**Investigating Causes of Ethnic Identification and Mobilization in Oil-Rich Regions:**

**Ethnicity, Birthplace, and Revenue Sharing in Bunyoro, Uganda**

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*Investigating Causes of Political Preference in Oil-Rich Regions: Ethnicity, Birthplace, and Revenue Sharing in Bunyoro, Uganda*

**Abstract**

Disputes over oil often relate to ethnicity, with rebels and community groups claiming to represent minorities denied control over resources found in their homeland. What factors inspire support for ethnic control over oil rents? Uganda, which recently discovered oil in an area dominated by an ethnic minority, provides a test case for theories about ethnic mobilization. I surveyed residents in Hoima, an oil-rich district, and found that many variables cited in the ethnic conflict literature (such as social views and proximity to oil) did not account for variation in residents’ preferences for or against a revenue sharing agreement with the local tribal kingdom. Birthplace was the strongest predictor of preferences. This suggests that birthplace may be an important identity marker, limiting individuals’ ability to adopt new identities. This finding has implications for constructivist, especially rational choice, accounts of ethnic identification and mobilization.

**INTRODUCTION**

What factors inspire support for ethnic control over oil rents? Less ambitiously, why do some residents of oil-producing areas agitate for a tribal share of resource revenues while others accept central government control? These questions guide this study, a survey of the drivers of support for tribal control of oil rent in western Uganda—to my knowledge, the first of its kind. I use Uganda, where oil was recently found in the territory of a minority tribe, as a test case for prevailing hypotheses about the causes of ethnic and resource conflict. In early 2006, Tullow Oil[[1]](#footnote-1) confirmed the discovery of commercial level petroleum reserves in sites along the banks of Lake Albert in western Uganda. Since then, estimates of Uganda’s total reserves have climbed from 1 to 2.4 billion barrels of oil,[[2]](#footnote-2) which could make Uganda one of the world’s top fifty oil exporters once production starts[[3]](#footnote-3) and potentially double or triple the country’s export earnings.[[4]](#footnote-4) In a 2012 interview, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni predicted that oil exports would put Uganda’s economy on a par with that of Nigeria in twenty years.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Many Ugandan commentators fear that the comparison to Nigeria may be only too apt. According to some groups, oil production in Uganda risks unleashing the ethnic violence experienced in the Niger Delta, which has seen waves of tribal secessionism since oil exploitation began in the 1950’s.[[6]](#footnote-6) These fears are not unfounded. There is strong support in the literature for the idea that oil can precipitate ethnic conflict and secessionism, whether by activating long-standing grievances or by providing opportunities for plunder.[[7]](#footnote-7) Bunyoro is of interest as a case study for the literature on ethnic identification and mobilization, and because of the consequences unrest would have for East African security.

Lake Albert falls within the Bunyoro subregion (akin to a province), which shares many characteristics with other oil-producing regions that have seen conflict. Bunyoro subregion, a political unit, occupies the same geographic area as Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom, [[8]](#footnote-8) a traditional tribal polity whose king, Omukama Solomon Iguru, could present an alternative to state leadership. The area’s dominant ethnic group, the Banyoro,[[9]](#footnote-9) lost much of its wealth and political power attempting to resist conquest by the British and their colonial era allies, the Baganda.[[10]](#footnote-10) The creation of Uganda transformed the kingdom from a regional power to a minority enclave within a larger state.[[11]](#footnote-11) The Banyoro have historical grievances with the state and Uganda has a history of violent tribal politics, which could augur for future ethnic violence.[[12]](#footnote-12) The area is also poor, largely rural, and has high youth unemployment, all risk factors associated with insurgency. Lake Albert straddles the Congolese border, further increasing the potential for instability: Eastern Congo is in perpetual crisis,[[13]](#footnote-13) and clashes between Congolese and Ugandans on Lake Albert have increased since oil was discovered.[[14]](#footnote-14)

***Overview of Study and Findings***

Whether and how oil is politicized in Bunyoro impacts regional security, Ugandan unity, and local quality of life. Uganda is still in the pre-production phase of oil development—wildcatter exploration has confirmed major oil reserves, but extraction has not yet begun—making predictions about future rebellion conjecture. However, the pre-production phase does afford researchers a unique chance to measure support for tribal control of oil before production. This helps us understand when and how natural resources become politicized along ethnic lines, a precondition for ethnic conflict. It also has implications for the debate in the literature about whether rebel groups are motivated by grievance or greed. My study addresses the question: what drives support for tribal control over oil resources?

To answer this question, I surveyed nearly 200 Banyoro in three communities in Hoima District, where oil has been found: a village located near the oil exploration sites that is the proposed site of an oil refinery, an otherwise similar village located further away from the oil sites, and the regional center, Hoima Town. In my survey, I asked about respondents’ preferences regarding a proposed revenue sharing agreement between Uganda and Bunyoro Kingdom and about hypothesized drivers of this preference (demographic factors, geographic location, social views, expectations of personal benefit or harm from oil, and connections to tribal and government elites).

I included the following independent variables in my analysis: age, gender, education, occupation, birthplace, residence near an oil exploration site, and residence in an urban environment. I analyzed a set of eleven outcome variables: willingness to marry outside the tribe; preference that children learn the local language; having consulted a tribal leader about a personal problem; having consulted with a government leader; expectation of being benefitted by oil development; expectation of being harmed; preference for a revenue sharing agreement; desire to see that agreement benefit all Bunyoro, only Hoima District, or only displaced persons; and desire to see that agreement benefit only co-ethnics.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Surprisingly, I found that in contrast to much of the literature, proximity to oil, social views, expectations of benefit or harm, and measures of contact with and trust in elites did not predict the political preferences of those surveyed. Rather, personal demographic factors predict both political preferences and social values. My most significant finding is that birthplace, a factor named in none of the studies in my literature review, strongly affected both political preferences *and* the social and elite contact variables which other theories claim affect political preferences. As compared to those born outside of Bunyoro, respondents born in Hoima District were more likely to believe that Bunyoro Kingdom should receive a share of oil revenues, as were those born in Bunyoro districts other than Hoima. Respondents born in Hoima were also more likely than those born outside Bunyoro to disapprove of intermarriage and to have consulted with tribal leaders.

More research must be done before the importance of birthplace can be fully understood. One possible explanation is that those born outside of Bunyoro have greater ties to other areas in Uganda, and prefer that the country as a whole benefit from oil. I also draw upon a small number of studies about birthplace and citizenship claims to suggest, however, that birthplace may affect the perceived credibility of a person’s asserted ethnic identity. People born outside of Hoima District may believe that their claims to be “truly” Banyoro are weak and therefore prefer that tribal authorities do not have a role in allocating oil rents.

My findings should be of interest to political scientists for a few reasons. First, because they contradict some of the dominant theories of ethnic identification and mobilization in the literature. That place of birth shapes social views and political preferences more than place of residence suggests that firm rational choice theories may overstate the mutability of identity. Second, whereas most studies of oil conflict hypothesize about causes after violence has erupted, this survey provided a rare opportunity to measure the political salience of ethnic identity in the pre-production phase of oil development. Young underemployed men form the backbone of rebel movements in many resource conflicts, yet I found that occupation was not an important predictor of political preferences. This finding suggests that underemployed men are not inherently more radical than the rest of the population. Third, the Ugandan press has mainly reported the positions of regional tribal leaders and national-level politicians on issues like revenue allocation, and this survey gives insight into the political views of everyday Banyoro. To this end, my study may also allow us to estimate how much influence the public positions of local tribal leaders and national politicians have on public opinion in Bunyoro.

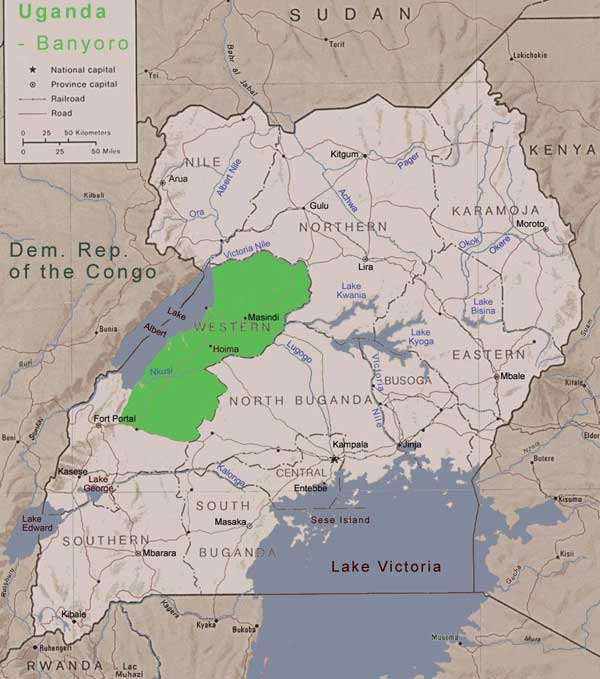
**BACKGROUND**

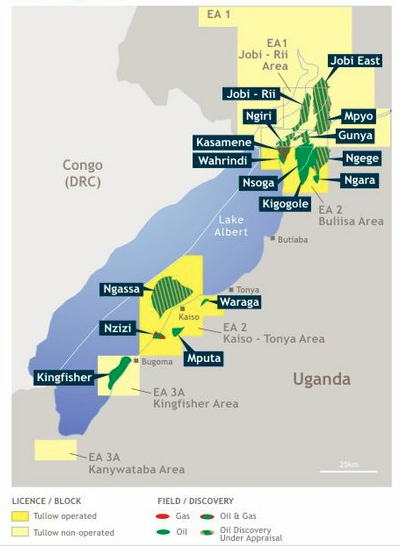
***Oil Exploration in Uganda***

Ugandan oil exploration is concentrated in the Albertine Rift, the fault line that runs through Lake Albert and demarcates the Congolese-Ugandan border. Reports of oil seepages in this area date to the British colonial period, though serious attempts at exploration did not begin until the 1990’s.[[16]](#footnote-16) In 2006, oil was discovered in commercial quantities in Uganda. The active oil exploration sites are located in Hoima and Buliisa Districts, both within the Bunyoro subregion (see Figure 1, Bunyoro, and Figure 2, a Tullow Oil map of licensed blocks).

*Figure 1: Bunyoro Sub-Region and Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom, Uganda. Source: Crossed Crocodiles.*

Source:





*Figure 2: Oil Exploration Sites in Western Uganda. Source: Tullow Oil.*

Progress toward full-scale oil extraction has been delayed, however, by apparently contentious negotiations between oil companies and the Ugandan government, lengthy legislative debates, and a series of corruption scandals. I offer an overview of the progress of oil exploration and criticisms of the government’s handling of it both as background and to suggest that many Ugandans suspect that oil development is being mismanaged. This is relevant to my study insofar as perceptions of a lack of government accountability may inform preferences regarding the distribution of oil revenues.

Internationally, the Ugandan government’s ongoing legal battles with two oil companies, Heritage Oil and Tullow Oil, are the best known of these disputes.[[17]](#footnote-17) Parliamentary debates and bribery scandals are of greater domestic political consequence. As Richard Vokes writes in his analysis of Uganda oil development, “President Museveni has faced growing criticism over his autocratic handling of oil issues, and the secrecy with which he and his inner circle have surrounded their dealings.”[[18]](#footnote-18) New regulations have garnered particularly widespread disapproval. The 2012 Oil and Gas Management Policy grants Ugandan government ministries great control over the oil industry, with no independent body to oversee their activities.[[19]](#footnote-19) The government has not been forthcoming about pre-production payments from oil companies. [[20]](#footnote-20) It has employed a private security company in which President Museveni’s brother has a major stake to guard oil wells, further raising speculation of corruption.[[21]](#footnote-21)

The government has also restricted access to oil exploration sites and certain neighboring villages. There are reports of roadblocks on the way to certain oil exploration sites, and researchers now need special permits to conduct fieldwork near the oilrigs, generating further suspicion.[[22]](#footnote-22) Henry Bazira, a prominent civil society leader and Chairman of the Civil Society Coalition for Oil, claims that government security forces “are making it hard to access the area and hinder[ing] the public’s oversight function.”[[23]](#footnote-23)

The government has been criticized as well for its handling of security issues along the Congolese border. In 2007, Ugandan and Congolese soldiers exchanged fire several times in and around Lake Albert, resulting in the deaths of Congolese soldiers, Ugandan civilians, and an engineer working for Heritage Oil.[[24]](#footnote-24) These incidents have increased tensions at the border, as has the government’s construction of a new military base in Kyangwali, Hoima District.[[25]](#footnote-25) This latter development has been variously interpreted as an attempt to forestall future instability in Hoima (due either to local rebels or to incursions by other states, a fear that has been expressed in the Ugandan press) and as “‘cover’ for establishing direct control over the oilfields themselves.”[[26]](#footnote-26) Despite these issues, plans to extract oil are moving forward: the government has announced its intention to build a refinery in Kabaale, Hoima District and that oil production may begin in 2017.[[27]](#footnote-27) Regardless, the existence of such suspicion in the media demonstrates the extent to which oil development is already politically sensitive in Uganda.

Discussion in the Ugandan press of how to distribute oil revenues is further evidence of the attention oil development is receiving in the country and the degree to which oil issues have been politicized. One of the most heated public debates has been about whether or not oil-producing areas should receive a separate share of oil revenues, and if so, how much and to which local body. Local people have demanded a share of oil rents as compensation for likely environmental and social costs relating to oil development (not to mention land dispossession, a major concern for civil society groups).[[28]](#footnote-28) These demands have already led to protests: in 2011, residents of Buliisa blocked the road between an oil well and Tullow Oil’s camp, and in 2012 the roads leading to Kibaale were blocked.[[29]](#footnote-29)

The government initially avoided discussion of a local share of revenues. Last year’s Oil and Gas Management Policy allocated 7% of royalties to local governments in oil-producing areas, perhaps in response to political pressure.[[30]](#footnote-30) Notably, the Policy does not reserve a share of revenues for Bunyoro Kingdom, though Iguru has repeatedly called for the kingdom to receive 10-12.5% of royalty revenue.[[31]](#footnote-31) This issue risks pitting the government against traditional tribal authorities, who retain a local political role despite their designation by the government as purely “cultural institutions.”[[32]](#footnote-32)

***Tribal Politics in Uganda***

Uganda has a history of (often violent) tribal politics. This does not necessarily augur ill for Bunyoro—other social factors affect Ugandan politics and may moderate the influence of tribe, and Museveni has consciously deemphasized tribal divisions since taking power in 1986. Understanding when and how tribal differences have mattered in Ugandan politics, however, affects our appreciation of how important tribal identity may prove to be in Bunyoro as oil development continues. Ugandan tribal politics also grounds my interpretation of findings related to the influence of contact with tribal elites on political preferences, discussed later.

The British Protectorate of Uganda, established in 1894, bound 63 different language groups, at least 200 distinct political entities, and four major tribal kingdoms into a single administrative unit.[[33]](#footnote-33) British control was achieved with the assistance of the Baganda, now the largest tribe in the country and then a powerful regional kingdom, in military campaigns against rival kingdoms.[[34]](#footnote-34) The British established the Baganda as the country’s bureaucratic class, and much of pre-independence Ugandan politics consisted of power struggles between the Baganda, their allies, and other groups.[[35]](#footnote-35) Though this is a simplified explanation, Ugandan tribes were more or less divided between historically disadvantaged northern tribes (and their western allies, including the Banyoro) and southern tribes serving in bureaucratic posts (and their eastern allies).[[36]](#footnote-36)

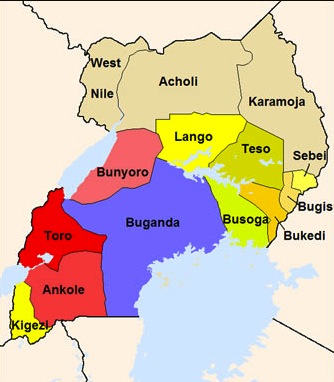
Following independence in 1962, power was quickly taken by northerners who retaliated against years of southern political dominance. Presidents Milton Obote and Idi Amin elevated their Langi and West Nilotic co-ethnics, respectively, to positions of authority and targeted other ethnic groups (often Baganda).[[37]](#footnote-37) In this unstable environment, conflict also emerged amongst other tribes. Banyoro and Baganda, for example, clashed over disputed territory in the 1960’s, resulting in a spate of ethnically motivated murders.[[38]](#footnote-38)

The salience of tribe and region in Ugandan politics has abated under the Presidency of Yoweri Museveni, a Munyankole[[39]](#footnote-39) from southwestern Uganda. Tribal leaders are weaker political actors today than they were at independence: the Ugandan constitution mandates that “a traditional leader…shall not have or exercise any administrative, legislative or executive powers of Government.”[[40]](#footnote-40) In part, this is a result of Obote’s failed attempt to assassinate the Kabaka (king) of Buganda in 1966, prompting the Kabaka’s exile and the abolition of tribal kingdoms.[[41]](#footnote-41) Though Museveni restored the kingdoms in 1993, their authority was much diminished after a thirty-year absence from national politics.[[42]](#footnote-42) Moreover, Museveni designated the kingdoms as merely cultural institutions, prohibiting them from engaging in political activities. Museveni has repeatedly spoken out against tribal politics.[[43]](#footnote-43) There is a limit on how explicit a role tribal leaders may play in politics, though they still have some power.

Tribal divisions in Ugandan politics have also been subsumed by another cleavage, that of region. Buganda, in the south of the country, is home to Uganda’s historically privileged tribe as well as the capital city, Kampala. It is, and historically has been, far more developed and politically influential than the north. Around independence, alliances emerged between the Baganda and other southern and eastern tribes, and the northern and to some extent western tribes.[[44]](#footnote-44) Though the north-south division is rooted in tribal issues, it has since come to have a meaning of its own in Ugandan politics, based largely on differences in economic development and stability.[[45]](#footnote-45)

Bunyoro has a history of tribal conflict, which we might assume makes future tribal conflict more likely, but there are also countervailing forces. Museveni’s move away from tribal divisions and Bunyoro’s exclusion from the major north-south divide make ethnic violence less likely today than thirty years ago. Another mitigating factor is the perception that Museveni, a man from Ankole in southwestern Uganda, has elevated western tribes to positions of power in his government.[[46]](#footnote-46) As Donald Horowitz writes, the president’s ethnicity is often seen as evidence of ethnic control over politics in African states, regardless of the actual ethnic composition of the president’s cabinet or of the legislature.[[47]](#footnote-47) Museveni’s cabinet includes Ugandans from 24 different tribes, and the best-represented tribe is the Baganda, not the Banyankole.[[48]](#footnote-48) Despite this, there is a perception that Museveni has favored politicians from western Uganda.

