

Enduring Designs: Exploring Cultural Resilience through production of Baganda Indigenous Iron Artifacts in globalized space

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to examine the resilience of Baganda in production and consumption of their indigenous iron designs in the globalized contemporary space. It interrogated the adaptations in production of indigenous iron artefacts designs, their continuous relevancy, and how the Baganda view these designs in their cotemporary space impacted on by the various attributes globalization. A total of fifteen participants selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques was composed of merchants specializing in trading indigenous iron objects, household users, and blacksmiths. All respondents were identified from Buddu and Kyaggwe counties of Buganda kingdom. Data extraction process was through library search for secondary data, and primary data was gathered through interviewing and observing participants; this was used to triangulate obtained information which was analysed using qualitative content analysis approach. The study findings indicated that the Baganda have a variety of intricately crafted iron items in their indigenous iron collection, with spears and arrows being the most notable and commonly used objects in today's society. These artifacts blend well with the current needs and are influenced by both the indigenous and the contemporary practices of the Baganda such as agriculture, modern design production, security and performance arts. The increasing demand for these indigenous iron artifacts driven by their aesthetic value, performance, and political relevance among the Baganda, has played a significant role in warranting their continued production. Additionally, initiatives aimed at preserving cultural heritage have helped to shift perceptions towards a more positive view of the significance of these designs. The concludes that although the Baganda have faced significant reformations in their culture due to globalization, leading to the transformation of indigenous spaces into modern ones, indigenous artifacts remained important for cultural practices, domestic use, and as sources of inspiration for new innovations.

Keywords: *indigenous designs, Iron artifacts, globalization, perception, The Baganda.*

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents a portion of field research findings gathered from Kyaggwe and Buddu counties in the Buganda kingdom. This paper focused answering a bigger question; what

stimulates the resilience of Baganda in production and consumption of their indigenous iron designs in the contemporary space despite the availability of modern substitutions. It interrogated the drives behind adaptations in production of indigenous iron designs, their continuous relevancy, and how the Baganda view these designs in their cotemporary times. the study was drawn from consideration of impacts attributed to globalization such as hybridized cultures, tourism, modern education, religion, multiplicity patronage and change in ownership of resources. (Humphrey et al, 2001; Arndt, 2004; Dhanagare, 2003; ŽILKOVÁ, 2021; Sideri, 2020). Utilizing data from my ongoing a PhD research project field work focusing on the production and consumption of indigenous iron artifacts of the Baganda in Uganda, this paper delves into how globalization has impacted on production and use of indigenous iron designs, as well as the attitudes and strategies employed by the Baganda to protect and promote their cultural heritage. By combining data from historical analysis with observations and interviews from field work , the paper contributes to the ongoing conversation by contemporary scholars on how indigenous art can withstand and thrive amidst global influences (Awogu-Maduagwu, 2016; Groh, 2006; Ahmadi, 2005; Burton, 2009; Ugor & Mawuko-Yevugah, 2016; Kakande, 2008).

Designs are the visual tangible ideas established after material manipulation either in two- or three-dimensional form. Kazmierczak (2003) affirms that “design draws upon the concept of diagrammatic reasoning, and proposes that all designs be regarded as diagrams of mental maps of individual and collective cultures”. This perspective on designs has been a commonly held belief for different Baganda both indigenous and modern attributions in producing iron artifacts; fostering production of useful items for utilitarian and decorative purposes.

Diagrammatic reasoning in design formation incorporates decision making as core component during ideation, planning, production and evaluation of the product as a material object for user experience to foster future innovations (Redström, 2006). This has been reflected in indigenous iron works of the Baganda where products are made to meet different needs at societal, communal or individual levels. Consequently, designs for indigenous iron works have to be studied in taking account into esthetics, ergonomics, and cultural considerations either in modern or indigenous context.

Designs in the indigenous realm of Baganda can be exhibited in the cultural heritage collection of visual ideas incorporating a number of native artefacts made for identity, esthetics, symbolism and sometimes utilitarian purposes. These include but limited to basketry, pottery, woodwork, jewelry, musical instruments, textile, architecture and iron works. the artefacts in the above-mentioned categories have gone through various transformation in which have led to alterations in their design attribute; colours, material, meaning, functionality, production process, decorating styles and among others either by cultural fusion or appropriation as agents of globalization. However, for the purposes of contributing towards the fulfillment the PhD research project purpose, this study focused on designs of indigenous iron artifacts. The artifacts include but limited to hoes, bells, spears, knives, rattles, arrows, axes, sharp implements and among others.

