow sugar canes.”

The above views acknowledge that while group interests may remain unmet in Jinja, decentralization created the space for the state and citizens to interact through LGs in ways that the Basoga seem to appreciate. As explained earlier, part of this is because devolution restored for the Basoga what the centralized post-independence state
The preceding discussion recapitulates findings from the research on how decentralization can improve relationships between ethnic groups, and the state in Uganda. By examining perceptions and interactions between the Baganda in Kampala and Basoga in Jinja districts, and the state to achieve their interests, the study concluded that under particular conditions the system can improve relationships in some ethnic groups but not in others. These conditions manifest in four different ways as summarized in the next chapter. The chapter ends with recommendations on how the system can be re-imagined to also improve on relationships as a necessary condition to increase effectiveness in managing conflicts.
8.1. Conclusions

Power sharing is imagined by consociation and integrative theories to manage conflicts in ethnically divided societies. This comparative case study determined that devolution improved relationships between the Basoga and the state and managed associated conflicts in the region, including access to political power by the Basoga. But the system did not produce the same results in Buganda, where the history of Baganda’s participation in state formation produced claims of entitlement to power and status, which decentralization is not designed to meet. Historical processes of constructing group identities also produced unique group interests over state power and control of land in Buganda, as a resource and part of Baganda identity. Frustration from failure of the system to restore such power and control to Baganda influence demands for more autonomy for self-rule in the region, different from what is provided to LGs in the decentralization policy framework. Frustration is reinforced by the overwhelming influence of LGs on local communities, that they politically control and influence through funding, staffing, and local program implemented on behalf of the state.
Saunders (1999:77) maintains that power may stem from the connectedness between issues and groups. The performance of LGs can also be understood as a connection between groups and the issues they want to address. Poor performance, including failure to effectively deliver services to fight poverty and other problems, generates frustration among the Basoga. But LGs or the state are not perceived to threaten identity and cultural interests of the Basoga. This is largely because historical processes that established Busoga Kindgom produced a Basoga identity whose salience, status, strength and the opportunities it provides to members remain reliant on state power.

The evolution of Busoga chiefdoms into a Kingdom favored establishment of LG zones, where communities in electoral constituencies also exist in close lineage as clans and family members. In such communities, existing traditional authorities were reinforced with political authority through decentralization, which made them more influential and strengthened the Kabazinga. Here, political and other forms of influence by the state are perceived to make local communities stronger and their leaders more influential on issues of culture and identity, despite competition for political power among elites and groups. Thus state influence increases when elected local leaders are also the traditionally elected local chiefs, moreover by the same communities.
Sisk (1996) states that because power-sharing is based on elite coalescence and inter-group guarantees, it is inherently limited as a system of deterrence. This study confirmed that in the context of decentralization, election of local leaders and participation of local communities in LG can help to satisfy cultural and identity interests over power and resources in some groups but not in all groups. For example, as Sisk claims, in Jinja devolution seemed to guarantee the political and cultural interests of the Basoga, and elites elected as political leaders also reinforced the status and roles of Kabazingaship in general.

This was not the case in Kampala district, where election of local political leaders did not alleviate threats to identity and cultural interests of the group, and did not improve perceptions towards the state or decentralization as a policy. Instead the influence of “uncontested” authority of CLs endures, perceived by local communities to be more honest to culture and identity interests that LGs or the state. This is in spite of the irresistible influence LGs over the same local communities.

Accordingly, sharing of state power through political participation and representation of a local community in LG may have nothing to do with satisfying deep-rooted identity and cultural interests of ethnic groups over power and resources. Instead conflicts persist, especially when actors in the system are
unable to collectively affirm that devolution functions to meet vital interests of the local people. Such affirmation is necessary to improve perceptions and interactions between members of ethnic groups in local communities and LGs or the state. Particular conclusions from the study included the following:

8.2. Understanding decentralization

Local people do not have a one-dimensional way of understanding decentralization i.e. as devolution, decongestion or delegation of state power. Different historical experiences, including how each group participated in processes of state formation, during which group identities and cultural expressions over power and resources were constructed, shape how the each group understands and relate with LGs and the state. According to respondents, on one hand the system is understood in comparison with experiences and events that marked pre and post independence governments. These were marked by governments that controlled all affairs of communities and the state through centralized systems that evidently privileged some ethnic groups over others. Such histories and systems favored Buganda and produced unique demands over resources and claims of entitlement to different forms of power than what devolution provides through LGs.