Though Bunyoro is not proximate to Ankole (see Figure 3) it is still grouped along with Ankole and Toro as a western tribal kingdom. The impression of pan-western dominance of Ugandan politics is perhaps reinforced by the fact that one of the most important politicians in Uganda, Second Deputy Prime Minister Henry Kajura, is a Munyoro. The notion that westerners control the government affects our understanding of political preferences in Bunyoro: if Banyoro share this perception, they may believe that they are better off with Museveni firmly in power, and be less likely to look to Iguru for leadership on the oil issue or otherwise cause instability.



*Figure 3: Ugandan Tribal Kingdoms. Source: UG Pulse.*

In summary, while tribal politics have a long and bloody history in Uganda, the Banyoro themselves have had the greatest grievances against the Baganda, who are not currently perceived as controlling the state. Moreover, Bunyoro is not directly implicated in the most salient north-south cleavage, being a western subregion. The declining importance of tribal politics in recent years may argue against ethnic conflict in Bunyoro, though the oil production could also reactivate historical tribal conflicts.

*History and Politics of Bunyoro*

My research focuses on the issue of revenue sharing with tribal authorities, a matter of contention between Banyoro tribal elites and national political leaders. I use preferences regarding a revenue sharing agreement as a measure of how politicized oil has become in Bunyoro and how important ethnicity is to oil-related political preferences. Bunyoro’s specific history and politics obviously inform these preferences and are important to understand prior to interpreting statistical data from Bunyoro. As R.J. Southall, a historian of Bunyoro, writes, “There can be no understanding of modern day politics in Bunyoro without reference to the ancient political kingdom of the past, and memory of which seeps down into the historical consciousness [of the Banyoro].”[[49]](#footnote-49)

The Kingdom of Bunyoro-Kitara and the political unit of the Bunyoro subregion refer to different authorities in the same geographical area. Bunyoro subregion (similar to a province, though with no administrative function) comprises five districts: Hoima, Buliisa, Masindi, Kiryandongo, and Kibaale.[[50]](#footnote-50) While the hereditary king of Bunyoro-Kitara, Omukama Iguru, enjoys official recognition as a cultural leader, formal political power in the region is reserved for MPs for Banyoro districts. This does not mean that Iguru is absent from politics, however. Yolamu Nsamba, Principal Private Secretary to Iguru, characterizes the kingship as “not a position of coercive authority…[the king’s authority] comes from what people sincerely believe.”[[51]](#footnote-51) The king is a respected cultural leader and as such has political influence. In 2009, MPs and Bakiga tribal leaders appealed to Iguru to mediate tensions between indigenous Banyoro and Bakiga immigrants in the tribal kingdom.[[52]](#footnote-52) As noted earlier, Iguru has called for his kingdom to receive a share of oil revenues. Iguru has been more politically active than his predecessors; he is the only Ugandan tribal king to have visited Parliament (to advocate for this share)[[53]](#footnote-53) and has openly criticized the Museveni government for its handling of various other political issues.[[54]](#footnote-54) The government appears to be aware of the king’s political importance: in 2012, Iguru met with a delegation from the parliamentary Natural Resources Committee, and later Present Museveni himself, to discuss oil.[[55]](#footnote-55)

The Banyoro are proud of their history, and Iguru may feel empowered to intervene on oil issues because of the past power of Bunyoro Kingdom in Uganda. Bunyoro was an important regional power prior to colonization, one of the two largest kingdoms in the Great Lakes district (the other being Buganda).[[56]](#footnote-56) It was supposedly the heir to the Kitara Empire, a semi-mythological kingdom said to have extended across much of Uganda, eastern Congo, and northern Tanzania at its height in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, [[57]](#footnote-57) and was a sophisticated, centralized state.[[58]](#footnote-58) Shane Doyle has shown that Bunyoro was in decline by the nineteenth century due to a population crisis,[[59]](#footnote-59) and M.S.M. Kiwanuka has questioned the validity of oral histories of Kitara.[[60]](#footnote-60) Regardless, for the purposes of this discussion, people’s perceptions of their history matter more than the history itself. Bunyoro has a long history as a powerful political unit, and Banyoro consider it to have lost a former greatness.

Bunyoro’s resistance to British conquest is another important part of its history, affecting both how the Banyoro see themselves and their historical relationship with the central state in Uganda. This relationship has its roots in the “nineteenth-century struggle between Bunyoro and Buganda for regional supremacy.”[[61]](#footnote-61) When the British arrived in Uganda in the 1860’s, they approached the courts of Bunyoro and Buganda with offers of alliances.[[62]](#footnote-62) Then-Omukama Kabalega[[63]](#footnote-63) rebuffed them but Buganda accepted and invaded Bunyoro with the British in 1893.[[64]](#footnote-64) By 1895, Kabalega’s resistance had devolved into sporadic raiding, and he was captured and exiled in 1899.[[65]](#footnote-65)

Kabalega is held in high esteem in Bunyoro: his reign is seen as the last “golden age” of Bunyoro, a period of prosperity followed by hardship under colonial rule, and he is glorified as one of the few Ugandan leaders to have resisted colonization.[[66]](#footnote-66) Iguru has made a point of honoring Kabalega, holding celebrations at Bunyoro’s royal tombs to remember him and naming the kingdom’s scholarship program the Kabalega Education Fund.[[67]](#footnote-67) These gestures are interesting: modern memory of Kabalega implies pride in Bunyoro’s history of anti-colonial struggle and perhaps a sense of Banyoro uniqueness, which could plausibly form the basis of a nationalist movement. Iguru may be trying to activate these sentiments by linking his reign to that of his forebear.

Bunyoro has a more recent history of ethnic politics as well. Tribal political organizations emerged in 1950’s and 1960’s as Uganda approached independence.[[68]](#footnote-68) The Banyoro were particularly well organized, forming a lobby during negotiations over Uganda’s constitution.[[69]](#footnote-69) The Mubende Banyoro Committee, which advocated for the return of land lost to Buganda in the 1890’s (the “Lost Colonies”), was Uganda’s first political movement.[[70]](#footnote-70) R.J. Southall writes that “membership [in this group] was congruent with tribal identity,” demonstrating that political activism was explicitly organized along ethnic lines. Ugandan politics have changed since the 1960’s, of course. Bunyoro’s history of tribal mobilization could nonetheless serve as the foundation of future movements and is useful context for this study. Though the Baganda no longer dominate the Ugandan government, leaders trying to mobilize the Banyoro might be able to draw upon historical mistrust of the state. The tribal kingdom has a role in politics in Bunyoro and will likely influnece events surrounding oil development. In investigating the drivers of political preference in Bunyoro, we must consider the influence of both tribal leaders and historical grievances on local people’s preferences.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

My study investigates the drivers of oil-related political preferences in Bunyoro, Uganda. This topic pertains to three related literatures: theories of (1) ethnic identity, (2) ethnic conflict, and (3) resource conflict.

***Theories of Ethnic Identity***

A brief review of the ethnic identity literature helps ground my findings for two reasons: first, because a politically salient ethnic identity is a prerequisite for ethnic conflict, and second, because my findings about variation in the strength of tribal affiliation across sample groups suggest that identity is not highly malleable. Early accounts of nations assumed that ethnicity was primordial.[[71]](#footnote-71) That view is discredited; scholars of ethnic identity since Ernst Renan have agreed that nations are made, not born.[[72]](#footnote-72) That premise is often the extent of their agreement. Broadly, the literature is divided between psychosocial and constructivist theories of ethnic identity formation. I summarize the main distinctions between these theories to contextualize my study.

Psychosocial theories admit that identity is created, but argue that it is deeply held and experienced as intensely emotional once inculcated. Donald Horowitz is the best-known proponent of this view. Horowitz was influenced by Henri Tajfel, a social psychologist who theorized that cognitive processes—categorization, assimilation, and the search for coherence—lead humans to distinguish between in- and out-group.[[73]](#footnote-73) Horowitz argues that ethnic groups provide individuals with a sense of self-esteem and belonging.[[74]](#footnote-74) Evolutionary psychologists Mark van Vugt and Justin Park suggest that evolutionary processes contribute to a human tendency to quickly create and reify group divisions.[[75]](#footnote-75) These theories acknowledge that group divisions are artificial, but contend that such divisions are keenly felt and that individuals cannot change identity at will.

Constructivists claim that social and political pressures produce ethnic groups, disregarding psychological factors. Perhaps because of this, constructivists see ethnicity as more pliant (and interests-related) than do psychosocial theorists. Constructivists debate which pressures result in ethnic divisions. Mark Beissinger argues that chance incidents incite “tides of nationalism” that assume “their own causal structure.”[[76]](#footnote-76) According to modernists, identities result from processes associated with modernization. Benedict Anderson and Karl Deutsch argue that “print-capitalism” causes individuals across a nation to consume the same media and thereby identify with one another.[[77]](#footnote-77) Eugen Weber sees roads linking the center to the periphery as critical to identity formation, while Ernst Gellner emphasizes industrialization.[[78]](#footnote-78) These theorists assume that identity spreads outward from center to periphery. Peter Sahlins rejects this view, arguing that nation formation is a two-way process.[[79]](#footnote-79) Other constructivists, such as Clifford Geertz, claim that nationalist intellectual elites encourage national identity to consolidate their own political positions.[[80]](#footnote-80) Scholars who claim that identities are formed through indoctrination and mass schooling, such as Keith Darden and Anna Gzymala-Busse, A.R. Luria, and Sylvia Scriber and Michael Cole, also imply that elites create identities.[[81]](#footnote-81)

Constructivists also debate the extent to which individuals can change their ethnic identities. Rational choice theorists argue for the greatest latitude in identity choice. David Laitin distinguishes between the symbolic and political “faces” of culture, and claims, “Individuals learn that by modifying their cultural identities they can improve their life chances.”[[82]](#footnote-82) Abner Cohen argues that the ambiguity inherent in shared cultural symbols allows for their manipulation to suit the political and economic motives of cultural groups.[[83]](#footnote-83) Such accounts directly oppose explanations posited by social psychologists like Michael Hogg, who argues that in-group pressure and out-group acceptance constrain individuals’ ability to change their identities.[[84]](#footnote-84)

***Theories of Ethnic Conflict***

The logical extension of studying ethnic identity is studying when and how identity groups come into conflict. My study investigates factors increasing support for tribal control of natural resources, a possible precursor to a tribally-based rebel movement, and concerns the ethnic conflict literature. This literature is divided between three hypotheses about which factors are most responsible for ethnic violence: the level and nature of ethnic difference in a country, resource competition between groups, and factors favoring insurgency. I omit from my analysis arguments that the degree of ethnic difference between groups determines the potency of ethnicity in politics. By this logic, conflicts between racial groups should be more intractable than those between religious sects—Northern Ireland and Iraq challenge this argument, and it is widely discredited.

More nuanced views of how ethnic heterogeneity contributes to conflict persist in the literature, however. Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan argue that historical forces determine which cultural cleavages contribute to conflict.[[85]](#footnote-85) M. Crawford Young applies this hypothesis to Africa, claiming that colonial policy resulted in the salience of certain cleavages and not others.[[86]](#footnote-86) Clifford Geertz argues that colonized groups may be able to cooperate to achieve independence, but post-independence coalitions quickly break down along ethnic lines,[[87]](#footnote-87) implying that colonized ethnic groups inherently want self-determination and that heterogeneous countries are prone to secessionism. These arguments claim that cultural cleavages are historical and durable, meaning that ethnic heterogeneity makes conflict more likely. Francesco Caselli and Wilbur Coleman argue for a different causality, writing, “if the population is ethnically heterogeneous, coalitions can be formed along ethnic lines, and ethnic identity can therefore be used as a marker to recognize potential infiltrators.”[[88]](#footnote-88) These accounts are unified by their assumption that the existence of a reified cultural cleavage is the precondition for ethnic conflict.[[89]](#footnote-89)

Other theorists challenge this assumption and claim that it is competition for political or material resources that creates ethnic conflict. These theories draw on the rational choice literature to argue, as Robert Bates does, that “Ethnic groups are…a form of minimum winning coalition, large enough to secure beneﬁts in the competition for spoils but also small enough to maximize the per capita value of these beneﬁts.”[[90]](#footnote-90) Lars-Erik Cederman and Luc Girandin establish quantitative support[[91]](#footnote-91) for a claim also made by Gellner, that minority control over politics “constitutes a quite outstandingly intolerable breach of political propriety.”[[92]](#footnote-92)

Daniel Posner, Kanchan Chandra, Leonard Wantchekon, and Cyril Obi and Siri Aas Rustad further develop the argument that competition over political power activates cultural cleavages, each arguing in different ways that individuals are only mobilized by ethnic appeals when they believe the ethnic group can plausibly gain control over resources.[[93]](#footnote-93) Chandra, for example, argues that voters conduct ethnic headcounts and vote only for ethnic parties large enough to gain seats,[[94]](#footnote-94) while Wantchekon finds that the strength of appeals based on policy platform depends on how credible a candidate’s promises are, and that clientelism reinforces ethnic voting.[[95]](#footnote-95) Posner’s influential study of Chewas and Tumbukas in Zambia and Malawi found that the same ethnic groups were enemies when they were each large enough to vie for political dominance, and allies when they were marginal.[[96]](#footnote-96) The same logic has been applied to material resource competition, as I will explore in greater depth in the section on resource conflict. The implication of these arguments for ethnic conflict studies is that competition over political resources mobilizes ethnic groups, which form alliances not according to the historical depth of cultural cleavages but according to group size.

A third group of theorists within the ethnic conflict literature contends that the most predictive factor of ethnic violence is neither the existence of cultural cleavages nor the potential for groups to form large ethnic coalitions but rather the presence of factors favoring insurgency. James Fearon and Laitin are the best-known proponents of this view. According to their analysis, countries with high poverty rates, political instability, rough terrain, and large populations are at the greatest risk of civil war.[[97]](#footnote-97) Poverty is seen as contributing to rebel recruitment, an argument Gudrun Ostby, Ragnhild Nordas, and Jan Ketil Rod extend, claiming that regions with high horizontal inequality (rather than poverty per se) have higher risks of conflict.[[98]](#footnote-98)

Though these arguments are often presented in opposition to accounts emphasizing the existence of cultural cleavages or competition over resources, I submit that the distinction between motivations and feasibility as causes of violence is exaggerated. Cultural cleavages or resource scarcity may make ethnicity politically salient, while factors facilitating insurgency precipitate the evolution of ethnic difference into ethnic confrontation.[[99]](#footnote-99) As Paul Williams writes, single causes likely do not explain complex phenomena like ethnic conflict, and it is worth distinguishing between underlying factors that make conflict more likely and immediate causes.[[100]](#footnote-100)

***Theories of Resource Conflict***

As I am concerned with the causes of political preference among ethnic minorities in oil-rich regions, I analyze only resource conflict theories dealing with minorities. Such work is dominated by two opposed explanations of resource conflict: greed and grievance. According to the former narrative, resources themselves cause conflict. In Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler’s classic account, the opportunities for plunder presented by natural resources inspire rebellion and competition, resulting in war.[[101]](#footnote-101) Fearon and Laitin also suggest that resource wars have rational causes, holding that poverty favors insurgency because it facilitates rebel recruitment.[[102]](#footnote-102) This implies that most rebels are materially, not ideologically motivated. They may be quite indifferent to their movement’s stated political aims and use ethnic grievances as a pretext for looting. Robert Bates et al., and Richard Auty and Alan Gelb, make similar arguments, claiming that conflicts begin because of greed and continue because oil rents encourage corruption (contributing to further instability) and allow the state to finance a counterinsurgency.[[103]](#footnote-103)

In contrast to these arguments are hypotheses that grievances motivate resource conflict. In some accounts, these grievances are underlying historical issues between ethnic groups that are activated by resource development raising the stakes of confrontation. Obi and Rustad argue that oil production in Nigeria has primarily benefitted dominant ethnic groups, exacerbating preexisting inequalities and encouraging minority groups in the Niger Delta to rebel.[[104]](#footnote-104) They write, “Since oil is from an ethnic minority region, its political and economic significance makes it a key factor in national politics and ethnic minority-ethnic majority relations.”[[105]](#footnote-105) In other accounts, the externalities of resource development create new grievances that motivate protest. Thomas Homer-Dixon claims that environmental degradation in oil producing areas results in resource scarcity, encouraging competition and conflict that tends to emerge along ethnic lines.[[106]](#footnote-106) This literature and the literature on greed as a motivator share an assumption that rebellion is rational, though the former often asserts normative justifications for unrest that the latter does not.

More nuanced views have recently emerged that assign a role to both greed and grievance in instigating conflict, rejecting the assumed dichotomy between the two traditional explanations. Augustine Ikelegbe and Michael Watts argue that underlying grievances give rise to ethnic conflict in the Niger Delta and opportunities for plunder feed conflict once it starts.[[107]](#footnote-107) In Ikelegbe’s account of the Niger Delta, youth grievances in particular precipitate conflict, as young people are more likely to be unemployed and to experience the harms of ethnic marginalization. To Miriam Lowi, the grievances of the ethnic group as a whole contribute to conflict. She writes,

If, at that time [when oil development begins], there are major societal groups which are weakly incorporated into the state…then political instability is more likely to ensue when there is an economic shock…because the groups which have suffered historically from marginalization are likely to be the hardest hit by an economic downturn. Disaffected, they may seize the opportunity presented by a weakened state and try to mobilize against it.[[108]](#footnote-108)

As these analyses suggest, the causes of ethnic mobilization in resource-rich areas are far from resolved in the literature. My study tests theories of the causes of politicization and political preference amongst minorities in oil-rich regions and attempts to contribute to our understanding of conditions for ethnic conflict in such areas.

