



Dialogue rather than law can wipe out Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). A case study of Uganda

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ABSTRACT

Among the countries under the UN Umbrella, FGM is outlawed. It is regarded as an infringement to the fundamental rights of the feminine. In outlawing this practice, countries looked at the health (physical & emotional) concerns and ignored the cultural aspect. For instance, Uganda introduced the Anti-FGM Act in 2010 to augment the fight against FGM. However, since then, the practice has been on the increase in the North-East and Karamoja regions. Among the Pokot people, it is almost a universal practice, currently estimated at about 95%. The practice is done underground in defiance of the law. This is because people view the law as an infringement on their cultural norms and practices. Less effort has thus far been made to address this practice in a cultural perspective, through open dialogue to help the very perpetrators abominate it rather than forcing them to change. Unless there is a change in approach, Uganda's efforts to achieve the Global Agenda 2030, especially SDG goals 3, & 10 remain in balance. This paper therefore is premised on the fact that "you cannot force someone to change, but you can help him/her change". This approach has been used before in Karamoja.

Keywords: infringement, cultural, norms and practices