On the other hand the system is understood to be similar to traditional structures
of tribal authority. In Buganda LG were perceived duplicated from the administrative structure of the monarchy, institutionalized through LGs in which citizens participate, that the state influences to draw and gain control over communities and local resources. Saunders (1999:76) argues that power should be thought of as “the capacity to change the course of events.” From this view, decentralizing state power is not perceived to have changed Buganda’s experiences since 1966. Instead the state used the system to highjack Baganda’s authority to manage their affairs including control local resources. However in Busoga, election of local leaders into LG structures was perceived consistent with local traditional and reinforces traditional authority over their territories with political power sanctioned by the state.

8.3. Decentralization and relationships.

The study revealed four dimensions in which devolution can or fails to improve relationships between the Baganda and Basoga ethnic groups and the state in Uganda, demonstrated in the matrix below. This finding discards the traditional view that relationships can only be explained as simply positive or negative. The matrix requires further research in other regions of Uganda including, for example, Bunyoro, Toro and Ankole, to become more conclusive. It however helps to reveals conditions under which the system can or fails to improve relationships in conflict situations. The dimensions are: Positive (P^{+ve}), Non-
positive ($NP^{+ve}$), Negative ($N^{-ve}$) and Non-negative ($NN^{-ve}$). As an analytical concept therefore, the study further demonstrates that “relationships” are more intricate and complex than commonly perceived in conflict situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethic Group</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$P^{+ve}$</td>
<td>Relationships are positive when devolution is perceived to function to fulfill broad interests of the state and ethnic groups, including cultural and identity interests over power and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$NP^{+ve}$</td>
<td>Relationships are non-positive when devolution is perceived to function to deliver services, but ethnic groups still perceive their cultural and identity interests over power and resources threatened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$NN^{-ve}$</td>
<td>Relationships are non-negative when the way devolution functions frustrates ethnic groups, but is perceived not to threaten their culture and identity interests over power and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$N^{-ve}$</td>
<td>Relationships are negative when devolution frustrates ethnic groups during service delivery, but is also perceived to threaten their culture and identity interests over power and resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher

**Figure 24. Relationship Matrix**

### 8.3.1 Positive Relationships

Relationships are positive when devolution is perceived to function to fulfill broad interests of the state and vital interests of ethnic groups over power and resources. This includes reinforcing the power and authority of traditional authorities to meet cultural and identity needs of their members. Expanding the scope of government and increased citizen participation of citizens in LGs to
make decisions about service delivery also reinforces culture and identity interests of the group. Tajfel (1982) sums up this view and states that status differences are one of the reflections of differences in power: differences in power are one of the determinants of relative status; and sometimes, when status confers power, the relationships may improve.

In Busoga for example, devolution restored the power and authority of local leaders, which centralization of state power between 1966 and 1993 had taken away. The LG system is consistent with the traditional chieftaincy system in the region and reinforces lineage among members in LC zones, where especially in rural areas majority of families in a zone are often related. The power and influence of leaders in these chiefly communities are also reinforced with political power when they are elected to fulfill devolved functions of the state from village to district levels.

The LG practice to elect leaders is consistent with traditions of the Basoga where chiefs are elected and not appointed, including the Kyabazinga or King of Busoga. As local communities participate in LG to elect leaders, devolution is perceived to reinforce traditions of the Basoga, while also according elected leaders a share of state power that enables them to connect with communities to deliver services to meet local needs. This is in spite of weaknesses in capacity
and inadequate financial resources, which is attributed to leaders themselves and not perceived as an agenda by the state to undermine Busoga.

8.3.2 Non-Positive (NP\textsuperscript{+ve}) relationships

Relationships are non-positive when devolution is perceived to function to deliver services, but ethnic groups continue to perceive the system and state to threaten their status, cultural and identity interests over power and resources. Threats in this case involve undermining perceived entitlement to status, power and authority of traditional authorities and their members to meet group interests, including control local resources. For example, majority of the Baganda overwhelmingly participate and interact with LGs to, for example, solve their problems or elect local leaders. However unlike in Busoga, the Baganda perceive the mandate of devolution does not give adequate authority and autonomy to LGs enable the group achieve \textit{Ebyaffe}. The LG structure is modeled like the traditional structure of Buganda Kingdom, but competes with traditional authorities in Buganda as both systems deliver different forms of services to the same communities. Devolution is also perceived to undermine traditional authorities when it shifts services previously offered by CLs to LGs, including collection of taxes, resolving local disputes, and control of land.
Inadequate authority and autonomy of LGs to engage the state over Ebyaffe exacerbates the threat, which manifests through recentralization of decentralized functions of LG e.g. appointment of key LG staff in each district by the state. These ensure that tax collection, control of land, allocation and application of financial grants to deliver services, are consistent with political and development goals of the state. This condition accounts for the threats, negative perceptions, and unfavorable estimation of how the system shares state power with local people to meet their needs, despite enabling overwhelming participation of Baganda in LGs.