**EXPERIMENT**

Politicization of oil is a precondition for ethnic mobilization and resource conflict, whether in Africa or elsewhere. As the above literature review reveals, the causes of politicization are contested. Understanding whether and how oil has been politicized in Uganda matters both insofar as it furthers our appreciation of which factors drive oil-related political preference—a contribution to the literature—and helps us anticipate potential sources of discontent in Bunyoro. Africa has seen some of the most intractable resource conflicts, exemplified by the Niger Delta’s five decades of violence and secession. Uganda has largely recovered from the violence of the Obote and Amin years; civil society groups and politicians in Uganda understandably worry that oil may reactivate dormant ethnic tensions in Bunyoro and plunge the country back into war.

I do not purport to predict the likelihood that Bunyoro will see violence. Rather, I try to understand why some Banyoro believe that Bunyoro Kingdom should control a portion of oil rents while others accept federal jurisdiction over natural resources. Specifically, I tested whether demographic factors, proximity to oil, social views, expectations of benefit or harm, or elite contact affect individuals’ beliefs about whether or not Bunyoro Kingdom should receive its own share of oil revenues, and whom within the kingdom should benefit from that share. Bunyoro serves as a test case for hypotheses about which factors strengthen ethnic identity and encourage ethnic conflict.

***Research Design***

I designed a survey measuring respondents’ social views, expectations, contact with and trust in elites, and political preferences and administered it to target demographic groups in Hoima District, where oil has been discovered. Results from this survey form the basis of my analysis.

*Method*

I surveyed 186 ethnic Banyoro subjects in four groups in Hoima District:

* Residents of Kabaale, Buseruka Sub-county, a village located near oil exploration sites in Hoima and the proposed site of an oil refinery (42 subjects)
* Residents of Katanga, Bugambe Sub-county, a similar village located further away from the oil exploration sites (44 subjects)
* *Boda-boda* (motorcycle taxi) drivers in Hoima Town, the regional center in Hoima District (50 subjects)
* Shopkeepers in Hoima Town (50 subjects)

I intended to compare the Kabaale and Katanga groups to determine whether proximity to oil affected political views or other outcome variables. I treated nearness to oil as a proxy for expectations of benefit or harm from oil, and thought that this comparison would serve as a test of theories that the prospect of material gain motivates greater identification along ethnic lines and preferences for tribal control over resources. Figure 4 shows the locations of (A) Hoima Town, (B) Katanga, and (C) Kabaale within Hoima District, as well as the limits of Block 2, the oil exploration block nearest to the survey locations, and (D) Tonya, a fishing village near the oil exploration block.

I was not able to survey in Tonya itself because of previously mentioned limitations on travel to villages abutting oil exploration sites and restrictions of oil-related research. Because of this, I surveyed in Kabaale: it is also quite near the oil exploration sites (as Figure 4 shows) and is the planned site of an oil refinery, factors which I hypothesized might affect residents’ expectations and perceptions of oil exploitation. I selected Katanga because of its similarities to Kabaale in most respects other than proximity to oil and plans for a refinery: both are mostly farming villages, have populations of fewer than 500 people, are within 35 kilometers of the regional center, Hoima Town, and are largely Banyoro. Katanga is also home to a tea plantation, which attracts economic migrants and provides some local employment. I judged that this feature would mimic the effects of the fisheries and farms in Kabaale, which also provide jobs and bring local people into contact with Ugandans from other tribes and Congolese.



*Figure 4: Survey Sites. Source: Google Maps.*

I selected two urban groups to test whether or not living in an urban area—with greater media exposure, literacy, and exposure to people from other tribes and places—affects political preferences or other views. I surveyed *boda-boda* drivers in particular upon the recommendation of Nsamba. In an interview in May 2012, Nsamba expressed his concern that underemployed young men in Hoima Town could form the basis of a rebel movement.[[109]](#footnote-109) Most young men in the district have attended high school, Nsamba claimed, and are frustrated to find little work available to them upon leaving school.[[110]](#footnote-110) Nsamba thought that *boda-boda* drivers best exemplified this class of underemployed young men, who might have more radical political views than the general population.[[111]](#footnote-111)

Nsamba’s claim about education levels is corroborated by Ugandan educational statistics—96% of children in Hoima have at least some schooling—and my own survey, which found that the median education level among *boba-boda* drivers was some senior school (equivalent to high school).[[112]](#footnote-112) His claim about underemployment is also borne out by official data. According to a 2008 World Bank report, Uganda has the highest youth unemployment rate in the world, with over 80% of Ugandan youth out of the workforce.[[113]](#footnote-113) A 2011 UN Population Fund report also claims that Uganda has the youngest population in the world: the median age in the country is fifteen, and 34% of the population is between 10 and 24.[[114]](#footnote-114) This has created enormous competition amongst young people for jobs, made all the more bitter for Ugandan youth because of their high educational attainment.[[115]](#footnote-115) Analyzing how occupation and age affect political preferences is important to understanding how youth frustration may manifest itself.

I included a second urban group, shopkeepers, to add demographic variety to my urban samples (shopkeeping is not associated with a particular age or gender in Hoima Town). I also hypothesized that shopkeepers might have greater expectation of benefitting from oil production because oil workers and immigrants would raise demand for their goods, and wanted to compare two urban socio-economics groups to test the influence of occupation on political preferences and other views.

Accurate, up-to-date census data and maps of Kabaale, Katanga, and Hoima Town were not available to me. To randomize my sample, I took only left turns in the villages and Hoima city center, stopping at every other house (or *boda-boda* stand). In the villages, I varied whom I surveyed in a home by creating categories based on age and gender (male/female between 18 and 30, 30 and 40, and above 40) and cycling through these at each house. My sample is small (40 to 50 subjects per group, 186 total) but I estimated that it would be representative because the groups I surveyed—residents of two similar villages smaller than 500 people each and urban groups with specific backgrounds—were fairy homogeneous.

*Survey Questions*

To avoid biasing the sample by only interviewing English speakers, I worked with a translator who administered the questionnaire to respondents who did not speak English. After noting demographic data, we asked nine survey questions:

* Social views
  + Are you married? If so, would you have considered marrying someone who was not a Munyoro? If not, would you consider marrying someone who is not a Munyoro?
  + If they could only speak one language, would you prefer that your children speak Runyoro or English?
* Expectations
  + Do you expect that you personally will benefit from the oil? If so, how?
  + Do you expect that you personally will experience any problems because of the oil? If so, what?
* Elite contact and trust
  + Have you ever gone to a tribal leader when you had a personal problem? [If requested clarification, suggested parish-level chiefs as examples]
  + Have you ever gone to someone in the government when you had a personal problem? [If requested clarification, suggested LC1 chairman][[116]](#footnote-116)
* Political preferences
  + Do you think that some of the money from the oil should be set aside for Bunyoro alone?
  + [If yes] Which areas should benefit from this money? (a) All of Bunyoro, (b) Hoima District only, or (c) only areas where people have to leave their land?
  + [If yes] Who should benefit from this money in that area? (a) Only Banyoro, or (b) everyone living in the area?

The first two questions were designed to measure social views. I modeled the first question after a question in Posner’s study of Chewas and Tumbukas, which used willingness to intermarry as a proxy for positive or negative perceptions of other ethnic groups.[[117]](#footnote-117) The question about language was intended to gauge the importance respondents assigned to transmitting their ethnic identity to their children relative to ensuring they were conversant in the national lingua franca. This question was inspired by work on the role of native languages in nationalist movements in Soviet republics.[[118]](#footnote-118)

The second set of questions, about expectations of personal benefit and harm from oil, were intended both as controls in an analysis of political preferences (and thereby a test of whether political preferences were influenced by predictions of personal advantage) and as tests of whether proximity to oil increased or decreased expectations of benefit from oil.

The third set of questions, about tribal and government leaders, was designed to measure contact with and trust in elites. Such measures might not yield much information in more urban or developed areas, where people are unlikely to confer with even local political leaders about personal problems. Uganda’s local council (LC) system, however, places a network of elected representatives at levels of local government ranging from LC1, the village level, to LC5, the district level. Residents are familiar with their LC representatives, especially at the LC1 and LC2 levels, and often approach them about local issues. Bunyoro’s decentralized tribal structure operates in a similar way, with parish-level chiefs located in a hierarchy that extends up to the Omukama. Based on the density of government and tribal representation in Bunyoro and the fact that representatives are locals and therefore embedded in the community, I reasoned that consulting with tribal and government representatives was a feasible and appropriate indicator of contact with and trust in two important types of elites.

There are clearly other means by which elites disseminate their views and wield influence: public speeches, interviews, and policy platforms, for example. Having sought out a member of the elite for advice on a personal problem is both easier to measure than attendance at speeches or media exposure, however, and gives less ambiguous information: the fact of attendance tells us nothing about an individual’s opinion of the speaker, but soliciting advice implies trust in both the person consulted and, presumably, the elite they represent.

The final set of variables measures preferences regarding a potential revenue sharing agreement. Iguru has publicly called for his kingdom to receive a share of oil revenues, and the contentious debate about a revenue sharing agreement has been widely published in the Ugandan press.[[119]](#footnote-119) I expected that Banyoro respondents would be familiar with the issue and that their responses would indicate the extent to which they saw oil as a political issue. The further questions about which geographic areas and ethnic groups should receive the reserved share were intended to assess respondents’ sense of a broader Bunyoro “nation” beyond Hoima District and of ethnic cohesion. In this way, the latter two questions were envisioned as a way of measuring whether politicization of oil had also led to politicization of ethnicity.

***Variables***

I coded demographic factors and responses to the questions described above to create the set of variables shown in Table 1. Most variables are dummy variables, for which positive responses or responses denoting a greater level of “tribal nationalism” were coded as a 1 (e.g., only being willing to marry a Munyoro was coded as a 1, while willingness to intermarry was coded as a 0). I use three ordinal variables: education, occupation, and birthplace. I coded education and occupation according to increasing skill level. Coding this way for education is common practice, and I adapted this method of coding to occupation, including jobs like “farmer” in the manual labor category, and jobs like “engineer” or “nurse” in the skilled labor category.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| TABLE 1: Variables | |
| ***Personal Background*** | |
| Birthplace | 2=Hoima District, 1=Bunyoro (outside of Hoima), 0=Elsewhere |
| Oil | 1=Living in Kabaale, 0=Not living in Kabaale |
| Urban | 1=Living in Hoima Town, 0=Living in a rural area |
| Occupation | 3=Skilled, 2=Semi-skilled, 1=Manual labor, 0=Unemployed |
| Age |  |
| Gender | 1=Female, 0=Male |
| Education | 4=Certificate/degree/diploma, 3=O or A level, 2=Senior level, 1=Primary level, 0=None |
| ***Social views*** | |
| Marriage | 1=Would only marry a Munyoro, 0=Willing to intermarry |
| Language | 1=Prefer children speak Runyoro, 0=Prefer children speak English |
| ***Expectations*** | |
| Benefit | 1=Expect to personally benefit from oil, 0=Do not expect to benefit |
| Problems | 1=Expect to personally experience problems from oil, 0=Do not expect problems |
| ***Elites*** | |
| Tribe | 1=Have consulted with a tribal leader when had a problem, 0=Have not |
| Government | 1=Have consulted with a government representative when had a problem, 0=Have not |
| ***Revenue sharing*** | |
| Share | 1=There should be a share of revenues set aside for Bunyoro, 0=There should not be |
| Bunyoro | 1=All Bunyoro Kingdom should benefit from this share, 0=Other response |
| Hoima | 1=Only Hoima District should benefit from this share, 0=Other response |
| Displaced | 1=Only areas with displacement should benefit from this share; 0=Other response |
| Co-ethnics | 1=Only ethnic Banyoro should benefit from this share, 0=All residents, 0=N/A |

This coding does not perfectly capture the distinctions between different occupations, and assumes that the each increase in skill level has the same effect. I judged this coding appropriate, however, for a primary regression analysis and left myself the option of breaking occupations out as dummy variables if that became of interest. The other ordinal variable is birthplace, with increasing value attached to birthplaces located closer to Hoima District. I later performed additional analyses of birthplace dummy variables, which form the basis of the latter part of this paper.

***Hypotheses***

*Hypothesis 1: Social Views Drive Political Preferences*

Broadly speaking, accounts of ethnicity other than strict rational choice theories acknowledge the importance of social views to political preferences. I have reviewed psychosocial theories (Horowitz, van Vugt and Park) and theories emphasizing indoctrination (Darden and Gzymala-Busse). According to these theories, identity is created and not primordial, but once inculcated it is deeply held and experienced as intensely emotional. People experience psychological benefits from membership in an ethnic group and mobilize when these benefits are threatened by a rival group. Individuals do not have free and unlimited choice over their ethnic ties, and social relations between ethnic groups are important.

Extending the argument to resource conflict, people may be mobilized on political issues regardless of whether or not they expect to materially benefit from the mobilization. In a regression, social beliefs should predict political preferences, since relations between groups are informed by social dynamics and psychosocial threats can serve as the basis for mobilization—positive responses on the marriage and language variables should be associated with increases in the values of revenue sharing variables. The strength of social views also tends to differ by age, gender, level of education, and residence in an urban versus rural environment. We might also expect to see these variables affect political preferences.

*Hypothesis 2: Expectations of Personal Benefit or Harm Drive Political Preferences*

An alternative view of ethnicity is that people attach little emotional value to their identities, emphasizing different aspects of their cultural heritage in different situations to access goods allocated on the basis of ethnicity (Laitin, Cohen). If people are rational, self-interested actors seeking to maximize their own benefit, the primary driver of their political preferences should be their expectations of benefit or harm from a given resource or policy. By extension, ethnic conflict in resource-rich areas is primarily opportunistic, encouraged by conditions facilitating plunder, as argued by Collier and Hoeffler, Auty and Gelb, Reno, and Oyefusi. Ethnic groups’ claims to have long-standing grievances are interpreted as political cover for predation.

In a regression analysis, expecting problems from oil should have a positive effect desires for a revenue sharing agreement (people who expect to be harmed by oil exploitation should have a strong preference for a revenue sharing program) and perhaps also on preferences that the revenue sharing program to be limited to their district and to co-ethnics. Conversely, expectations of benefit from oil should either have a negative effect on desires for revenue sharing (people who already expect to benefit may want to restrict the distribution of rents in the region in order to improve their relative socio-economic position) or a neutral one (people who expect to benefit may be agnostic about whether they or others receive a marginal additional increase in utility).

We might also see that political preferences vary by occupation. Shopkeepers, for instance, may expect that an influx of oil company workers and migrants from elsewhere in Uganda will create a greater market for their goods. Manual laborers, already largely underemployed in Hoima, may believe that low-skilled immigrants will increase competition for work. This population should be of particular interest to us, as young, unemployed men are sometimes taken to be “good proxy for the proportion of the population psychologically predisposed to violence and best-suited for rebel recruitment.”[[120]](#footnote-120) In interviews I conducted, Banyoro tribal leaders and civil society representatives have expressed fears that *boda-boda* drivers in particular may turn to violence as oil production begins.[[121]](#footnote-121)

*Hypothesis 3: Proximity to Oil Drives Political Preferences*

We might interpret the rational choice literature as suggesting that proximity to oil would be associated with changes in political preferences, and perhaps also in social views. The assumption underlying this interpretation is that the closer a village is to the oil, the more likely its residents are to expect to benefit from tribal control over the resource. Accordingly, villages closer to the oil fields should show higher levels of preference for a revenue sharing agreement than villages that are further away. We should also see that proximity to oil predicts expectations variables. People in Kabaale, located near the oil and itself the proposed site of an oil refinery, may believe that they will find jobs in the oil industry or be contracted to sell crops to oil workers, and have higher expectations of benefit than people in Katanga, the village further from the oil.

Conversely, residents of Kabaale might also expect greater harms from oil production, such as dispossession or environmental degradation, than residents of Katanga. This would also presumably increase their preference for a revenue sharing agreement that benefitted them directly. In either case, we would expect geography to drive any significant effects that expectations have on political preferences. In a regression, we would predict that the effect of the expectations variables decreases or disappears when the proximity to oil variable is included in the analysis.

*Hypothesis 4: Elites Drive Political Preferences*

According to Geertz, as well as Darden and Gzymala-Busse, identity is the result of elite manipulation. Elites, vying for power with one another, seek to mobilize the masses in order to consolidate their political positions and establish credible claims to control territory or resources. The same logic can be applied to specific political movements: mobilization on political issues should occur at the prompting of elites. If this is the case, a regression analysis should show that contact with and trust in tribal leaders—who have repeatedly called for Bunyoro to have a share of oil revenues—have a positive effect on desire for revenue sharing. Exposure to government representatives should have the opposite effect, as the government should try to maximize its revenues from oil rents or at least avoid strengthening an alternative regional authority like a tribal kingdom.[[122]](#footnote-122)

***Findings: Effects of Social Views, Expectations, and Elite Contact***

The above hypotheses are based on theories that currently dominate the literature on ethnic identity, ethnic conflict, and resource conflict. To test these theories, I regressed demographic, social views, expectations, residence, and elite contact variables on political preference variables. I performed four different logistic regressions, regressing demographic variables and (1) social views variables, (2) expectations variables, (3) elite contact variables, and (4) all these variables on political preference variables. Results are shown in Table 2. I have included only results for the dummy variable of whether or not respondents favored a revenue sharing agreement; the other variables related to revenue sharing (which district and ethnic groups should benefit from this share) followed the same pattern.[[123]](#footnote-123) I also performed joint significance tests for the social, expectations, and elite contact variables, none of which indicated multicollinearity.[[124]](#footnote-124)

I find that *none* of social views, expectations of benefit, residence, or contact with elites has a statistically significant effect on political preferences. None of the hypotheses I tested for was supported by my findings. My results challenge many of the prevailing theories in the ethnic identity, ethnic conflict, and resource conflict literatures. This may have important implications for our understanding of the drivers of political preference—preconditions for conflict—in oil-rich areas. My findings about the relationship between social views and political preferences suggest that while identity may still be the result of psychosocial factors, it does not axiomatically translate into political preferences.