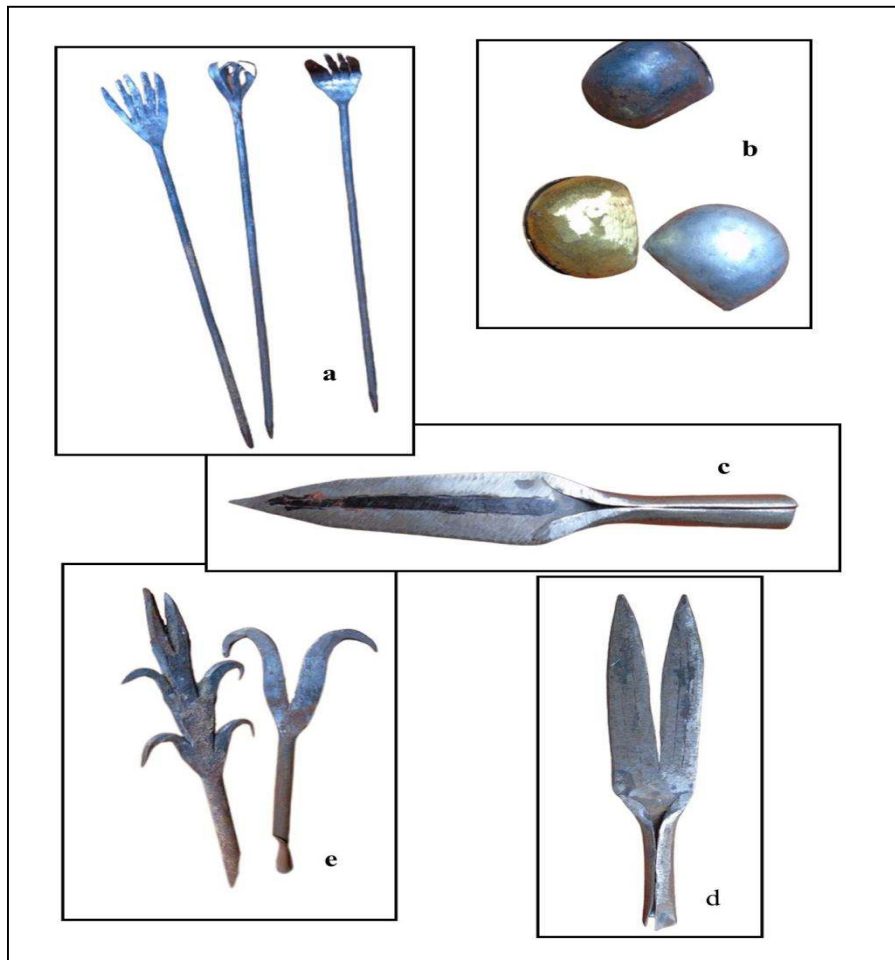


Figure 1: selected indigenous iron designs of the Baganda

Contextualizing indigenous iron designs

Iron artifacts were developed for different purposes in different societies and their relevancy is still evident in communities where they are embraced (Reitsma et al. 2019; Tunstall, 2020; Sheehan, 2011; Rangel, 2013; McMaster, 2020; Mutungi, 2015). The enduring significance of indigenous artifacts designs can be observed in various communities where they are valued and integrated into everyday life, whether it be in a traditional, modern, or indigenous context. They are part of political and social-economic development fabric of the modern societies as sources of income, symbols of resilience bringing the past to the present, homage, resistance, identity and peace construction.

The designs of indigenous iron artifacts have been utilized as symbols of hegemony fostering national pride, appearing on national emblems, currency, and flags (Hambly, 2022). They serve as a catalyst for technological advancements and creativity in design, showcasing a rich cultural heritage that inspires both locals and tourists (Heersmink, 2023; Layton, 2020; Fredericks & Bradfield, 2021; Nicholas, 2022). The craftsmanship of creating these indigenous designs provides an important source of income for artisans, as well as contributing to the revenue of museums and tourism industries (Mutungi, 2017; Wherry, 2006; Mutungi, & Ghaye, 2013). Incorporation of these iron artifacts into various aspects of society plays a significant role in the economic development and global identity of peoples as collections

In some communities, indigenous iron designs are produced and consumed despite societies' submission toward globalization tendencies. The production processes are influenced by emerging formation of hybridized cultures, tourism, modern education, religion, multiplicity patronage these have fueled indigenization and de-indigenization in iron artifacts designs and otherwise. The products are embraced by natives and immigrants' cultural trends, materials and design ideas. However, in certain societies such as the Sami community in Norway, Native American tribes, Chinese communities, Japanese cultures, the Masai people in Kenya and Tanzania, they still hold they still hold their indigenous practices and productions in high regards.