8.3.3 Non-negative (NN⁻) Relationships

Relationships are non-negative with the state when the way devolution functions frustrates ethnic groups e.g. failure to address poverty or poor delivery of services, but is perceived not to threaten culture and identity interests over power and resources. In Buganda and Busoga, many respondents indicated LGs have inadequate authority and autonomy to make decisions about local priorities, perceive the state to be the biggest beneficiary from decentralization, and both groups also experience high levels of poverty and poor service delivery by LGs.
However in Busoga these experiences were not perceived as threatening to the culture and identity needs of the Basoga, and respondents did not direct their frustration towards the state. Instead they attributed it to their leaders for lack of capacity and choosing to play politics instead of serving the people. Therefore frustration with how the system functions may have nothing to do with threatening the cultural or identity interests of the ethnic group in Busoga.

8.3.4 Negative (N°) Relationships

Relationships are negative when devolution frustrates ethnic groups during service delivery, but is also perceived to threaten their culture and identity interests over power and resources. For example in Buganda, locally elected leaders understand culture and identity needs and concerns of the Baganda because they are members of the ethnic group. But LGs are perceived to have inadequate authority and mandate to engage the state or to directly respond to the groups’ demand for Ebyaffe. The clash between LC leaders elected by communities and administrators appointed by the state contributes to negative perceptions of the system, especially when these conflicts among system implementers are also marked by corruption, favoritisms and political influence from the state.
Interests of traditional authorities and LGs are also perceived to be in competition, with contradicting traditional and state-centric approaches to achieve them. This finding defies Horowitz (1985) view, that inter-ethnic cooperation is more likely where intra-ethnic competition is present. He argues that during intra-ethnic competition, links may be easier to forge between portions of groups that are cohesive than between groups that are undivided. However in Buganda, intra-ethnic competition between LG and traditional authorities, both from and serving the same communities, presents multiple management, electoral, resource and political challenges. These undermine chances for collaboration between the parallel authorities to serve political, identity and cultural interests of local people.

8.4 Re-imagining decentralization

The study determined that structures through which state power is decentralized benefit the state by expanding the reach of government and citizens through electing local leaders and participation in decision-making over local priorities. But in ethnically divided societies, the system can improve relationships by addressing grievances over power and resources between the state and some but not all ethnic groups.
According to the matrix above, the $P^{+ve}$ dimension is consistent with the overall assumptions of, especially, consociation and integrative theories. However conditions where relationships are $NP^{+ve}$ and $NN^{-ve}$ indicate areas that practitioners and policymakers can begin to re-imagine the system. Re-margining in this case concerns addressing the structural violence that makes the system dysfunctional or threaten cultural and identity interests of ethnic groups over power and control of resources. In this way the system will become more effective and improve relationships in conflict situations.

This approach is consistent with Galtung’s (1969:185) expanded view of ‘peace’ that seeks to achieve the absence of both direct and indirect violence, to address SV. In the context of this study absence of direct violence is marked by improved interactions, and absence of indirect violence is marked by perceptions that the system is honest to social justice. To achieve this, $NP^{+ve}$ improvement require that devolution and associated structures are accommodative and responsive to local power and resource interests that make ethnic groups demand for unique forms of autonomy. Including, for example, expanding the authority and mandate of LGs to integrate TLs as alternative forms of authority that also participate in decision-making processes to complement implementation of decentralization. As Galtung (1969:186) argues, this is a dissociative nonviolence approach that allows parties the necessary authority that caters for their own identities.
On the other hand, NN⁻ve improvement require system-wide reforms to ensure the system generally functions more effectively in delivering services to respond to concerns e.g. poverty, despite absence of threats to culture and identity. Galtung argues further that such associative nonviolence approaches can serve to bring parties, in this case ethnic groups and the state, together when a basis for equal non-exploitative partnership exists. On the other hand N⁻ve improvement indicates major limitations that any system would experience, that can continue to be addressed as systems and structures are improved to become more effective.