Even people with strong social views and deep tribal loyalties—people who were

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TABLE 2: Effect Of Social, Expectations, and Elite Contact Variables on Political Preferences (Share Variable) | | | | |
|  | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| Age | -.0097  (.01)\*\*\* | -.0097  (.01)\*\*\* | -.0096  (.01)\*\*\* | -.0100  (.01)\*\*\* |
| Gender | -.0148  (.84) | -.0312  (.69) | -.0095  (.90) | -.0313  (.69) |
| Education | -.0293  (.43) | -.0426  (.24) | -.0408  (.26) | -.0300  (.42) |
| Occupation | -.0323  (.58) | -.0303  (.60) | -.0343  (.56) | -.0302  (.61) |
| Birthplace | .1207  (.02)\*\* | .1395  (.01)\*\*\* | .1316  (.01)\*\*\* | .1282  (.01)\*\*\* |
| Urban | -.0085  (.93) | -.0009  (.99) | -.0137  (.89) | .0038  (.97) |
| Oil | .0193  (.85) | .0291  (.78) | .0140  (.90) | .0334  (.76) |
| Marriage | .0975  (.19) |  |  | .0884`  (.25) |
| Language | -.0550  (.54) |  |  | -.0619  (.49) |
| Benefit |  | .0355  (.63) |  | .0336  (.66) |
| Problems |  | -.0738  (.38) |  | -.0705  (.41) |
| Tribe |  |  | .0120  (.87) | .0165  (.83) |
| Government |  |  | -.0118  (.89) | -.0083  (.93) |
| Constant | .8254  (.00) | .8923  (.00) | .8727  (.00) | .8479  (.00) |
| *N* | 177 | 177 | 177 | 177 |
| *Notes:* Standard errors in parentheses. \**p*=.10, \*\**p*=.05, \*\*\**p*=.01.  All models included demographic variables. Model 1 included social variables (marriage and language variables). Model 2 included expectations variables (benefit and problems variables). Model 3 included elite contact variables (tribe and government variables). Model 4 included all variables. | | | | |

unwilling to marry outside the tribe, or who would rather teach their children Runyoro than a lingua franca that could afford them greater opportunities—were able to separate these social views from their judgments about how oil revenues should be divided. Writing on modern European nationalism, Michael Mann defines nationalism as “an ideology which asserts the moral, cultural, and political primacy of an ethnic group…In Europe the assertion that an ethnic group had distinctive cultural virtue often preceded agitation to secure its own state.”[[125]](#footnote-125) In Bunyoro at least, beliefs about cultural primacy appear to be separable from political preferences about oil revenues.

Finding that respondents’ expectations of personal benefit or harm from oil development do not affect political preferences affects our understanding of how interests lead to politicization. My results may indicate that people distinguish between their immediate personal welfare and a sense of societal welfare or justice. I do not think that my findings refute the idea that interests contribute to political preferences, as I discuss in the next section. Rather, calculations about the effects of oil may be too abstract in the pre-production phase to affect political preferences in a meaningful way.

Alternatively, people may separate expectations about the effect of oil production itself from interests implied by a revenue sharing mechanism. For example, a person might expect that oil workers will increase the market for his or her crops and still want a share of revenues. Similarly, one might expect that oil will cause environmental degradation and still want a share. Expectations about personal benefit or harm from oil appear not to have any power in predicting preferences about revenue sharing.

My findings challenge theories of the role of expectations and interests in forming political preferences in two other ways. First, I find that occupation does not predict political preferences. I performed a further set of regressions testing the effect of occupation dummy variables on political preferences and still did not find that occupation had a statistically significant effect on revenue sharing responses.[[126]](#footnote-126) Finding that *boda-boda* drivers do not have significantly different viewsthan other groups is especially interesting. This indicates that unskilled, underemployed young men, widely considered in the literature to form the backbone of rebel movements, are not inherently more politicized or radical than other groups, at least in the pre-production phases of oil development. They may well be more open to rebel recruitment once production starts and either opportunities for looting emerge or grievances are exacerbated: assessing this claim is beyond the scope of this paper.[[127]](#footnote-127) However, the proposition that underemployed young men have greater underlying grievances or frustrations than other groups due to marginalization and are innately political appears unlikely.

Furthermore, I find that shopkeepers, who might expect to benefit from the influx of oil workers and increased prices, do not have significantly different views from other groups. (This was also true of skilled workers, who presumably have the greatest job security and therefore potentially different expectations of benefit or harm from oil production). This further supports the idea that beliefs about personal benefit from oil development do not affect beliefs about revenue sharing. In the pre-production phases at least, political preferences do not break down along socio-economic or class lines.

Second, I find that proximity to the oil exploration sites does not have a statistically significant effect on revenue sharing preferences. Though the regressions in Table 2 included variables controlling for proximity to oil and being in an urban area, I performed a further set of regressions directly comparing the Kabaale and Katanga groups to eliminate any confounding variables arising from including the two urban groups. This analysis is presented in Table 3 and shows that there were no statistically significant differences in political preferences between the Kabaale and Katanga groups: membership in one of these groups did not in itself predict revenue sharing responses. I did not survey Banyoro living outside Hoima and therefore do not know whether their views differ. Villages like Kabaale may also become more politicized once production

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 3: Effect of Proximity to Oil on Political Preference Variables in Kabaale and Katanga Groups | | | | | |
|  | Share | Bunyoro | Hoima | Disp. | Co-ethnics |
| Oil | .0519  (.63) | -.2037  (.14) | .0271  (.83) | .1766  (.18) | -.0527  (.70) |
| *N* | 86 | 53 | 53 | 53 | 53 |
| *Notes*: Being proximate to oil is synonymous with living in Kabaale. The oil variable here functions as a variable testing the effect of being in the Kabaale group as compared to the Katanga group. | | | | | |

begins, or it may be that politicization happens on the district level: it is too soon to know. These results indicate, however, that oil is no more politicized in oil-rich areas than in areas without oil, at least within Hoima District and in the pre-production phase.

Finally, I found that consulting with tribal and government elites did not predict political preferences either. This is notable because elites of various kinds in Uganda are already speaking out about revenue sharing and possibly trying to mobilize support for their positions on the issue. Iguru has repeatedly called for the Kingdom of Bunyoro to receive a share of oil revenues, Banyoro and other politicians have expressed their own views of how oil wealth should be allocated, and Ugandan media have covered the issue extensively. Lest we assume that Banyoro simply are not aware of tribal and political leaders’ views on revenue sharing, we should note that the survey questions about elites control for this by asking about whether or not respondents have sought the counsel of a tribal leader or government representative. A positive answer to this question presumes contact with and trust in tribal and political representatives, likely implying knowledge of their views on a range of issues.

Moreover, media penetration in Uganda is fairly dense, even in rural areas. I observed stores selling newspapers and battery-operated radios in both Kabaale and Katanga, and cellphone use was ubiquitous. Some estimates place the rate of cellphone ownership in Uganda’s adult population at 80%.[[128]](#footnote-128) In this context, my findings signal that elites are probably not responsible for the politicization of oil that has occurred so far. This does not preclude future mobilization by elites, but does convey that local elites are probably not directly responsible for respondents’ current political preferences. In summary, none of social views, expectations of benefit or harm, or contact with elites predict political preferences. I now turn to another set of variables that my results indicates do predict political preferences: demographic factors, and most importantly, birthplace.

***Findings: Effects of Demographic Factors***

I find that factors related to personal background influence political preferences as well as the social, expectations, and elite contact variable sets. After my initial analysis (Table 2), I excluded social, expectations, and elite contact variables form my list of independent variables and regressed demographic factors on each of the former variables as well as on political preference indicators. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4 and summarized below. A range of demographic factors affected political preferences as well as social views, expectations, and elite contact variables. That a number of factors affect the same outcome variables indicates that political preferences have complex causes. That the same demographic variables—especially birthplace—affect both social views and political preferences suggests that underlying demographic variables are responsible for political preference effects often attributed to social views or other outcome variables that are also predicted by personal background.

*Summary of Findings*

* *Birthplace*: the closer a person’s birthplace was to Hoima District, the more likely he or she was to be unwilling to intermarry, to have consulted with a tribal leader, and to want there to be a revenue sharing agreement with Bunyoro Kingdom.
* *Place of Residence, Near Oil:* living near oil substantially increased one’s likelihood of having consulted a government representative with a personal problem, and a moderate increase in expectations of problems arising from oil.
* *Place of Residence, Urban Environment:* living in an urban area was associated with greater preference that Hoima District alone receive a Bunyoro share of oil rents, and lower preference that only displaced areas receive such funds.
* *Occupation:* increased job skill level was associated with a small decrease in respondents’ preference for teaching their children Runyoro over English.
* *Age*: age and preference that Bunyoro receive a dedicated share of oil revenues were negatively related. Amongst those who did want Bunyoro to receive a share of oil revenues, age did not have a statistically significant effect on preferences regarding which region should receive this share, or on whether or not the share should go exclusively to Banyoro co-ethnics. This effect was substantively small (a one percentage point decrease) but refers to the yearly change.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TABLE 4: Effect of Demographic Factors on Social, Expectations, Elite Contact, and Political Preference Variables | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Marr. | Lang. | Tribe | Gov. | Benefit | Problem | Share | Bunyoro | Hoima | Disp. | Co-ethnics |
| Birthplace | .1320  (.01)\*\*\* | .0287  (.50) | .0976  (.05)\*\* | .0626  (.16) | .0357  (.49) | .1183  (.01) | .1320  (.01)\*\*\* | -.0129  (.86) | -.0022  (.98) | .0151  (.77) | .0366  (.62) |
| Oil | -.0475  (.66) | .0263  (.77) | .1674  (.12) | .2378  (.01)\*\*\* | -.0588  (.59) | .1864  (.05)\*\* | .0132  (.90) | -.1919  (.15) | .0376  (.78) | .1543  (.11) | -.0989  (.46) |
| Urban | .0011  (.99) | .0986  (.22) | .1005  (.30) | .1140  (.18) | -.0458  (.64) | .1527  (.08) | -.0138  (.88) | -.0653  (.58) | .2820  (.02)\*\* | -.2167  (.01)\*\*\* | -.1381  (.25) |
| Occ’n | -.0626  (.30) | -.0821\*  (.10) | -.0183  (.76) | -.0590  (.26) | -.0028  (.96) | .0473  (.38) | -.0339  (.56) | .0082  (.91) | .0021  (.98) | -.0103  (.83) | -.1087  (.19) |
| Age | -.0009  (.82) | -.0049  (.13) | .0050  (.19) | .0029  (.38) | .0034  (.38) | -.0010  (.76) | -.0096  (.01)\*\*\* | .0086  (.12) | -.0048  (.38) | -.0037  (.35) | -.0018  (.75) |
| Gender | .0534  (.49) | .0223  (.73) | -.1689  (.03)\*\* | -.0606  (.37) | .0506  (.52) | -.2513  (.00)\*\*\* | -.0108  (.89) | .2063  (.04)\*\* | -.2160  (.03)\*\* | .0097  (.89) | -.0014  (.99) |
| Education | -.1099  (.00)\*\*\* | .0300  (.34) | -.0513  (.17) | .0159  (.62) | .0261  (.49) | .0000  (1.0) | -.0417  (.25) | .0863  (.06)\*\* | -.0598  (.19) | -.0265  (.43) | -.0349  (.46) |
| Constant | -.0475  (.00) | .2987  (.06) | .1622  (.38) | -.0002  (1.0) | .4650  (.02) | .4626  (.01) | .8746  (.00) | .0001  (1.0) | .6135  (.02) | .3863  (.04) | .6485  (.01) |
| *N* | 177 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 118 | 118 | 118 | 118 |
| *Notes:* Standard errors in parentheses. \**p*=.10, \*\**p*=.05, \*\*\**p*=.01. Only subjects who responded that they thought that there should be a reserved share were included in the regional (Bunyoro, Hoima, and areas with displacement) and co-ethnic variable analyses, resulting in lower *n*-values.  When these regressions are performed without the birthplace variable, the urban and oil variables have statistically significant effects on the tribe variable, the age and education variables have slight significant effects on preference that a revenue share go to Hoima District, and the age and oil variables have slight significant effects on preference that a revenue share go to displaced persons. This suggests that such effects are attributable to birthplace. | | | | | | | | | | | |

* *Gender*: women were less likely to have consulted a tribal leader about a personal problem. Women were also less likely to report expectations of problems arising from oil. Gender also affected preferences about which region should receive a share of oil revenues: women were more likely to favor distribution to Bunyoro as a whole, while men were more likely to favor distribution to Hoima District.
* *Education:* increased education was associated with greater willingness to intermarry. Increased education also had a slight positive effect on preference that Bunyoro as a whole receive a share of oil revenues.

Age, gender, and education functioned in ways we would expect (greater analysis of these variables is available in Appendix 2). More unexpected were the effects of birthplace, place of residence (whether near oil or in an urban environment), and occupation, which are analyzed in greater depth below. The cluster of variables related to where subjects are from, where they are now, and what they do had the greatest effect on preferences regarding revenue sharing, as well as on social views, contact with elites, and

expectations. As noted in the Literature Review and Hypotheses sections, many ethnic identification and conflict theories suggest that current residence and occupation should have significant effects on political preferences like desire for or against a revenue sharing agreement. If individuals change their identities to suit their needs, we should expect that ethnic identification and political preference depend upon current location. If underemployed young men are the driving force behind ethnic conflict, we should expect that occupation determine political preferences.

Instead, where respondents were from—their birthplace—was strongly associated with whether or not they thought there should be a revenue sharing agreement, as well as for their views on marriage, a telling social view. Only one aspect of where they were currently living—residence in an urban environment—affected political preferences (namely, which regions should benefit from such an agreement). This finding may affect our understanding of where identification comes from and how durable it is: my study supports the view that origins affect social and political views long after individuals have moved away and started new lives. These findings also affect our understanding of ethnic conflict: “angry young men” may join rebel movements in large numbers after oil production begins, but they are not inherently more socially conservative or politically radical than other groups. Taken together, these findings about birthplace, residence, and occupation modify our understanding of ethnic identification and ethnic conflict, and constitute a novel contribution to the literature.

*Birthplace*

My most noteworthy finding is that birthplace, a factor none of the studies in my literature review investigates, has significant effects on both political preferences *and* the social and elite contact variables which other theories contend affect political preferences. I found that the closer a respondent’s birthplace was to Hoima District, the more likely he or she was to not want to intermarry, to have consulted a tribal leader, and to want Bunyoro to receive share of oil revenues. Of all the demographic factors tested, birthplace most consistently predicted outcome variables. Finding that birthplace matters more to social and political views than place of current residence is problematic for dominant rational choice explanations of ethnic identity and ethnic politics. To probe the effect of birthplace more closely, I created a few additional variables breaking out the birthplace variable and conducted further regressions. This analysis and its implications are given in the next section.

*Place of Residence: Near Oil*

Proximity to oil affected respondents’ likelihood of having consulted with a government representative (a 24 percentage point increase, at 99% confidence) and expectations of problems from oil development (a 19 percentage point increase, at 95% confidence). These findings are not surprising. The government has held community outreach meetings in Kabaale over the past few years to educate residents about oil development,[[129]](#footnote-129) and people in Kabaale have likely had more opportunities to consult with government representatives about oil.

Officials and politicians may also be making themselves more available to people in communities likely to be directly affected by oil in an effort to forestall future conflict or better understand their concerns. As regards the effect of nearness to oil on expectations of problems, government and civil society meetings have likely increased Kabaale residents’ awareness of the potential harms of oil production. In a 2012 interview with me, Robert Byaruhanga, the Bunyoro Region Field Coordinator for the Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO), said that his NGO has been “trying to sensitize the people” of Kabaale about environmental damage from oil production and has conducted a number of community meetings about this issue.[[130]](#footnote-130)

It is interesting, however, that nearness to oil affected contact with government elites and expectations of problems but did not affect beliefs about revenue sharing. This lends further support to my finding that contact with elites and expectations do not drive variation in political preferences. If identity and political preference were highly mutable, we would expect to see different political preferences among people living near to oil as compared to those living further away. Instead, as noted earlier, place of birth tends to predict political preferences.

One might explain the lack of difference between Kabaale and Katanga by arguing that people across Hoima District expect to experience similar effects from oil development and assume that the district as a whole would receive a revenue share. There is a problem with this logic, however: people in Katanga may well conceive of themselves as belonging to the same political unit as Kabaale and entitled to a share of oil revenues, but people in Kabaale may not share this view. If individuals are utility-maximizing, people in Kabaale should prefer that only people in areas with displacement—areas like the future site of an oil refinery—receive a share of oil revenues. One might respond that people form ethnic coalitions when the ethnic group is large enough to plausibly influence resource distribution. This may explain why people in Kabaale do not have a statistically significant preference for allocating the revenue share to only areas with displacement. In this case, though, people from all three groups should prefer that the revenue share be distributed to Hoima District.

*Place of Residence: Urban Environments*

I used two variables describing place of residence, one coding for residence in an urban area (Hoima Town) and one for residence near the oil exploration sites (Kabaale). Amongst those who wanted Bunyoro to receive a share of oil revenues, I find that living in an urban area made respondents more likely to want that share to benefit only Hoima District (a 28 percentage point increase, at 98% confidence) and less likely to want that share to benefit people in areas with displacement (a 22 percentage point decrease, at 99% confidence). These findings are not surprising. People in Hoima Town would not benefit from a revenue share that went solely to displaced persons, and would benefit more from a share concentrated in Hoima District (and presumably distributed from Hoima Town) than one spread across Bunyoro as a whole.

What is more surprising is that urbanity did not affect social views or preference that there be a revenue sharing agreement at all. The modernizing effects typically associated with urbanization—breakdown of tribal affiliation, which might be indicated by differences in social variables, or greater nationalization, which might reduce preferences for revenue sharing—are apparently not at play in Hoima. [[131]](#footnote-131) This does not necessarily provide evidence against these effects, though: Hoima Town has a population of about 42,000 people,[[132]](#footnote-132) and may not be large enough or sufficiently developed to cause the changes usually associated with urbanization.

*Occupation*

Occupation had a slight effect on the language variable (an eight percentage point decrease in probability of preferring English over Runyoro with each increase in skill level, at 90% confidence). Education did not have a similar effect, so the effect of occupation cannot be interpreted as masking the effect of greater education. Rather, this effect might be explained by unskilled laborers rarely coming into contact with English speakers and therefore seeing no instrumental value to teaching their children English (in the way that people who come into contact with English speakers and associate speaking English with economic opportunity might).