According to Lijphart (1999), the central question to any forms of power-sharing is whose interests should government be responsive to when people disagree or have divergent preferences? This study argues that by re-imagining power-sharing through decentralization, as explained above, will be more responsive in delivering services and improve perceptions between ethnic groups and the state as they interact to achieve their interest. Re-imagining will, for example, maximize implementation, create opportunities to level-off disparities in power and control of resources between LGs and traditional authorities, and reduce the problem of dual authorities.
At a social identity level, as Stets and Burke (2000) argue, such gains will substitute the self-esteem motive of the group, with other motives including a self-efficacy motive, an uncertainty reduction motive, and a self-regulation motive. They maintain that these motives can be brought into play to depersonalize an active (salient) identity, where behaviors become more deliberately self regulated because it is attended to. Under such conditions, group members will act to match their behavior to the standards relevant to the social order, in this case as an outcome of improved perceptions and interactions between the group and the state.

8.5. Recommendations

The study recommends that NP^ve and NN^ve dimensions are appropriate to begin to re-imagine decentralization. The following recommendations combine associative and dissociative approaches, as explained above, to suggest more ways practitioners and policy makers can implement to improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state towards more effective decentralization in conflict situations.

8.5.1 Flexible LG mandate.

Saunders (1999:77) argues that, sufficient sources of power and authority reside in the bond of civic associations and commitments of mutual support in achieving
common purposes.” To enable devolution offer particular services that are critical to particular regions, LGs require a flexible mandate to be able to integrate traditional authorities to collaborate responses to unique local interest where they exist. In such regions, like Buganda, LG can maximize implementation and effectiveness of decentralization by responding to vital interests of ethnic groups and broad interests of the state. A flexible mandate will also alleviate the dichotomy of dominance against tolerance that manifest during devolution of state power (Schwartz and Anat 2001). Currently the Baganda perceive domination by the state where the Basoga perceive security and collaboration with the state, which explains the hostility and tolerance in relations of the Baganda and Basoga towards the state, respectively.

Saunders (1999) maintains that the roots of power may often be relational than physical or judicial, where the capacity to accomplish goals does not depend only on action or government but various elements in the body politic. Similarly, respondents shared the view that LGs and traditional authorities are interdependent structures of power and control. LG policies and functions should conform to this reality to improve responsiveness of decentralization to the needs and interests of citizens that exist as communities of ethnic groups. An expert from Kampala stated that:

“Everyone knows that traditional authorities lead the same
communities that also elect LGs; working together will help unite communities around similar interests, whether cultural or political.”

A LCIII leader stated that:

“It would help if the work of both authorities was harmonized at policy and local levels, because in several ways none can be effective without the other.” He further added that, “it is in the interest of the state to see traditional authorities as partners, to help government expand its influence and improve the way LGs operates.”

A chief from Jinja also confirmed that:

“We have always worked better when we collaborate with government in our programs. It is appropriate to keep it that way, where we can consult and strengthen each other.”

8.5.2. De-politicization of decentralization

De-politicizing involves limiting political influences during devolution, which tends to favor government and strengthen political constituencies. This will create space that allows adequate autonomy of LGs to determine and respond to local priorities and interests. De-politicization is an incentive for ethnic and other groups to participate and explore how LGs can respond to vital interests at the local level, as well as those of the state. Such a relationship creates opportunities
for coordination and balance between strong decision-making by the state and tailored implementation by empowered local authorities at the local level.

8.5.3. Control of local resources

Control of local resources can be more effective if agendas of top (policy) and bottom (implementation) ends of devolution are perceived to be inclusive of the vital interests of local communities and responsive to cultural and identity needs of ethnic groups. Influence by the state to control local resources e.g. land and revenue collection, is always contested where traditional authorities exist and claim ancestral rights associated with such resources as a matter of security, culture and identity of the group. Control of such recourses by LGs, through policies developed exclusively by the state, generates negative evaluation of the power and security of ethnic groups (Tajfel 1982). LGs become evaluated with higher status of the state and CLs are evaluated with lower status when they lose authority over local resources. Inclusive agendas in this case involve catering for diverse interests of the state, LG, and traditional authorities, even if symbolically, in processes of ownership and control of local resources. This will improve the evaluation of especially traditional authorities, and will improve the quality of control of local resources when vital cultural and identity interests of ethnic groups are perceived balanced with those of the state.
8.5.4. Level-off disparities

Devolution should contain mechanisms that help to level off disparities in management capacities and revenue generation between new and old districts. Fiscal programs and resource allocation preferences of the state should contain distributive inducements (Rothchild 1997) that enhance choices and interests of LGs and the state simultaneously along preferred lines. On the other hand in Uganda, the increasing cost of decentralization undermines effectiveness of LGs, when units are multiplied to meet political interests of the state, without expanding revenue sources and other facilities to deliver desired services to local communities. The state allocates conditional grants to all districts to support LG program, but from revenue collected mostly from established districts like Kampala, which is also the most highly populated in the country. This creates perceptions of exploitation by the system and the state, reinforces grievances over entitlement to local resources, and justifies the demand for more autonomy by the Baganda.