***Findings: Effect of Birthplace***

None of the hypotheses that the literature would lead us to believe explain political preferences accounted for the variation in responses about revenue sharing seen in my study. Instead, demographic factors had the greatest explanatory power. The demographic variable with the most substantial and consistent effect on political preference was birthplace. The closer a person’s birthplace to Hoima District, the more likely he or she was to be unwilling to intermarry (a 13 percentage point increase with each “level increase” in proximity of birthplace to Hoima District, at 99% confidence), to have consulted a tribal leader (a nearly 10 percentage point increase at each level, at 95% confidence), and to believe that there should be a revenue sharing agreement (a 13 percentage point increase at each level, at 99% confidence).

These results suggest that those born in Hoima District have stronger tribal loyalties than those born elsewhere in Bunyoro or outside the sub-region—more parochial social views as well as greater exposure to tribal elites—and are more likely to desire a revenue sharing agreement. We might assume that this means that birthplace affects social views, which in turn affect political preferences. However, birthplace did not affect respondents’ preferences about which region should benefit from a revenue sharing agreement or whether benefit should be restricted to co-ethnics. This suggests that social views and political preferences are separable, supporting my earlier finding that social views do not predict political preference.

To investigate what was driving the effect of birthplace on political preferences, I performed additional regressions. The birthplace variable that was producing statistically significant results in the earlier regressions was coded 2=Hoima District, 1=Elsewhere in Bunyoro, and 0=Outside Bunyoro. I created dummy variables for each of these categories and regressed them on the social, expectations, elite contact, and revenue sharing variables (Table 6). I also created new birthplace variables for locations in Hoima District, excluding subjects born outside the district, and regressed these on the same outcome variables (Table 7). The new birthplace variables are given in Table 5.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| TABLE 5: Birthplace Variables | |
| ***Birthplace: all Uganda*** |  |
| BP: Hoima District | 1=Born in Hoima District, 0=Not |
| BP: Bunyoro | 1=Born in Bunyoro, outside Hoima District, 0=Not |
| BP: Elsewhere | 1=Born outside Bunyoro, 0=Not |
| ***Birthplace: Hoima District*** |  |
| BP: Kabaale | 1=Born in Kabaale or another oil producing village, 0=Not |
| BP: Hoima Town | 1=Born in Hoima Town, 0=Not |
| BP: Rural | 1=Born in a rural village not near oil, 0=Not |

*Summary of Findings: “All Uganda” Regression (Table 6)*

* Being born in Hoima District accounted for the greatest variation in outcome variables. Compared to respondents born outside Bunyoro, those born in Hoima were substantially more likely to be unwilling to intermarry, have consulted a government leader, expect problems, and believe that there should be a revenue sharing agreement. The effect of birthplace on consultation with government elites was hidden in the initial demographic variable analysis (Table 4).
* People born in Bunyoro but outside of Hoima District were also more likely to prefer a revenue sharing agreement than those born elsewhere in Uganda, but otherwise did not have substantially different responses compared to other groups.
* The effect of birthplace on contact with tribal elites disappeared when birthplace was broken out as Hoima District, Bunyoro, and Elsewhere.[[133]](#footnote-133)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TABLE 6: Effect of Birthplace (All Uganda) on Outcome Variables | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Marr. | Lang, | Tribe | Gov. | Benefit | Prob. | Share | Bunyoro | Hoima | Disp. | Co-eth. |
| BP: Hoima District | .2591  (.01)\*\*\* | .0477  (.55) | .1458  (.16) | .1472  (.10)\* | .0792  (.45) | .2314  (.01)\*\*\* | .2890  (.00)\*\*\* | -.0196  (.90) | -.0061  (.97) | .0257  (.82) | .0850  (.58) |
| BP: Bunyoro | .1537  (.31) | -.0455  (.72) | -.1531  (.31) | .1769  (.18) | .1168  (.45) | .0782  (.57) | .3022  (.04)\*\* | .0829  (.69) | -.0507  (.80) | -.0322  (.83) | .0213  (.92) |
| Oil | -.0468  (.67) | .0152  (.87) | .1317  (.22) | .2515  (.01)\*\*\* | -.0480  (.67) | .1779  (.07)\*\* | .0336  (.75) | -.1711  (.21) | .0268  (.84) | .1442  (.15) | -.1048  (.45) |
| Urban | .0008  (.99) | .0931  (.25) | .0851  (.38) | .1187  (.16) | -.0410  (.68) | .1475  (.09)\* | -.0063  (.95) | -.0578  (.63) | .2800  (.02)\*\* | -.2222  (.01)\*\*\* | -.1461  (.23) |
| Age | -.0010  (.79) | -.0048  (.13) | .0051  (.17) | .0027  (.41) | .0033  (.40) | -.0011  (.75) | -.0098  (.01)\*\*\* | .0092  (.10)\* | -.0053  (.34) | -.0039  (.33) | -.0017  (.76) |
| Gender | .0567  (.47) | .0220  (.74) | -.1685  (.03)\*\* | -.0587  (.39) | .0524  (.51) | -.2495  (.00)\*\*\* | -.0067  (.93) | .2046  (.04)\*\* | -.2169  (.03)\*\* | .0122  (.86) | .0053  (.96) |
| Education | -.1100  (.00)\*\*\* | .0302  (.33) | -.0506  (.17) | .0156  (.63) | .0259  (.49) | .0001  (1.0) | -.0421  (.24) | .0857  (.07)\*\* | -.0592  (.20) | -.0265  (.43) | -.0351  (.46) |
| Occupation | -.0652  (.28) | -.0826  (.10)\* | -.0199  (.74) | -.0603  (.25) | -.0035  (.96) | .0450  (.40) | -.0366  (.53) | .0138  (.84) | -.0017  (.98) | -.0121  (.81) | -.1085  (.12) |
| Constant | .6825  (.00) | .3180  (.05) | .2378  (.20) | -.0270  (.87) | .4503  (.02) | .4800  (.00) | .8422  (.00) | .0489  (.86) | .6429  (.02) | .4060  (.04) | .6397  (.02) |
| *N* | 177 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 119 | 119 | 119 | 119 |
| *Notes:* Standard errors in parentheses. \**p*=.10, \*\**p*=.05, \*\*\**p*=.01.  “BP: Elsewhere” used as omitted category. | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TABLE 7: Effect of Birthplace (within Hoima District) on Outcome Variables | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Marr. | Lang. | Tribe | Gov. | Benefit | Prob. | Share | Bunyoro | Hoima | DIsp. | Co-eth. |
| BP: Kabaale | -.4219  (.03)\*\* | -.1011  (.55) | .0651  (.75) | .2619  (.14) | -.1362  (.49) | .1320  (.42) | .0098  (.96) | .2986  (.18) | -.2060  (.36) | -.0926  (.59) | .3436  (.14) |
| BP: Hoima Town | -.0504  (.61) | .1188  (.17) | -.0104  (.92) | .0181  (.84) | -.1082  (.29) | .0744  (.37) | .1035  (.28) | .0027  (.980 | -.0660  (.57) | .0633  (.49) | .0179  (.88) |
| Oil | .2317  (.20) | -.0114  (.94) | .1594  (.40) | .0773  (.64) | -.0114  (.95) | .0776  (.61) | -.0027  (.99) | -.2906  (.18) | .1354  (.53) | .1551  (.93) | .0899  (.69) |
| Urban | .0416  (.73) | .0409  (.70) | .1371  (.28) | .1168  (.29) | .0443  (.72) | .0385  (.71) | -.0822  (.49) | .0516  (.73) | .2445  (.10)\* | -.2961  (.01)\*\*\* | -.1759  (.25) |
| Age | -.0031  (.51) | -.0049  (.25) | .0035  (.48) | .0031  (.48) | -.0020  (.68) | -.0033  (.42) | -.0080  (.09)\* | .0140  (.03)\*\* | -.0133  (.04)\*\* | -.0006  (.90) | -.0061  (.35) |
| Gender | .0320  (.75) | .0333  (.70) | -.1615  (.12) | .0066  (.94) | .0833  (.42) | -.3393  (.00)\*\*\* | -.0385  (.69) | .3125  (.01)\*\*\* | -.2541  (.03)\*\* | -.0583  (.53) | .1131  (.36) |
| Education | -.0973  (.03)\*\* | .0079  (.84) | -.0934  (.05)\*\* | -.0078  (.85) | .0278  (.54) | -.0081  (.83) | -.0730  (.09)\* | .0463  (.39) | -.0395  (.46) | -.0068  (.87) | -.0941  (.10)\* |
| Occupation | -.0671  (.42) | .1193  (.10)\* | .0562  (.52) | -.0818  (.28) | -.0280  (.74) | .0764  (.28) | -.0087  (.91) | .0760  (.40) | -.0625  (.49) | -.0136  (.85) | -.0613  (.51) |
| Constant | .9847  (.00) | .4634  (.01) | .3563  (.11) | .1552  (.42) | .7083  (.00) | .8236  (.00) | 1.119  (.00) | -.3468  (.21) | .9848  (.00) | .3620  (.09) | .9687  (.00) |
| *N* | 134 | 134 | 134 | 134 | 134 | 134 | 134 | 95 | 95 | 95 | 95 |
| *Notes:* Standard errors in parentheses. \**p*=.10, \*\**p*=.05, \*\*\**p*=.01.  “Rural” used as omitted category; all subjects born outside of Hoima District excluded from analysis; people born in other towns located near to the oil included in “Kabaale” category. | | | | | | | | | | | |

*Summary of Findings: “within Hoima District” Regression (Table 7)*

* In an analysis that included only subjects born in Hoima District, being born in Kabaale, the village near the oil, was associated with an increase in willingness to intermarry, as compared to respondents born in other rural areas in Hoima. Being born in Hoima Town did not have statistically significant effects on any variables.

*Analyzing Birthplace Regression Results*

As Tables 6 and 7 show, most of the effects associated with birthplace in earlier regressions come from regional variation rather than variation within Hoima District. In the regional birthplace analysis (Table 6), being born in Hoima District accounted for most of the effects of birthplace on social views, elite contact, and expectations. As compared to those born outside of Bunyoro, people born in Hoima District were more likely to be unwilling to intermarry (a 26 percentage point increase, at 99% confidence), have consulted government representatives (a 15 percentage point increase, at 90% confidence), expect problems from oil production (a 23 pecentage point increase, at 99% confidence), and think that there should be a revenue sharing agreement (a 29 percentage point increase, at 99.9% confidence).

The effect of being born in Hoima on willingness to intermarry is likely due in part to the fact that Hoima District is somewhat more isolated that other Banyoro districts with greater tourism industries. Masindi, for example, is home to Murchison Falls, one of Uganda’s most popular tourist destinations. Hoima is also the seat of the Omukama, which may strengthen tribal networks in the district. The effect of being born in Hoima on contact with government representatives is probably driven by the fact that immigrants to Hoima District are less likely to have formed strong relationships with local leaders. Hoima District has seen an influx of internal migrants since oil was discovered. Recent immigrants, who moved in the hopes of working at oil rigs or selling goods to laborers, presumably do not expect problems to occur because of oil production, and may account for the fact that people born in Hoima are more likely to anticipate problems.

Variation in preference for or against a revenue sharing agreement appears to be driven by whether or not a person was born in Bunyoro: being born in Hoima and being born elsewhere in Bunyoro increased the likelihood that a respondent thought there should be such an agreement (increases of 29 and 30 percentage points, respectively, at 99.9% and 96% confidence). When I performed the regressions shown in Table 6 using subjects born in Bunyoro but outside of Hoima District as the reference category instead of subjects born outside Bunyoro, I found that being born in Hoima District had no effect on political preference: the relevant factor for political views is whether or not a person was born in Bunyoro sub-region. To illustrate this, Figure 5 shows rates of support for a revenue sharing agreement amongst respondents born outside of Bunyoro, in Hoima District, and elsewhere in Bunyoro. While support was slightly higher amongst people born in Hoima District than elsewhere in Bunyoro, the difference was small; the greatest gap was between those born outside and within Bunyoro.

This further supports my study’s suggestion that social views and political preferences are separable. People born in Hoima had more parochial social views than those born in other parts of Bunyoro; however, the political preferences of people born in Hoima and those born elsewhere in Bunyoro were similar. The idea that social views do not directly drive political preferences is further evinced by the fact that being born in Hoima was associated with decreased willingness to intermarry but had no effect on whether or not respondents thought that revenues should benefit only co-ethnics.

*Figure 5: Percentage of People Who Support a Revenue Sharing Agreement, All Respondents*

An analysis of respondents born in Hoima District itself showed that variation in birthplace within the district had no statistically significant effects on political preferences. Figure 6 shows that rates of support for a revenue sharing agreement were similar amongst groups of respondents born in Hoima District.

There was one statistically significant finding from the analysis shown in Table 7. Those born in Kabaale were more willing to intermarry than those born in other rural villages (a 42 percentage point change, at 97% confidence). This finding is not in tension with the finding that residence in Hoima District decreased willingness to intermarry: that effect is presumably driven by people born in other villages, the reference category for

*Figure 6: Percentage of People Who Support a Revenue Sharing Agreement, Respondents Born in Hoima District*

the regressions in Table 7. This difference is likely due to the fact that Kabaale is closer to Lake Albert than villages further inland, and Kabaale residents frequently encounter Congolese fishermen. People born in Kabaale, who have grown up around people from outside Bunyoro, may be more socially tolerant than people born in areas with fewer foreigners. The same may be true of people born in Katanga, which has an economic migrant population because of its tea plantation—the rural birthplace reference category referred not only to people born in Katanaga but to all people born in villages in Hoima District other than Kabaale.

*Explaining the Effect of Birthplace on Political Preferences*

The data from my study do not provide enough evidence to determine conclusively *why* regional differences in birthplace matter to political preference and other views and perceptions. I offer two potential explanations, which would require further research to substantiate. The first is simply that people born outside of Bunyoro are likely to have more ties outside of Bunyoro. They may have family and friends who live outside Bunyoro, and want them to benefit from Uganda’s oil wealth. They may also have a greater sense of Ugandan nationalism than tribal identity because they grew up outside of the Banyoro tribal homeland. This explanation privileges psychological attachments and assumes that they supersede individual interests. Similarly, people born within a region that has found oil may prefer that their region disproportionately benefit from oil because they and most of their near relations live in the same area, or they were instilled with a greater sense of ethnic loyalty growing up within the tribal kingdom.

The second possible explanation is more complicated and is based on calculations of individual interest. If birthplace is locally understood to be an important identity marker, those born outside of Bunyoro Kingdom may be perceived as not fully Banyoro (that is, “true” Banyoro identity, as understood within Bunyoro, may entail both Banyoro ancestry and birth). Caselli and Coleman’s position, that “ethnic identity can…be used as a marker to recognize potential infiltrators,” is worth recalling here.[[134]](#footnote-134) If birthplace is an identity marker, then the Bunyoro-born majority may reject the identity claims of people who were not born in the ethnic homeland.

Variation in preference for a revenue sharing agreement may be due to Banyoro born outside of the kingdom believing that their claim to Banyoro ethnic identity is weak despite their parentage. If Bunyoro Kingdom received a share of oil rents, benefit to the community would likely be either indirect, through greater funding for outreach activities, or distributed through the network of county and parish-level chiefs across Bunyoro. In the latter case, presumably only “true” Banyoro would receive patronage from tribal leaders. Individuals born outside of Bunyoro would oppose a revenue sharing agreement despite residing in the oil-producing region, explaining why place of birth, not of residence, predicts political preferences.

This hypothesis is in keeping with a rational choice view of ethnic politics: Banyoro who have what they believe will be credible claims to oil rents should like to see a revenue sharing agreement with Bunyoro, while Banyoro who believe that their claims will not be honored would be expected to oppose such an agreement. As Chandra writes, people are “instrumental actors who invest in an identity because it offers them the best available means by which to obtain desired benefits, and not because such identification is valuable in itself.”[[135]](#footnote-135) There may be limits, however, on the extent to which individuals can manipulate their ethnic identities for material gain. Tribal ancestry and residence in the traditional tribal territory may not be sufficient to make an individual’s claim to a tribal resource credible, adding additional nuance to our understanding of when and how individuals are able to instrumentalize their identities.

Little political science research has been done on the effect of birthplace on ethnic identity and ethnic claims. The sociology and psychology literatures provide support for the hypothesis that birthplace confers credibility on identity claims, however. In their study on the credibility of identity claims in Scotland and England, David McCrone and Frank Bechhofer find that birthplace is a more important identity marker than parentage, residence, race, and accent in determining whether or not someone is considered by others to be “from” a particular place. [[136]](#footnote-136) McCrone and Bechhofer write,

In terms of our national identity, who we are and are judged to be…depends on how well our claims are regarded by those around us. Being considered ‘not one of us’ means being an outsider whether one wants to be or not…being born in Scotland enables people to make claims and to have them accepted.[[137]](#footnote-137)

Masaki Matsunaga et al. find that parent’s birthplace predicts the ethnic identity and acculturation of Mexican-heritage children in the southwestern United States.[[138]](#footnote-138) My own survey did not ask about parents’ birthplace, but this finding speaks to the importance of birthplace to ethnic affiliation.

Marcela Raffaelli et al. argue that “birthplace can be seen as [a] measure[e] of ‘distance’ from the home country.”[[139]](#footnote-139) Dvora Yanow and Marleen van der Haar have also shown that birthplace is used as a proxy for the strength or authenticity of one’s identity, studying the Netherlands’ administrative system of categorizing citizens according to Dutch or foreign birthplaces.[[140]](#footnote-140) In their analysis, birthplace “underlies definitions…of ‘race.’”[[141]](#footnote-141) If this is the case in Bunyoro, individuals could be using birthplace to evaluate how credible their claims to potential future resources would be. Marcela Raffaelli et al.’s argument may apply to regions within countries, in which case birthplace may serve as a measure of distance from the tribal kingdom. Individuals born outside of Bunyoro may surmise that their claims to benefit from a tribally administered resource would not be honored and prefer that the central government receive (and distribute) all rents, rather than giving a share of oil revenues to Bunyoro Kingdom.