8.5.5. Building local autonomy and capacity.

Local leaders should build their own resource and human capacities to respond to local priorities and interest, but after reduced impositions on LG administration and organization as part of recentralization efforts by the state. Pierre and Peters (2000) also state that such minimal interference by the state can trigger a race
that no individual can risk not to join. Local communities that exist as ethnic groups fail to trust or be honest to the state, and reduce participation in LGs when elected leaders lack the powers to determine and exercise autonomous authority to respond to local interests. As a consequence they find difficulty in influencing devolved functions of the state and services of LGs in their favor. Although the system allows greater participation of citizens in elections, favoritism and corruption undermine opportunities to build autonomous, honest and trusted leadership and managerial capacities to serve local interests.

8.5.6. LGs and CLs as dual authorities

CLs and LG authorities manage resources and serve the same communities, yet both lack substantive knowledge of or undermine each other’s status, role and the interests that each authority represents. Devolved functions of the state need to contain opportunities and incentives that promote collaboration, confidence building and substitutability between traditional and LG authorities in serving local communities. Deutsch (2000) states that substitutability, where a person’s actions can satisfy another person’s intentions, is central to the functioning of social institutions. He adds that unless activities of other people can substitute for yours, you cannot accept the activities of others in fulfilling your needs.

In the context of devolution, this includes ensuring that LG practices reflect norms
that revere value systems and beliefs, which define local people as members of their ethnic groups in each region. Variations in how some aspects of devolution may be implemented in each region, depending on local perceptions and interests, may not make the system contradictory but more effective and consistent in the communities it aims to serve. This is particularly because, like other developing countries, Uganda is among the ‘soft states’ – still low on legitimacy and deficient in the ability to implement policies on a countrywide basis (Rothchild, 1997).

Incentives to deal with the problem of dual authorities may include ensuring that the decentralization policy provides the institutional framework that reinforces roles and authority of LG and traditional authorities. Where both can collaborate and complement each other in aspects like management of land, allocation of local revenues and appointment of LG staff. Rothchild (1997) also argues that insofar as ethnic groups interact with other ethnic, economic, political, and social interest groups, they promote the salient interests of that membership. In this way negative perceptions associated with these devolved functions will become less threatening to the security, identity and self-representation of traditional authorities and their subjects.

According to Schwartz and Anat (2001), collaboration between LGs and CLs can help to balance “prosocial values that support equality” between actors within the
system and “hedonism values that produce selfish interests” of actors in the system. As Chayes (1995) further explains, such values interact in complex ways to describe acceptable, required or prohibited behaviors and actions, and can induce obedience, cooperation and legitimacy of the system. Chayes further argues that such values carry a moral compulsion, social pressure, and a sense that they ought to be followed; yet any diversion does not invalidate them. In this way the problem of dual authorities can be addressed, when value systems about leadership and autonomy of LGs, self-representation by the state and ethnic groups within system, and control of local resources, are perceived to be mutually reinforcing in serving local communities.

8.5.7. Advocacy

Members of ethnic groups model their behaviors on those of the monarchy or traditional authorities, and these tend to become hostile when they perceive threats to culture and identity from the state or LGs. On the other hand citizen participation in LG tends to be modeled by political party affiliations, and competition between parties generates hostile behaviors between competing individuals, groups and communities. Effective implementation of decentralization in such conditions requires LGs to adopt advocacy approaches that leverage responsiveness to local interests and concerns, in which the state is but a facilitator not the solution, and traditional authorities partner and don’t compete
with LGs, to serve their communities. As Oskamp (2000) affirms, such appeal to more general issues as opposed to attacking group-specific interests helps to construct more egalitarian systems that respect equal opportunities and a moral obligation to promote long term change.

In doing so, roles of traditional authorities should be standardized and institutionalized at different levels in the decentralization system. Appropriation of the functions of each authority under the system should maintain the expanded scope of government, service delivery and accountability as key features of LGs, while also improving positive self-evaluation, self-esteem, and self-representation of ethnic groups. For example, respondents proposed that local chiefs should have a consultative and supervisory role in the decentralization system. In areas where the jurisdiction of a local chief area extends beyond a LG zone or division, the authorities can appoint more chiefs to ensure their representation in decisions and activities of LCs at each LG level.

8.6 Areas for future research.

According to Deutsch (2000), the complexity theory assumes a chaotic, nonlinear, dynamic, and self-organization of phenomena that are unpredictable locally because of their complexity, but when viewed globally, are essential and stable. Similarly there is international preference to decentralize state power to
manage conflicts, without attention to how the system functions to improve relationships especially in post-election or post-civil war multi-ethnic societies. Horowitz (1985) has also cautioned that the supra-segmental sentiments that tie group members in Europe together are less inscriptive, less severe in intensity and less exclusive in their command of the loyalty of participants, compared to those in Africa. This study revealed more complexities and much unpredictability in how the system functions to improve relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda. This is in spite of having expanded the scope of government where LG deliver services across the country, and in which citizens as local communities of ethnic groups participate.

However the study did not establish how the above recommendations translate into meaningful sharing of state power by a range of political and other actors at the local or national levels. Instead it focused interests, perceptions and interactions between ethnic groups and the state, since particular ethnic groups dominate the regions where LGs function to implement decentralization. Each ethnic group has different identity and cultural interests and history, all of which influence claims and expectations of how the system should function to deliver services and meet local interests.

Findings also revealed the need for further research to become more conclusive on how the system can respond and improve unique perceptions and respond to
group-specific demands and interests in each region of Uganda. This might help to reveal policy shifts that are necessary to ensure that LG are more autonomous where they function, and more accountable to local communities than the state. Accountability in this case may also include the extent to which LGs interact with traditional authorizes to improve perceptions and respond to interests of ethnic groups.

Such research may indicate relational functions that LGs can fulfill to expand effectiveness of decentralization to deliver services and respond to vital interest of diverse groups in multi-party conditions and multi-ethnic societies. It will also make more information available to academicians, practitioners and policy makers from which to generalize relational functions decentralization can fulfill at different levels in ethnically divided societies. Such a study may further provide information to expand conceptual and operational definitions of key elements of decentralization e.g. scope of government to also include traditional authorities, citizen participation. To include participation of communities as ethnic groups, accountability to include responsiveness to claims of entitlement in LG zones and constituencies, and can develop the strategies necessary to fulfill these functions in conflict situations.
8.7. A finishing note

Lijphart (1969), Sisk (1996), Mehler (2008), Horowitz (1985), Bogaards (2006) and other scholars have made numerous recommendations on how to make power-sharing work in multi-ethnic societies, including creating a centrist core of moderates deeply and widely acceptable to conflicting parties to promote sharing of state power, redistributing resources or democratic constitutional reforms. Negative relationships between parties to the conflict and actors in power-sharing systems often protract beyond these arrangements, and like in Uganda, tend to escalate into a spiral of violence and other hostilities. This study sought to combine conflict analysis and resolution approaches with political science theories in a single problem-solving process. It also sought to engage the enduring problem of managing relationships during power-sharing processes to achieve more enduring stability in multi-ethnic post-conflict societies.

The study determined that decentralization as a power-sharing process and system of government can improve relationships under particular conditions in ethnically divided societies like Uganda. Traditional and LC authorities can complement each other in this process, when both are integrated in LC structures to improve self-representation of ethnic groups and responsiveness of LGs to local interests in electoral constituencies. Government should provide a conducive environment and traditional authorities and their members should
create the cultural space for such inter-dependence to be harnessed to improve implementation of decentralization.
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Buganda and Busoga Regions
Appendix 2

Power-Sharing Agreements in Africa 1999-2009

Source: Updated on the basis of Mehler 2009.
Appendix 3: Ethnicity and Citizenship in Kampala District