There has been some work on birthplace as an identity marker in Africa, though these studies are few and focused on citizenship claims rather than ethnic identity. Joanna Davidson argues that a proposed amendment to Guinea-Bissau’s constitution, restricting top government positions to people born in the country, reflects a postcolonial shift from kinship definitions of nationhood in Africa to political and legal definitions .[[142]](#footnote-142) This trend appears to have been mostly isolated to West Africa, however, and is likely due to internal political pressures. Guinea-Bissau’s amendment debate followed an attempted military coup by Gambian-born Ansumane Mané. Contention over the status of Burkinabé people[[143]](#footnote-143) in Côte d’Ivoire began after the death of President Félix Houphouët-Boigny initiated a succession struggle between Ivorian-born Henri Konan Bédié and Burkinan-born Alassane Ouattara.[[144]](#footnote-144) The literature that I have encountered on birthplace and identity in Africa does not explain variation in political preferences and identification amongst people born in different regions of the same country. More work remains to be done to investigate birthplace as an ethnic, rather than national, identity marker.

*Theoretical Implications of Birthplace Findings*

My birthplace findings contribute to ethnic identification and conflict theory in a few ways. First, these results appear to demonstrate that ethnic identity is not as fluid as some rational choice theorists contend. Birthplace, not current location, affects the strength of tribal identity and preference for tribal control over resources. Individuals who move to new areas do not automatically adopt the political positions widely held by native residents of those areas. Migration does not seem to significantly attenuate pre-existing loyalties or cause individuals to radically alter their political preferences: people do not forget that they came from outside Bunyoro when they move to Hoima. This may seem obvious, but much rational choice theory *does* assume that identification and political views are wholly shaped by interests, which in turn depend on current residence rather than origins. My results indicate that we cannot simply assume that everyone in a given area—or even everyone purporting to be from the same ethnic group—and subject to the same political pressures and interest calculations share the same views.

Second, individuals likely do form political preferences based on their expectations of benefit or harm, but this may not be in quite the way that much of the rational choice literature posits. As shown earlier, subjects’ responses about expectations of personal benefit or harm from oil *itself* did not have significant effects on their political preferences—people did not support revenue sharing simply because they thought that there might be oil spills, for example. Rather, they made more sophisticated calculations about how likely they were to benefit from the proposed *policy*, a revenue sharing agreement with Bunyoro Kingdom. They based these calculations on judgments of how the Kingdom would distribute resources and whether they would benefit from this allocation. This should not be surprising, but it does call into question the underlying assumptions of resource conflict papers suggesting that benefit or harm caused by oil per se inspire rebellions and sedition, without reference to actors and revenue allocation.

Third, my hypothesis that birthplace determines the credibility of ethnic identity claims—which remains to be proven via further research—concerns ethnic identification theory. The literature often assumes that ethnic identity is binary: individuals may or may not be able to change their ethnic identities at will, but ethnicity itself is an either/or proposition. If correct, this hypothesis about birthplace and identity claims suggests that we should think of ethnic groups as having “hierarchies of belonging” within them, or “degrees” of membership.

*Further Research*

The most novel finding of this study is the effect of birthplace on political preferences. I have suggested, based on sociology and psychology research, that birthplace may affect preferences for or against a tribal share of revenues if it serves as an ethnic identity marker in Bunyoro: those born in Bunyoro may be considered “more Banyoro” than those born elsewhere. More research is needed to confirm whether or not this is the reason why birthplace affects political preference. One could conduct a survey similar to McCrone and Bechhofer’s studies in Scotland, asking respondents whether hypothetical individuals with various identity markers (e.g., parentage, birthplace, current residence) are Banyoro or not.

I also surveyed only in Hoima District and studied whether or not there are differences in preferences within an oil-rich district. Expanding the survey to districts across Bunyoro could yield interesting information about how preferences differ across districts in the same tribal kingdom and region. My research also investigates pre-production politics, and it would be interesting to return to Uganda after production has begun to ask the same questions and compare pre- and post-production results. Such a comparison would be a rare opportunity to evaluate when political radicalization in oil-rich regions occurs, and whether anticipation of oil rents exerts different political pressures than the materialization of those rents.

**CONCLUSION**

Toward the beginning of this piece, I drew from the literature on ethnic identity, ethnic conflict, and resource conflict to hypothesize four drivers that might predict local people’s preference for or against tribal control of oil resources: social views, expectations of personal benefit or harm from oil development, proximity to oil, and contact with and trust in elites. Logistic regression analysis showed that *none* of these factors accounted for the variation in respondents’ preferences about a revenue sharing agreement with Bunyoro Kingdom.

Instead, the best predictors of political preferences were demographic factors. Some of these were to be expected: age, gender, and education, for example. Other demographic variables had surprising effects. We might have thought that residence or occupation would predict political preferences, given rational choice theories insisting on individuals’ *current* calculations of self-interest and the role of young, underemployed men in resource conflicts, but they did not. Birthplace had the greatest effect on subjects’ beliefs about whether or not there should be a revenue-sharing agreement.

Birthplace is largely unexplored in the literature, and it remains unclear why birthplace had the effects it did in my study. I have proposed two potential explanations. One is that most people have friends and family in the place they were born, want these people to benefit from resources, and therefore prefer policies that benefit both the place they were born and the place they are now. People born in Bunyoro, who have ties mainly within Bunyoro, want there to be an agreement that disproportionately benefits Bunyoro, while people born outside of Bunyoro prefer that oil resources benefit all Ugandans. Like most constructivist theories, this explanation assumes that interests shape political preferences, but adds benefit to loved ones as a variable that individuals consider when forming preferences.

The other potential explanation I have offered is that birthplace may serve as an ethnic identity marker in Bunyoro, with people born in the Kingdom considered to be “more Banyoro” than those born without. If so, then those born in other areas of Uganda would not expect to benefit from rents distributed by the tribal kingdom, an institution presumably interested in perpetuating a traditional definition of “genuine” Banyoro identity. People outside of Bunyoro would rather the central government distribute resources, while people born in Bunyoro prefer a revenue-sharing agreement. This explanation is also interests-based, but contends that out-group acceptance limits people’s ability to profit from ethnic identity. This is in contrast to strict rational choice theories asserting that individuals can change their identities at will.

More research is needed to prove or disprove these explanations. Regardless of whether either hypothesis is true, the finding that birthplace affects political preferences more strongly than place of residence may suggest new ways of thinking about how people conceive of their interests, identify with their ethnic group, and form political preferences. People do not seem to forget where they came from when thinking about who they are and whether they believe a policy is fair: the weight of personal background and history bears on ethnic identification and politics.

Finding that respondents, who are *all ethnic Banyoro*, did not all agree that their tribal leadership should receive a share of oil revenues is also interesting in and of itself. The ethnic conflict literature sometimes treats ethnic mobilization in terms of a monolithic mass either mobilizing itself or being manipulated in mobilization by elites. That members of the same tribal group do not all agree that the tribe should distribute rents suggests that this view needs to be revised. Members of the same ethnic group do not all share the same political opinions, which may seem obvious but is often forgotten in ethnic conflict theory. On a more practical level, security actors should consider intragroup divisions when thinking about causes of and potential resolutions to ethnic mobilization.

The finding that occupation does not predict political preferences is also important. Young, unemployed men are of tremendous concern in the resource conflict literature; as my interview with Nsamba and various media reports demonstrate, they are also a worry to Ugandans. My results do not tell us anything about whether or not underemployed youths will become politicized in the future, but do they imply that this group is not *inherently* angrier or more radical than the rest of the population.

As the preceding three paragraphs outline, this study challenges our understanding of how current and original place of residence shape identity and political preferences, whether ethnic group membership always entails certain political views, and when and how young men become open to rebel recruitment. My findings imply that many prevailing theories may oversimplify the causes of ethnic identification and conflict. The relationship between ethnic identity and ethnic politics is complicated, and one of the main contributions of this paper may be to suggest that it is often irreducibly so.

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**APPENDIX 1: SELECTED LIST OF UGANDAN TRIBAL TERMS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TABLE 9: Tribal Terms Mentioned in This Study | | | |
| **Tribal kingdom and sub-region** | **Collective demonym** | **Singular**  **demonym** | **Language** |
| Bunyoro | Banyoro | Munyoro | Runyoro |
| Buganda | Baganda | Muganda | Luganda |
| Ankole | Banyankole | Munyankole | Runyankole |

**APPENDIX 2: ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS**

In the body of the text, I analyzed the effect of selected demographic factors (birthplace, living near oil, living in a city, and occupation) on social, expectations, elite contact, and political preference variables (Table 4). Analysis of demographic factors included in the regression at Table 4 but not analyzed in depth in the text is given below.

*Age*

In my analysis, age predicted certain political preferences but had no effect on social views, expectations, and elite contact variables. Age appears not to affect the strength of tribal affiliation per se; rather, it affects the extent to which oil is politicized for individuals. Specifically, an increase of one year in age was associated with a 0.96 percentage point decrease in preference that there be a revenue-sharing agreement with Bunyoro, at 99% percent confidence. While this effect is small, it refers only to the rate of change associated with a single year and is more substantial when we consider differences between generations. For example, 48 year-olds’ preference for a revenue sharing agreement is 28.8 percentage points lower than that of 18 year-olds.

Younger people have a stronger preference for a revenue sharing agreement. We might think that this suggests that young people are more attached to their tribal identities, but age did not predict social views or have any effect on preference that revenues be solely distributed to co-ethnics. Rather, younger people may be more politically radical or instrumental, seeking benefit (a share of oil rents) more than older people. Uganda is a poor country with a high birthrate. There are more young people than any other segment of the population and therefore more competition for jobs. The dearth of employment opportunities could mean that young people see oil rents as their sole economic opportunity and therefore strongly favor a revenue sharing agreement.

This finding also affects how we think about the role of young underemployed men in resource conflicts. It seems that younger people of all genders and occupations are more politicized than older people. This supports the earlier finding that occupation did not predict political preferences, and the interpretation that underemployed men do not necessarily have greater grievances than other groups. Young men may be more often recruited after a conflict starts or radicalized after production begins, but this finding implies that younger people in general have similar political preferences.

*Gender*

Women were less likely than men to have consulted a tribal leader and to expect problems arising from oil development. These effects were fairly substantial: 16.9 and 25.1 percentage point decreases relative to men at 97% and 99.9% confidence, respectively. Relative to men, women were also more likely to prefer that Bunyoro as a whole receive funds under a revenue-sharing agreement (a 20.6 percentage point increase, at 96% confidence) and less likely to prefer that Hoima District receive these funds (a 21.6 percentage point decrease, at 97% confidence).

I postulate two potential explanations for the finding that women were less likely to have consulted a tribal leader, though neither can be substantiated with my data. First, women may be less likely to consult tribal leaders because the society is traditional and patriarchal, resulting in women being less assertive or less often serving as head of household. I find this explanation unsatisfactory because there was no significant gender difference in likelihood of consulting a government official: women were sufficiently assertive and/or responsible for managing the household’s problems to approach government representatives just as men did.

What seems more likely is that the tribal leadership is more traditional—and patriarchal—than the state, meaning that women are less likely to have preexisting relationships with tribal leaders and feel comfortable approaching them with personal problems (or feel it is appropriate to do so). Whatever the explanation, the difference in male and female rates of consultation with tribal leaders demonstrates that men are more connected to traditional power structures than women are. This might further imply that women are less open to appeals from tribal leaders than men, which could also contribute to the recruitment of men into ethnic protest movements and rebellions (as noted in the resource conflict literature).

Women were also less likely to expect problems arising from oil development than men. It is interesting that the data show no significant difference between male and female expectations of benefit. One might explain this with reference to occupation, arguing that women are more often shopkeepers, who might expect fewer problems, but occupation is included as a control and shopkeeping is not an exclusively female occupation in Hoima. Moreover, further testing of occupational dummy variables did not show that being a shopkeeper was associated with lower expectations of problems. One might also argue that women are less educated and therefore less knowledgeable about the environmental effects of oil extraction or countries that have seen instability as a result of oil development. However, education is also a control.

I propose two different hypothetical explanations for the gender effect on expectations of problems. First, because women have less contact with (or trust in) tribal leaders, and tribal leaders probably *do* expect problems, women may be less aware of oil-related problems. One might argue that if this is so, we should see a difference in male and female political preferences as well, with men supporting Bunyoro Kingdom’s demand for a share of revenues, but the analysis in Table 2 showed that consulting with elites didn’t affect political preferences. One can consult with and learn from a trusted advisor without necessarily adopting that person’s political views, though. Second, both women and men may expect that migration to Bunyoro will increase (indeed, the area has already seen increased immigration and prices), but since the majority of economic migrants have been male, only men may feel that this threatens them by intensifying competition for traditionally male jobs. Of course, wives and female dependents would also be harmed by a male breadwinner finding less work, but men may feel this risk more acutely and homogeneously.

Women were also more likely than men to prefer that a revenue share accrue to all Bunyoro, and less likely to prefer that that share benefit only Hoima District. We might think that this suggests that women are more traditional and have greater tribal loyalty, but the finding that women were less likely than men to have consulted a tribal leader contradicts this. In a field experiment on voting in Benin, Wantchekon finds that women respond better to public goods appeals than men do and theorizes that this is because women in Benin are traders: women are more aware of conditions across the country and value infrastructure improvements. While women in Bunyoro are not cross-district traders, a similar logic may explain the gender effect on preferences about regional distribution of oil rents. Marriage in Bunyoro is patrilocal.[[145]](#footnote-145) Married women may have been removed from families in other districts or know other women who have moved elsewhere to marry, giving them ties to people across the Bunyoro sub-region and a preference that these people also benefit from a revenue sharing agreement.

*Education*

Each level increase in education was associated with a ten percentage point increase in willingness to intermarry, at 99.9% confidence.[[146]](#footnote-146) This finding is not surprising: education decreases prejudices and contributes to the breaking of traditional affiliations and stereotypes. It is interesting that education does not have a similar effect on respondents’ preference for learning English versus Runyoro. I suspect that language preferences may be informed by perceived utility of English (and therefore occupation) as well as social values, meaning that education in and of itself does not exert a significant influence on the language variable

Amongst those who answered that there should be a revenue sharing agreement, greater education was also associated with a slight increase in desires that such an agreement benefit all Bunyoro, rather than just Hoima District or displaced people (an increase of 8.6 percentage points with each increasing level of education, at 94% confidence). This is an interesting finding given that education had no significant effect on preference that there be a revenue sharing agreement. In the context of education increasing willingness to intermarry, these political preference findings support my earlier finding that social views do not affect beliefs about revenue sharing, at least for more educated people—greater education changed social views but had no effect on whether or not a person thought there should be a revenue sharing agreement. People who want there to be a revenue sharing agreement are not solely drawn from demographic groups that we might expect to be more parochial.

On the whole, more educated people had more progressive social views, but those educated people who did prefer that there be a share suggested that it benefit Bunyoro as a whole. More educated people may be more willing to share benefits with a larger group because they are likely in more stable economic circumstances. Alternatively, the effect of education on preference that Bunyoro as a whole benefit from a revenue sharing agreement may be driven by a subset of tribally nationalistic elite with broad tribal loyalties. This latter explanation would be in keeping with experiments showing that education trains the mind to think in abstract categories and facilitates the creation of national loyalties.[[147]](#footnote-147) This is not to say that education increases tribal loyalties, but that those people who both are educated and strongly attached to their tribal identity may feel a greater allegiance to Bunyoro than other people.

**APPENDIX 3: SURVEY RESULTS – EXPECTATIONS OF PROBLEMS**

The concerns of the President, Members of Parliament, and the Omukama about oil development and revenue sharing have been extensively covered in the Ugandan media. Less attention has been given to the concerns of non-elites in the areas where oil has been discovered. My survey was small (186 subjects) and cannot be assumed to be entirely representative. Results from this survey do, however, give some insight into the specific concerns of regular Banyoro in Hoima District. In addition to asking respondents whether or not they expected to be personally affected by problems arising from oil development, I asked what kinds of problems they anticipated. Answers are divided by survey group and given in Table 8.

*Summary of Findings*

* The majority in each survey group thought that they would be harmed in some way by oil development. *Boda-boda* drivers were the most likely to expect problems (90% of respondents), followed by residents of Kabaale, shopkeepers, and residents of Katanga.
* The most frequently cited problem was war, referring ambiguously to interstate war and rebellion. *Boda-boda* drivers were again most likely to expect war, but the difference between them and other groups was not as great here as it was for overall expectations.
* In descending order, the most frequently cited concerns after war were environmental damage, land issues (both contestation over land rights and fair compensation of evicted landowners), immigration issues (referring primarily to overcrowding and subsequent increases in price), issues at oil rigs (such as strikes), and corruption. *Boda-boda* drivers were notably less likely than other groups to expect to be harmed by land issues, immigration, or issues at rigs.