2002 Uganda Population and Housing Census

Kampala District Report

Table 8: Ethnicity of Ugandans or Citizenship of Non-Ugandans by Sex and Rural-Urban Distribution for the Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity or Citizenship</th>
<th>Rural Male</th>
<th>Rural Female</th>
<th>Rural Total</th>
<th>Urban Male</th>
<th>Urban Female</th>
<th>Urban Total</th>
<th>Total Male</th>
<th>Total Female</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ugandans by Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
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<td>23,323</td>
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<td>19,799</td>
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<td>9,084</td>
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<td>16,041</td>
<td>9,809</td>
<td>6,232</td>
<td>16,041</td>
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<td>7,355</td>
<td>15,802</td>
<td>8,447</td>
<td>7,355</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>7,759</td>
<td>13,291</td>
<td>5,532</td>
<td>7,759</td>
<td>13,291</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,725</td>
<td>5,120</td>
<td>10,845</td>
<td>5,725</td>
<td>5,120</td>
<td>10,845</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33,676</td>
<td>32,109</td>
<td>65,785</td>
<td>33,676</td>
<td>32,109</td>
<td>65,785</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Ugandans</td>
<td>549,234</td>
<td>691,725</td>
<td>1,240,959</td>
<td>549,234</td>
<td>691,725</td>
<td>1,240,959</td>
<td>549,234</td>
<td>691,725</td>
<td>1,240,959</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Non-Ugandans             |           |             |            |           |             |            |           |             |            |
| Kenya                    | 0         | 0           | 0          | 1,981     | 1,918       | 3,899      | 1,981     | 1,918       | 3,899      |
| Tanzania                 | 0         | 0           | 0          | 1,843     | 2,062       | 3,905      | 1,843     | 2,062       | 3,905      |
| Rwanda                   | 0         | 0           | 0          | 2,560     | 3,740       | 6,300      | 2,560     | 3,740       | 6,300      |
| Burundi                  | 0         | 0           | 0          | 450       | 429         | 869        | 450       | 429         | 869        |
| Sudan                    | 0         | 0           | 0          | 1,996     | 1,685       | 3,683      | 1,996     | 1,685       | 3,683      |
| DR of Congo              | 0         | 0           | 0          | 2,765     | 2,580       | 5,345      | 2,765     | 2,580       | 5,345      |
| Other Africa             | 0         | 0           | 0          | 1,500     | 1,229       | 2,729      | 1,500     | 1,229       | 2,729      |
| Outside Africa           | 0         | 0           | 0          | 4,640     | 3,371       | 8,011      | 4,640     | 3,371       | 8,011      |
| Non-Ugandan not stated   | 0         | 0           | 0          | 1,135     | 945         | 2,080      | 1,135     | 945         | 2,080      |
| All Non-Ugandans         | 18,877    | 17,959      | 36,836     | 18,877    | 17,959      | 36,836     | 18,877    | 17,959      | 36,836     |

Total                     | 569,111   | 619,684     | 1,188,795  | 569,111   | 619,684     | 1,188,795  | 569,111   | 619,684     | 1,188,795  |
Appendix 4: Ethnicity and Citizenship in Jinja District

2002 Uganda Population and Housing Census  
Jinja District Report

Table 8: Ethnicity of Ugandans or Citizenship of Non Ugandans by Sex and Rural-Urban Distribution for the Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity or Citizenship</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
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<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugandans by Ethnicity</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>9,622</td>
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<td>Iteso</td>
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<td>904</td>
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<td>294</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>364</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Ugandan not stated</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>273</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,038</td>
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<td>1,983</td>
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<td>2,305</td>
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</table>

Total                     | 147,223 | 154,612 | 301,835 | 42,883 | 42,531 | 85,414 | 190,106 | 197,143 | 397,249 |

*This table excludes population enumerated in hotels.*
Appendix 5

MAP OF KAMPALA DISTRICT SHOWING POPULATION DENSITY BY SUB COUNTY
Appendix 6

MAP OF JINJA DISTRICT SHOWING POPULATION DENSITY BY SUB COUNTY

Population Density
Persons per Sq km
- 257 - 353
- 354 - 487
- 488 - 638
- 639 - 1575
- 1576 - 2325
- Water Bodies

0 5 10 15 Kilometers
Appendix 7.
CRM Key Performance Indicators for Political Decentralisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Performance Indicator</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of councils adhering to established standards</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% citizens satisfied with local council performance</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of LGs that are followed up on 70% of their audit queries</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Ministry of Local Government (August 2010)
Appendix 8.
Key Performance Indicators for Administrative Decentralisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Performance Indicators</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of planned LGSIP policy actions completed</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% new structures in MOLG and LGFC filled</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>72% 77% 77% 79% of MoLG and 72% of LGFC structures filled. The combined average is 77%. MoLG had 130 persons in post against 164 established positions. LGFC had 38 in post against 53 established positions. The remaining 34 posts in MoLG have been declared to the PSC to be filled next FY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of higher Local Govt with new structures operational</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>70% 48% 48% of the HLGs have strategic and key posts filled and operational. This percentage varies between the rural and urban councils with the rural at 47% and urban at 73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of HLG, CB plans that meet National Assessment Criteria</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100% 95% The percentage of HLG capacity building plans that meet the national assessment criteria fell from 97% in 2008/09 to 95% in FY 2009/10. The decline is attributed to the appointment of a number of competent Principal Personnel Officers to the posts of CAOs and D/CAOs leaving their offices to less competent personnel officers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Ministry of Local Government (August 2010)
## Appendix 9.
### Key Performance Indicators for Administrative Decentralisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators Fiscal Decentralization</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
<th>Comment on the 2009/10 achievements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of LGs producing timely Final Accounts</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>95% 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of fiscal transfers allocated to non-wage recurrent budget</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28% 21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of fiscal transfers that are conditional and earmarked</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>70% 80.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% LLGs audited within the statutory period.</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Audit of all urban councils was done within the statutory period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Districts / Municipalities with functional Contracts Comm</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100% 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: The Ministry of Local Government (August 2010)*
Appendix 10
Research Instruments

Recruitment Letter for Potential Interviewees

Date:________________________

Dear Mr. / Mrs. _________________________________________

My name is Ashad SENTONGO, a PhD candidate at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR) at George Mason University in the United States. I am conducting research to understand how decentralization influences relationships between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda. As a member of the community, I would like to invite you to participate in an interview for me to learn about your views on this subject.

Your participation and that of others is completely voluntary, and there are no consequences if you decline this invitation or decide not to participate. If you accept to participate, the interview may take approximately one hour. I will personally conduct the interview and will request you to answer some questions. All answers and the views you will share with me will be handled with strict confidence.

I thank you.
Sincerely,

Ashad SENTONGO
PhD Candidate, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR)
George Mason University.
Interview Script

Interviewee code:_________________

Date of interview: ___/___/____ District: ___________ Male______ Female____

Political leadership
1. In case of a problem or issue in your local area, would you seek help from the local government_____ Traditional authority_________ Both _____ or unsure ___

Scope of government.
1. In your view, how much authority and autonomy members of your group have under decentralization to: -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Complete</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make-decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set and collect taxes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control local resources e.g. Land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocation of local resources</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivery of local social services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold local leaders to account</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local dispute resolution</td>
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</table>

Citizen participation
1. In your view, how much authority and autonomy members of your group have under decentralization to: -

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Complete</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determine their leaders</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Set local priorities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set rules and regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence LC actions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion: Whom do you consider to benefit most from decentralization? The central government_____Political leaders_____Community members_____Unsure ___
INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWS

The following information is being presented to help you decide whether or not you want to take part in this research project. Please read this document carefully.

TITLE OF STUDY: Re-imagining decentralization: transformation of relationships between ethnic groups and the state.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR/CO-INVESTIGATOR-STUDENT RESEARCHER:
Professor Terrence Lyons/Ashad SENTONGO

STUDY LOCATION: Institute of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, Arlington, Virginia – USA. The field research will be conducted in Uganda.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES: This research is being conducted for me to understand how decentralization influences the relationship between ethnic groups and the state in Uganda. This interview will be tape-recorded. If you agree to participate, you will be interviewed for about 1 hour.

RISKS: There are no risks to participating in this study.

BENEFITS: You will not directly benefit from participating in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All personal information will be kept confidential. The views you share on this subject matter, together with data collected from other participants and other sources will be analyzed, and the results of this research will be published. Your name will not be included in the publication. This research data will be stored safely under lock during and after the research.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason. If you decide not to participate or if you withdraw from the study, there is no penalty or loss of benefits. You will not be paid for your participation. There are no costs to you or any other party.

CONTACT: Ashad SENTONGO, Ph.D. Candidate, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, is conducting this research. He may be contacted at 001-571-332-6532, or asentong@gmu.edu, or 3401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 4D3, Arlington, VA 22201. The ICAR faculty advisor for this research is Prof. Terrence Lyons and he may be reached at tlyons1@gmu.edu; or 3401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 4D3, Arlington, VA, 22201. You may contact the George Mason University Office of Research Subject Protections at 001-703-993-4121; or 4400 University Dr., MS 4C6, Fairfax, VA USA 22030; or hsrb@gmu.edu if you have questions or comments regarding your rights as a participant in the research.

This research has been reviewed according to George Mason University procedures governing your participation in this research.

CONSENT: I have read this form and agree to participate in this study.

Sign:__________________ Date:___________________________
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