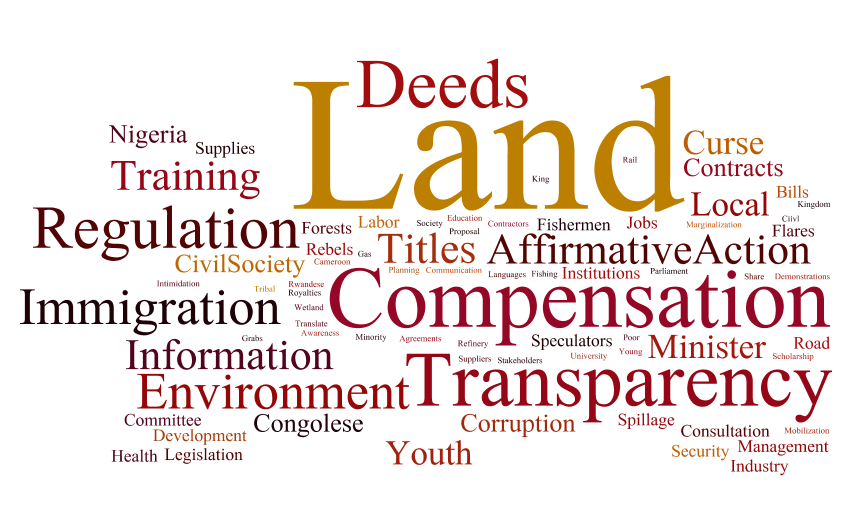
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 8: Expectations of Problems across Subject Groups | | | | | | | |
|  | **Will there be problems?\*** | **What kind?\*\*** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Yes** | **War** | **Environment** | **Land Issues** | **Immigration** | **Issues at Rigs** | **Corruption** |
| **Kabaale**  *N* | 73.8%  (31) | 41.9%  (13) | 22.6%  (7) | 45.2%  (14) | 12.9%  (4) | 3.2%  (1) | 3.2%  (1) |
| **Katanga**  *N* | 59.1%  (26) | 34.6%  (9) | 19.2%  (5) | 23.1%  (6) | 30.8%  (8) | 0 | 0 |
| **Boda-Boda**  *N* | 90.0%  (45) | 57.8%  (26) | 46.7%  (21) | 8.9%  (4) | 6.7%  (3) | 2.2%  (1) | 4.4%  (2) |
| **Shopkeepers**  *N* | 64.0%  (32) | 31.3%  (10) | 43.8%  (14) | 9.4%  (3) | 31.3%  (10) | 6.3%  (2) | 0 |
| **Total**  *N* | 72.0%\*\*\*  (134) | 43.3%\*\*\*\*  (58) | 35.1%  (47) | 20.1%  (27) | 18.7%  (25) | 3.0%  (4) | 2.2%  (3) |
| *Notes:* \*Share and *n*-values out of total number of subjects in each group (42 in Kabaale group, 44 in Katanga group, and 50 in each of the *boda-boda* and shopkeeper groups). \*\*Share and *n-*values out of number of subjects in each group that said there would be problems (31 in Kabaale group, 26 in Katanga group, 45 in *boda-boda* group, and 32 in shopkeeper group). \*\*\*Share and *n-*value out of total number of respondents, 186. \*\*\*\*This and subsequent total shares and *n-*values out of total number of subjects who expected problems, 134.  Respondents referred both to inter-state war (invasion by neighboring states) and to internal rebellion when citing war as a potential problem. Environmental issues cited included air pollution, soil pollution from run-off, oil spills, deforestation, and destruction of fishing industry. Land issues referred to displacement, compensation for displacement (and related issues about title deeds), and speculators buying up land in Hoima. Immigration was described as harmful mostly insofar as respondents expected increased disease and crime from overcrowding, rather than because they resented immigration per se. Issues at rigs referred to workplace accidents and, in one case, the expectation that workers might riot if they were not paid on time. | | | | | | | |

**APPENDIX 4: ELITE EXPECTATIONS OF PROBLEMS**

Comparing the results in Appendix 3 with comments made by government and tribal leaders provides a sense of the similarities and discrepancies between the concerns of elites and non-elites regarding oil. This comparison has implications for Ugandan politics. If non-elite populations do not believe that elites share their concerns, they may opt out of official conflict resolution (i.e., protest or form rebel movements). Obi and Rustad argue that in the Niger Delta, “Militancy is…linked to a generational power shift from local chiefs and elites to young people that took place in the late 1990’s.”[[148]](#footnote-148) Ukoha Ukiwo claims that this power shift occurred because youths did not feel represented by elites of any stripe, and resented slow progress toward a revenue sharing agreement.[[149]](#footnote-149)

*Civil Society Groups*

In the interviews I conducted and community meetings I had the chance to observe, civil society groups were most concerned about land issues, environmental damage, political process (i.e., transparency), and education and training. Figure 5 shows concerns raised by civil society representatives at a May 2012 Resettlement Committee meeting in Hoima with MPs on the Natural Resources Committee, with concerns sized according to the frequency of their mention. Box 1 selects representative quotations from interviews with representatives of an energy management NGO. Land issues were of primary concern, including the lack of titles among customary land users and fairness of



*Figure 7: Concerns Raised at Resettlement Committee Meeting, Sized According to Frequency of Mention*

|  |
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| Box 1: Selected Quotations from Interviews with Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) Representatives[[150]](#footnote-150) |
| **Dickens Komugisha, Executive Director[[151]](#footnote-151)**  *Government Response*   * “Government is treating oil as a very political matter”   *Community Response*   * Of the Banyoro: “for them, they still believe that that oil is their oil…they want a share of revenue.” * “They’re [the Banyoro] also scared. All the countries in Africa have not managed to succeed with their oil. They know things can be worse.”   *Popular Perceptions of the Kingdom*   * “Every person [in Bunyoro] thinks the kingdom owns the land of Bunyoro.” * “If the kingdoms are empowered to use resources…[they] can demand accountability” * “Many people…think the kingdom is not transparent…[and that it should be] providing, like in Buganda.” * “People tend to trust them [tribal chiefs] much more than politicians. [With more money it would be] very possible for them to gain the full trust and confidence of their people.”   *Education and Employment*   * “They [the Banyoro] need affirmative action”   **Robert Byaruhanga, Bunyoro Region Field Coordinator[[152]](#footnote-152)**  *Activism*   * “We are working on encouraging the local people to demonstrate.” * “The Ministry of Energy is now more responsive [because of the demonstrations]” * “They [local people] thought they would be given money [after oil was discovered]. Information concerning oil has not been flowing so well to the local people from government.”   *Violence*   * On government response to activism: “They [government officials] think if we go and sensitize the people…they [the people] can get excited, we can incite them to rebel [against] some activities of oil companies” * “They [Banyoro communities] know that in other African countries, the issue of oil governance is not good…Nigerian scenarios may come here.” * “[We] cannot rule out international conflicts.” * “Local people see a lot of army being placed down [here]…they are not used to seeing a lot of army…they think there may be war” |

compensation for land acquired by the state. The environmental issues raised by civil society groups were unsurprising: NGOs and advocacy groups were concerned about oil spills contaminating the water supply, gas flares polluting the air, and damage to the fishing industry.

As regards education and training, civil society representatives argued that oil companies should provide job training for Banyoro so that they can work in the oil industry, or the government should enforce affirmative action for Banyoro in oil company hiring. Civil society representatives recalled that Bunyoro had been promised a university by the central government, to help with training. While university buildings have been constructed, there has been no attempt to actually hire faculty or begin instruction. Bunyoro had also been promised a Minister for Bunyoro Affairs, a position that now exists but is not associated with an accompanying ministry. Civil society representatives took the Bunyoro university and ministry as evidence of the government reneging on promises. Catherine Murungi of the Hoima Center for Health asked MPs at a May 2012 community meeting, “Are you people serious or is it all paperwork?”[[153]](#footnote-153)

I also interviewed Henry Bazira, the Executive Director of Uganda’s Water Governance Institute and Chairman of the Civil Society Coalition on Oil, an association of Ugandan NGOs working on oil issues (quotations in Box 2). Bazira, a prominent civil society leader, focused on community awareness issues (and the need for NGO advocacy) and the need for employment opportunities and some kind of revenue sharing agreement to benefit the people of Bunyoro. Bazira was skeptical of the value of an agreement with the Kingdom, recommending an agreement with local government.

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| Box 2: Selected Quotations from Interview with Henry Bazira, Executive Director of the Water Governance Institute and Chairman of the Civil Society Coalition for Oil[[154]](#footnote-154) |
| *Public Awareness*   * “The population has little knowledge about the [oil] industry.” * “Expectations are…unrealistic…People expect to become rich men and billionaires overnight.” * Of Civil Society Coalition for Oil advocacy efforts: “[we have been] trying to explain to the people…this resource is not going to make…[them] rich overnight.” * “They [the people] don’t know what it means, if there is a spill.”   *Community Response*   * “[There are] misgivings in the community about [oil] companies…[and] disgruntlement with government.” * “False promises, a dream not achieved, that will cause a change…for now, everybody’s still excited.” * Of tribal mobilization: “It will be suppressed.” * “The fact that they [the Banyoro] are sparsely populated makes it difficult for them to coalesce.”   *Immigration*   * Of foreign immigration: “the locals have seemed to live with it…[but if they] appear to dominate the jobs [at oil refineries], that could spark some riots.” * “Borders are highly porous” between Uganda and the DRC   *Education and Employment*   * “Jobs are going to be created in the auxiliary industries…[such as industries related to] byproducts of crude oil, pharmaceuticals, paints, cosmetics, bitumen.” * Of auxiliary industries: “[There should be a] ringfence for developing local content [that is, employment and ownership].”   *Revenue Sharing*   * “They [Banyoro] suffer the brunt of the impact, [should be given] slightly better consideration.” * “I think there are people who do not trust their king.” * “What is the guarantee that we have that this money will be spent well?” * Of a revenue sharing agreement with the Kingdom: “Must be tagged [sic] to programs with clear deliverables, and there should be accountability.” * “Iguru is asking for ten to twelve percent of what?”[[155]](#footnote-155) |

*Tribal Leadership*

The tribal leader I interviewed, Nsamba, raised most of the same concerns as civil society groups did. As was to be expected, he was also concerned with issues more specific to the tribal kingdom, such as securing a share of oil revenues for Bunyoro-Kitara and seeing that the tribal leadership was consulted in decision-making about oil. As I have mentioned earlier in this paper, Nsamba also raised concerns about rebellion originating from *boda-boda* drivers. Quotations from this interview are shown in Box 3.

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| Box 3: Selected Quotations from Interview with Yolamu Nsamba, Principal Private Secretary to Omukama Solomon Iguru[[156]](#footnote-156) |
| *Land Issues*   * “How are you going to compensate people who don’t have land titles?...People are starting to see this injustice, and they have come here to the king to complain…A lot of people live on land to which they have no title at all.”   *Environmental Concerns*   * “Oil needs a lot of fresh water…[Oil development will] compromise that water for the community…No one has done a serious EIA [Environmental Impact Assessment].” * “There is also the issue of the fisheries.”   *Youth Movements*   * “I cannot talk sense to the young people anymore. That [What has happened in Nigeria] may happen here if they [government] don’t take any measures.” * Of *boda-boda* drivers: “They are of a violent age, you can push them into anything…They are a frustrated lot…[There is] a lot of simmering anger…They fear they may be out of employment [when oil funds better roads]…That semi-educated class…[government] failed to find training for those young men.”   *Education and Employment*   * “Oil companies…hire labor from outside [of Bunyoro].” * Of jobs at oil companies: “They [Banyoro] can’t do them. They can do the lifting, the menial jobs, but then they will say they are underpaid.” * Of the proposed Bunyoro University: “It has never operated, it was proposed two years ago.”   *Involvement of the Tribal Kingdom*   * “[The King] is talking, but…when you have a disempowered king, you have a disempowered community.” * “[There is] a lot of lament in Bunyoro. Our past weighs heavily…The Banyoro have always felt that they are marginalized within Uganda.”   *Immigration*   * “People have always migrated into Bunyoro…the Banyoro have no quarrel at all with migrants.”   *Tensions within Bunyoro*   * “There is tension…they [the Banyoro] quarrel about leadership. The politicians seek out support in the various communities, that is what has created the tensions.” |

*Government Leaders*

In general, government leaders were more optimistic about the effects of oil than civil society and tribal representatives. This is not surprisingly, especially considering that all of the MPs that I interviewed or observed at the Resettlement Committee Meeting belonged to Museveni’s NRM party (as all three of the MPs representing Hoima District do).[[157]](#footnote-157) MPs were forthcoming about the likelihood that pre-production oil deals had been granted in a corrupt fashion, and that prepayments from oil companies had likely been misspent. They also acknowledged community interests in benefitting from oil, but urged community members to have trust in government and patience with the oil development process (and civil society members and tribal leaders to refrain from attempts to mobilize the community). Quotations from some of the MPs present at the 23 May 2012 Resettlement Committee Meeting with Civil Society Groups in Hoima Town are given in Box 4.

I also conducted personal interviews with two Ugandan MPs, Hon. James Rwebembera and Hon. Gerald Karuhanga. Rwebembera represents Bugahya County, one of three seats in Hoima District, and Karuhanga is an independent youth MP (quotations in Boxes 5 and 6). Both have been active on oil issues and occasional critics of Museveni’s use of executive power. In 2012, Rwebembera joined another Bunyoro MP, Hon. Ernest Kiiza,[[158]](#footnote-158) in calling for the restoration of presidential term limits.[[159]](#footnote-159) Karuhanga brought documents to Parliament in 2011 supposedly providing evidence that Tullow Oil had bribed then-Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi, Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa, and Energy Minister Hilary Onek, initiating a major corruption scandal.[[160]](#footnote-160)

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| Box 4: Selected Quotations from Comments Made by MPs at May 2012 Resettlement Committee Meeting in Hoima Town[[161]](#footnote-161) |
| **Hon. Michael Werikhe Kafabusa, MP for Bungokho County South (outside Bunyoro) and Natural Resources Committee Chairperson**  *Community Benefit*   * “To avoid the curse of having oil we need to manage this resource in a way that benefits the people from this area” * “It is the right of the Banyoro to know what is going on” * “We are here to ensure, yes, what is best for us as well as Bunyoro”   *Education and Employment*   * “We would like Bunyoro to have an affirmative action for training [for oil industry jobs].”   *Land Issues*   * “The people are not against the government, but the compensation is based on something the people do not understand… once people understand, we will move together, and there will be no problem.” * Of foreign land ownership: “If they are not Ugandan, they are not supposed to own land.”   *Revenue Sharing*   * Of Bunyoro receiving a share of oil revenues: “There must be specific benefit to the people of Bunyoro who are going to be affected by the extracting of the oil.”   *Security Concerns*   * “Some security operatives and local leaders who have threated the people here when they try to raise issues about oil, [but] you are entitled to say what you are supposed to say. Unless you are using the oil issue to recruit rebels.”   **Hon. Julius Junjura Bigirwa, MP for Buhaguzi County (Bunyoro) and Natural Resources Committee Member**  *Political Process*   * “Here, we are on a fact-finding mission” * “Civil society has been raising issues here [on the oil issue] for some time.” * Paraphrasing civil society concerns: “Which assurances are we giving that our committees work?...that our work [the work of the fact-finding mission] will be taken seriously…[and] incorporated into law?”   *The Role of Civil Society*   * “It is your responsibility [to raise issues].” * Of Banyoro MPs raising oil concerns: “It looks like we are looking after our own.” |

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| Box 5: Selected Quotations from Interview with Hon. James Kiiza Rwebembera, MP for Bugahya County, Hoima District[[162]](#footnote-162) |
| *Revenue Sharing[[163]](#footnote-163)*   * “I think, in this case, government will be wise enough to have a share for the Banyoro. Then, there will be peace. In fact, government shouldn’t wait for people to agitate [but grant a share now]…it [unrest] will spread, eventually.”   *Transparency*   * “Very few of us [MPs] know what is going on down in the Rift Valley.” * “If the corruption levels continue, the oil might be a curse. If there is a change of attitude, it might be a blessing.” * “The government resources are really abused…but I hope we shall see sense and do the right things, because more and more people are getting worried.”   *Community Expectations and Concerns*   * “As exploration goes on, people’s expectations get high.” * “Nobody is seriously [negatively] affected by what is going on there [at the oil exploration sites].” * Of agitation about oil issues, “It’s mainly from the educated class. The local man in the village is not so concerned.” * “What is concerning people most is that they don’t know exactly what will be.” * “People think when they [government and oil companies] build a refinery there [in Kabaale], it will benefit them—they will be working there, and government is giving an impression that there will be an oil city, whatever is meant by that…government is promising that there will be clear water…that health facilities could be upgraded.”   *Land Issues*   * “The only problem that is arising is with the land. Rich people are coming in and buying the land, there is a problem of where they [locals] will go…These people will claim to be landless. We are already seeing it in Kampala, they are becoming hawkers on the street.” |

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| Box 6: Selected Quotations from Interview with Hon. Gerald Kafureeka Karuhanga, Independent Youth MP[[164]](#footnote-164) |
| *Revenue Sharing[[165]](#footnote-165)*   * “There should be something that goes to them [the Banyoro].” * “They should benefit as a sub-region, all of them [not just ethnic Banyoro], because they are the same people…they are one people.”   *Community Expectations and Concerns*   * “People are looking forward to…an opportunity to make money in terms of government increasing its revenues…[and investing in] infrastructure.” * “[Oil had] raised hopes in Bunyoro…there is now less hope. I wouldn’t be surprised if the youth would raise some chaos.” * “We have studied what has happened in other countries that have oil.” * “Oil companies are known for funding wars.” * “People are not very seriously informed about the issues.”   *Community Relations with Government and Tribal Elite*   * “Ugandans hardly trust politicians.” * “They [the Banyoro] trust and respect their king…[he is] very strong.” * “MPs have some reasonable influence.”   *Oil and Politics*   * “I didn’t even mention it [oil] in my campaign.” * “It [oil] can create anarchy here.”   *Transparency*   * Of pre-production oil deals: “[They are] shady…not clear, not transparent. Everybody started getting disturbed [by reports of corruption].” * Of parliamentary inquiry into corruption: “[The Ministry of Energy] refused to cooperate.” * Of corruption: “Not many could take courage to expose it.” * “[Since parliamentary inquiries] things have turned around.” |

1. Then Hardman Resources, acquired by Tullow in December 2006-January 2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. U.S. Energy Information Administration, “Overview Data for Uganda,” 12 February 2013, Web, 9 March 2013; Jacob Kathman and Megan Shannon, “Oil Extraction and the Potential for Domestic Instability in Uganda,” *African Studies Quarterly* 12.3 (Summer 2011): 23-45, 23; and Richard Vokes, “Briefing: the Politics of Oil in Uganda,” *African Affairs* 111.442 (2012): 303-314, 303. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibrahim Kasita and Els de Temmerman‚ “Details of Uganda-Tullow Oil Deal Revealed,” *New Vision* (Kampala, Uganda)25 September 2009; Kathman and Shannon 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. International Alert, “Harnessing Oil for Peace and Development in Uganda,” *Investing in Peace* 2 (2009): 1-92; Kathman and Shannon 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Yoweri Museveni, “Uganda in 2012 and Its Role in Regional Stability,” Discussion led by Alex Vines at Chatham House (London: 22 February 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Yolamu Nsamba, Principal Private Secretary to Omukama Solomon Iguru, Personal Interview, Hoima Town, Uganda, 24 May 2012; Henry Bazira, Executive Director of the Water Governance Institute and Chairman of the Civil Society Coalition for Oil, Personal Interview, Kampala, Uganda, 19 May 2012; *Resettlement Committee Meeting with Civil Society Groups*, Hosted by the Ugandan Parliamentary Natural Resources Committee, Nsamo Hotel, Hoima Town, Uganda, 23 May 2012; Taimour Lay and Mika Miinio-Paluello, “Contracts Curse: Uganda’s Oil Agreements Place Profit before People,” Report of the Civil Society Coalition on Oil in Uganda (February 2010). Interview transcripts and notes from community meetings available upon request from the author. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. For an overview of this literature, see Ukoha Ukiwo, “The Nigerian State, Oil, and the Niger Delta Crisis” in Cyril Obi and Siri Aas Rustad (eds.) *Oil and Insurgency in the Niger Delta: Managing the Complex Politics of Petro-Violence* (London: Zed, 2011): 17-27, 17-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Hereafter abbreviated to Bunyoro Kingdom. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Banyoro is the term for members of the Bunyoro tribe, an individual member of the tribe is called a Munyoro, and the tribal language is Runyoro. Please see Appendix 1 for list and explanation of Ugandan tribal terms. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The Baganda are another tribe in Uganda, from the Buganda region and tribal kingdom (see Appendix 1). Prior to colonization, the Baganda and the Banyoro were the two largest kingdoms in the region and rivals. The British established the Baganda as the bureaucratic class of the Ugandan Protectorate, and they remain the largest tribe in the country and politically powerful. See Jan Jelmert Jorgensen, *Uganda: a Modern History* (London: Helm, 1981) 44-45, 82; Shane Doyle, *Crisis and Decline in Bunyoro: Population and Environment in Western Uganda, 1860-1955* (London: British Institute in Eastern Africa, 2006) 3; A.R. Dunbar, “History of Bunyoro-Kitara,” *American Anthropologist* 70.1 (February 1968); Viera Pawlikova-́Vilhanová, *History of Anti-Colonial Resistance and Protest in the Kingdoms of Buganda and Bunyoro, 1890-1899* (Prague: Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, 1988) 177-210. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Jorgensen 82. For more on Bunyoro’s decline under colonialism, see Pawlikova-́Vilhanová 63 and Cedric Pulford, *Casualty of Empire: Britain’s Unpaid Debt to an African Kingdom* (London: Ituri, 2007). For an account of the same phenomenon in the Niger Delta, see Cyril Obi and Siri Aas Rustad, “Introduction: Petro-violence in the Niger Delta—the Complex Politics of an Insurgency” in Obi and Rustad: 1-16, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Jorgensen 303-4, 309-15..For the view that colonialism did not much alter African ethnic institutions or relations between ethnic groups, see Tom Spear, “Neo-traditionalism and the Limits of Invention in British Colonial Africa,” *Journal of African History*, 44 (2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Dominic Johnson, *Shifting Sands: Oil Exploration in the Rift Valley and the Congo Conflict* (Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo: Pole Institute, 2003). The Ugandan government has already cited concerns that the Allied Democratic Forces, based in western Uganda and eastern DRC, may mount attacks against oil installations. See, for example, Haggai Matsiko, “Guns in Oil Region,” *Independent* (Kampala, Uganda) 22 June 2012, Web, 17 April 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. William Rwebembera, “Tension at Uganda-Congo Border,” *New Vision* (Kampala, Uganda) 21 August 2007, Web, 9 March 2013; Sarah Grainger, “Uganda and Congo's Troubled Waters,” *BBC News*, 16 August 2007, Web, 9 March 2013; Felix Warom Okello, “DRC, Uganda Discuss Border Pact,” *Monitor* (Kampala, Uganda) 7 August 2012, Web, 9 March 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. To measure the latter, I asked respondents whether or not they had ever approached a tribal leader or government representative for advice about a personal problem. Greater explanation of all survey questions and variables is given in the Research Design and Variables sections; I offer this as early clarification. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. David M. Anderson and Adrian J. Browne, “The Politics of Oil in East Africa,” *Journal of Eastern* *African Studies* 5.2 (2011): 369–410; Jedrzej Frynas and Manuel Paolo, “A New Scramble for African Oil? Historical, Political and Business Perspectives,” *African Affairs* 106.423 (2007): 229–5; and Johnson. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Vokes 304; “Heritage-Tullow Uganda Tax Case Kicks off in UK Court,” *Reuters*, 13 March 2013, Web, 13 March 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Vokes 308. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, *2012 Oil and Gas Management Policy* (Kampala, Uganda: GPO, 2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Robert Atuhairwe, “Bunyoro Demands Oil Pre-Production Accountability,” *New Vision* (Kampala, Uganda) 26 March 2012. Web. 2 January 2013; 27 Elias Biryabarema and Duncan Miriri, “Uganda MPs Demand Special Session over Oil Tax Row,” *Reuters,* 19 September 2011, Web, 13 March 2013; Biryabarema, “Ugandan Lawmakers to Probe Ministers over Oil Bribes,” *Reuters* 28 October 2011, Web, 13 March 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Vokes 310. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Peter G. Veit, Carole Excell, and Alisa Zomer, “Avoiding the Resource Curse: Spotlight on Oil in Uganda,” Working Paper, World Resources Institute, Washington, DC, 2011. As an anecdote to illustrate this point, I was approached by an official from the Ministry of Internal Affairs while at a community meeting about oil development in Hoima on May 23, 2012. The official, who had been recording the names of every person attending the meeting, asked about the purpose of my research and initially demanded a list of the names of everyone I had interviewed and photocopies of my notes. Recent laws and policies regulating activity related to oil include the Oil and Gas Revenue Management Policy of 2012, the Public Finance Bill of 2012, the National NGO Policy of 2010, the National Oil and Gas Management Policy for Uganda of 2008, the Non-Governmental Organisations Registration (Amendment) Act of 2006, the Land Acquisition Act of 2004, and the proposed Public Order Management Bill currently being debated in the Ugandan Parliament and awaiting judgment on its constitutionality in the Ugandan courts. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Quoted in Matsiko. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Vokes 310. Paul Willis, “British Oil Worker Dies in ‘Rescue Bid’ in Uganda,” *Telegraph*, 7 August 2007, Web, 13 March 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Pascal Kwesiga and Atuhairwe, “UPDF Evicts 3000 in Oil-Rich Hoima,” *New Vision* (Kampala, Uganda) 16 August 2011, Web, 13 March 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Vokes 310. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Ibid. 307 and Edward Ssekika, “When Will Uganda Start Producing Oil?” *Observer* (Kampala, Uganda) 29 January 2013, Web, 13 March 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Ssekika, “Buliisa People Decry Raw Deal in Oil Wealth,” *Observer* (Kampala, Uganda) 23 October 2011, Web, 13 March 2013. Compensation for land acquired by the state for oil development purposes was also one of the main concerns raised at the Resettlement Committee Meeting for civil society groups I attended in Hoima Town on May 23, 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Ibid. David Ayebale, “Bunyoro to Sue Britain over Losses,” *Monitor* (Kampala, Uganda) 25 February 2013, Web, 1 March 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. 2012 Oil and Gas Management Policy, 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ibid. 28. Henry Sekanjako, “Bunyoro King Storms Parliament over Oil Revenue,” *New Vision* (Kampala, Uganda) 1 June 2012, Web, 2 January 2013; Emma Mutaizibwa and Ssekika, “Bunyoro Angry with Museveni on Oil Sharing,” *Observer* (Kampala, Uganda) 21 June 2012, Web, 28 October 2012; Francis Mugerwa, “Bunyoro King Defends Parliament Appearance,” *Monitor* (Kampala, Uganda) 16 June 2012, Web, 20 November 2012; Fred Kiva, “Museveni Warns Bunyoro on Oil Talk,” *Uganda Radio Network* (Hoima, Uganda) 11 June 2012, Web, 20 November 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Chapter 16 of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda deals with the “Institution of Traditional or Cultural Leaders.” The article legalizes the existence of tribal kingdoms and kings but restricts them to purely cultural activities, barring cultural leaders from holding public offices, compelling the people they lead to pay for their upkeep, or exercising government powers. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Jorgensen 35-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Ibid. 37, 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Ibid. 227. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Ali Mazrui, *Soldiers and Kinsmen in Uganda: the Making of a Military Ethnocracy* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1975) 68. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Jorgensen. 273-85, 303-4, 309-15. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Ibid. 221. For reports of these events, see Special Correspondent, “The Uganda Army: Nexus of Power,” *Africa Report* 11 (December 1966) 38; Mutesa II, Kabaka of Buganda, *Desecration of My Kingdom* (London: Constable, 1967) 170; Akena Adoko, *Uganda Crisis* (Kampala, Uganda: African Publishers, 1970) 7, 119, and 140; Terence Hopkins, “Politics in Uganda: the Buganda Question” in A.A. Castagino and Jeffrey Butler (eds.) *Boston University Papers on Africa* (New York: Praeger, 1967) 260. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. A Munyankole is an individual member of the Ankole tribe, named for the Ankole region and tribal kingdom (see Appendix 1). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995*, Chapter 16, Article 246(3)(f). [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Jorgenson 227. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. David Apter, *The Political Kingdom in Uganda: a Study of Bureaucratic Nationalism* (London: Frank Cass, 1997). For the view that tribal kingdoms in Uganda are seeing a resurgence in power and inciting violence, see Tom Goodfellow and Stefan Lindemann, “The Clash of Institutions: Traditional Authority, Conflict and the Failure of 'Hybridity' in Buganda,” *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 51:1 (2013) and Lindemann, “Just Another Change of Guard? Broad-Based Politics and Civil War in Museveni’s Uganda,” *African Affairs* 110.400 (2011): 387-416. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. For example, Alfred Nyongesa Wandera, “Museveni Warns on Tribal Politics,” *Monitor* (Kampala, Uganda) 14 August 2009, Web, 15 March 2013; “Museveni Warns Bunyoro on Oil Talk;” and Gus Constantine, “Uganda Pursues Democracy Minus Baggage of Tribal Politics,” *Washington Post* 12 March 1998, Web, 15 April 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Jorgensen 227; Mazrui 68. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Ibid.; Zachary Lomo and Lucy Hovil, *Behind the Violence: the War in Northern Uganda,* Monograph No. 99 (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 2004) 14-21; *Northern Uganda: Understanding and Solving the Conflict*, International Crisis Group Africa Report No. 77 (Nairobi and Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2004) 2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Lindemann; Sadab Kitatta Kaaya, “Baganda Tell Museveni to Break ‘Ankole Clique,’” *Observer* (Kampala, Uganda) 12 August 2012, Web, 10 February 2013; and Nelson Kasfir, “Uganda,” in The *Countries at the Crossroads 2010* (New York: Freedom House, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Horowitz 188. See also Fearon and Laitin; Collier and Hoeffler; and Dov Ronen, *Dahomey: Between Tradition and Modernity* (Ithaca, NY: UP Cornell, 1975) 188. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Own analysis based on “Cabinet Members,” *Parliament of Uganda*, 2012, Web, 18 March 2013. Banyankole is the term for members of the Ankole tribe. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. R.J. Southall, *Parties and Politics in Bunyoro* (Kampala: Makerere Institute of Social Research, 1972) 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Uganda has one of the densest networks of local political units and authorities in the world, due to the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) policy of decentralization. The country had 33 districts when the NRM took power in 1986 and has 111 today. Though Bunyoro has an area of 18,600 km2, or nearly the size of New Jersey, it has five districts. For an analysis of district creation as a form of prebends, see J.B. Mugaju (ed.) *Analytical Review of Uganda’s Decade of Reforms, 1986-1996* (Kampala, Uganda: Fountain, 1996); Andrew Mwenda and Roger Tangri, “Patronage Politics, Donor Reform, and Regime Consolidation in Uganda,” *African Affairs* 104.416 (2005): 449-67; and Elliott Green, “Patronage, District Creation, and Reform in Uganda,” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 45 (2010): 83-103. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Nsamba. I met with Nsamba in May 2012 at the Omukama’s palace in Hoima Town. Over the course of a lengthy interview, Nsamba and I discussed the history of Bunyoro, the Omukama’s role as a social activist and “watchdog” (for example, advocating against child marriage and for environmental protections), and the likely effects of oil development on Bunyoro. I was also fortunate enough to receive a guided tour of the Omukama’s public rooms, including the palace’s throne room. Photos available upon request. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Mugerwa, “Bakiga Seek Audience with Omukama,” *Monitor* (Kampala, Uganda) 21 August 2009, Web, 10 April 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. “Bunyoro King Defends Parliament Appearance.” [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Fred Kayizzi, “King Iguru Opposes Basongora Eviction,” *New Vision* (Kampala, Uganda) 12 June 2007, Web, 22 November 2012; Kiva, “Bunyoro Kingdom Joins Campaign to Save Forests,” Uganda Radio Network (Hoima, Uganda) 1 August 2012, Web, 10 November 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Nsamba; “President Museveni Meets Omukama Iguru,” *New Vision* (Kampala, Uganda) 29 July 2012, Web, 10 April 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
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122. Mahdavy, Bablawi, Yates, Englebert and Ron, and Karl. For a rebuttal to the argument that oil producing states are always rent-maximizing, see Thad Dunning, “Endogenous Oil Rents,” *Comparative Political Studies* 43.3 (2010): 379-410. Dunning claims that politicians may limit rents if they expect to be out of power in the future, when high rents would benefit the new incumbents. In Dunning’s argument, however, the state limits its share of oil revenues relative to that of oil companies, rather than relative to local communities. The state should still prefer that rents coming to the government accrue to the central authority, not regional tribal leaders. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. These regression results available upon request from the author. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Mann147. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Available upon request from the author. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. There is, however, ample evidence that anticipation of benefit from oil are high in Bunyoro. In an interview with me in May 2012, Henry Bazira of Uganda’s Water Governance Institute (WGI) and the Civil Society Coalition for Oil (CSCO), claimed that villagers had attended 2009-2010 WGI community meetings with buckets, expecting to collect oil to sell. Young people may well become frustrated when massive oil wealth fails to materialize or accrue to them. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Kimberly Mitchell, Sheana Bull, Julius Kiwanuka, and Michele Ybarra, “Cell Phone Usage Among Adolescents in Uganda: Acceptability for Relaying Health Information,” *Health Education Research* (2011): 1-12, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. When I visited Kabaale on 24 May 2012 to survey residents, government representatives were hosting a community meeting about resettlement and compensation. MPs at the 23 May 2012 Resettlement Committee Meeting with Civil Society Groups that I attended mentioned that there had been previous government-run community meetings in Kabaale and other villages near oil exploration sites. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Robert Byaruhanga, AFIEGO Bunyoro Region Field Coordinator, Personal Interview, Hoima Town, Uganda, 26 May 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. For more on the effects of modernization, see Anderson, Deutsch, Gellner, Smith, Wallenstein, Weber. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)
132. Uganda Bureau of Statistics, *2010 Statistical Abstract* (Kampala, Uganda: GPO, 2010) 100. [↑](#footnote-ref-132)
133. There was one other difference between this analysis and the initial demographic regression: the effect of age on belief that a revenue sharing agreement should benefit all Bunyoro became significant at the 90% rather than 88% level, but the effect remained small, a .9 percentage point increase per year. [↑](#footnote-ref-133)
134. Caselli and Coleman 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-134)
135. Chandra 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-135)
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137. “National Identity and Social Inclusion” 1245. [↑](#footnote-ref-137)
138. Masaki Matsunaga, Michael L. Hecht, Elvira Elek and Khadidiatou Ndiaye, “Ethnic Identity Development and Acculturation: a Longitudinal Analysis of Mexican-Heritage Youth in the Southwest United States,” *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 41.3 (2010): 410-27, 420. [↑](#footnote-ref-138)
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141. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-141)
142. Joanna Davidson, “Native Birth: Identity and Territory in Postcolonial Guinea-Bissau, West Africa,” *Cultural Studies* 6.1 (2003): 37-54, 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-142)
143. People born in Burkina Faso. [↑](#footnote-ref-143)
144. For more on this, see Armando Cutolo, “Modernity, Autochthony, and the Ivorian Nation: the End of a Century in Cote d’Ivoire,” *Africa* 80.4 (2010): 527-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-144)
145. John Iliffe, *Africans: the History of a Continent* (Cambridge, UK: UP Cambridge, 1995) 110-1. [↑](#footnote-ref-145)
146. The coefficient is negative, but since the variable was coded 1=unwilling to intermarry and 0=willing to intermarry, I have rephrased here for clarity. [↑](#footnote-ref-146)
147. Luria; Scribner and Cole. [↑](#footnote-ref-147)
148. Obi and Rustad 3. See also Obi, *Youth and Generational Dimensions to the Struggle for Resource Control in the Niger Delta: Prospects for the Nation-State Project in Nigeria* (Dakar, Senegal:  Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-148)
149. Ukiwo 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-149)
150. AFIEGO is a registered NGO in Uganda. Its mission is to promote “An environment where energy resources are equitably used for social and economic development.” [↑](#footnote-ref-150)
151. Dickens Komugisha, Executive Director of AFIEGO, Personal Interview, Kampala, Uganda, 21 May 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-151)
152. Byaruhanga. [↑](#footnote-ref-152)
153. *Resettlement Committee Meeting with Civil Society Groups*. [↑](#footnote-ref-153)
154. Bazira [↑](#footnote-ref-154)
155. Referring to ambiguity over whether or not share would be of revenues, profits, post-tax income, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-155)
156. Nsamba. [↑](#footnote-ref-156)
157. “List of Members of Parliament,” *Parliament of Uganda*, 2012, Web, 10 April 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-157)
158. Kiiza represents Masindi Municipality and is the Chairman of the Bunyoro Parliamentary Caucus. [↑](#footnote-ref-158)
159. Kiva, “Two Bunyoro MPs Support Restoration of Presidential Term Limits,” *Uganda Radio Network* (Hoima, Uganda) 23 April 2012, Web, 17 April 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-159)
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163. Referred to a share with the people and government of the region, not necessarily with the tribal kingdom. [↑](#footnote-ref-163)
164. Karuhanga, Personal Interview, Ugandan Parliament, Kampala, Uganda, 19 May 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-164)
165. Referred to a share with the people and government of the region, not necessarily with the tribal kingdom. [↑](#footnote-ref-165)