In Uganda cultures like the Banyoro, Banyankole and Baganda indigenous people in Uganda, iron designs are cherished traditionalists and still valued by some contemporary groupings such as visual artists, musicians, commercial security organisation and among others for different

functions (Kekimuri & Wathum, 2024; Kabiito, 2010; Kekimuri, 2018). Indigenous people and migrants herein referred to as people in multicultural settings to still utilize the indigenous iron production to solve contemporary needs. (Chen et al,2021; Fallan, 2007; Melubo & Carr 2021; Classen & Howes, 2006; Smith et al 2020).

The preservation and continued usage of the indigenous designs in various communities highlight the importance of honoring and celebrating indigenous traditions and heritage (Crowell et al, 2010; Iseke-Barnes, 2003). Additionally, the widespread recognition and appreciation of these artifacts by both locals and visitors contribute to the cultural diversity and richness of these regions, fostering a sense of unity and respect among different communities. It is through these artifacts that the legacy of indigenous cultures is carried forward and shared with future generations, ensuring that their heritage remains alive and vibrant. As time progresses, these artifacts continue to inspire and influence contemporary Art and Design, serving as specimens and inspirational objects for designers and artists interested in incorporating elements of indigenous heritage into their work.

The legacy of indigenous iron artifact designs serves as a bridge between the past and the present, acting as a tangible link to the cultural history and traditions of these communities. By preserving and showcasing these artifacts, communities are able to showcase their unique identity and heritage to the world, fostering a sense of pride and appreciation for their cultural legacy. The intricate details and symbolism incorporated into these artifacts reflect the deep connection that indigenous people have with the natural world and their spiritual beliefs, highlighting the importance of maintaining harmony with the environment.

Through the creation and utilization of these designs, indigenous communities are able to express their cultural values and beliefs, passing down age-old practices and knowledge to future generations. Consequently, the enduring relevance and significance of indigenous iron designs in various communities underscore the importance of preserving and honoring cultural traditions, showcasing the creativity and ingenuity of indigenous artisans in Uganda and other part of the world throughout history.

Statement of the problem

Whereas the contemporary Baganda people like elsewhere in the world are experiencing cultural change and avant-gardism in cultural practice and consumption design ideas emanating from attributes of globalization, there is no total shift in the paradigm indigenous iron designs production. The Baganda have continued to embrace the production and utilization of their indigenous iron designs in various ways for cultural pride, identity construction and economic gains. The indigenous iron artifacts serve as a body of the rich cultural heritage and craftsmanship of these communities, showcasing a deep connection to their roots and traditions. Their intricate designs and craftsmanship of not only reflect the artistic abilities of the creators but also tell stories of the past, capturing the essence of their cultural identity, cultural pride and history of the Baganda. This can be lost if the strides in the continued production and relevance of this material culture of iron works is not studied to inspire and nurture future design innovation for identity and posterity in indigenous technological advance as globalization manifestation is reaching a higher level of manifestation and consolidation phase. Hence, prudence to analyse patterns for the resilience in the production of indigenous iron designs of the Baganda in the globalized space.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical context on significance of iron among the Baganda

Baganda Indigenous iron artifacts and their historical relevance have been significantly elucidated by various scholars such as (eg Kekimuri, 2019; Chrétien 2003; Iles 2013. Robertshaw 1997; Buchanan 1974; Childs 2000; Robertshaw 1991, 1994; Roscoe 1923; Tantala 1989; Iles 2011; Iles 2009; Reid, 2012). Their contribution on documentation of this significant knowledge cannot be ruled out; as part of sources that provide acclaimed evidence for affirming iron artifacts designs as pertinent material culture to the Baganda. The artefacts where used in playing a pivotal role fulfilling Buganda's political and economic ambitions with in the region in terms of territorial expansion and control, and trading. Kyaggwe and Buddu are some of the key counties that supported Buganda establishment of iron industry before assuming Kkooki county from Bunyoro in 1896.

The technology of iron smelting and forging was a greater economic muscle of Buganda development and its neighbors such as Bunyoro kingdom, Ankole, and Karagwe. It is asserted in various scholarly writings that Bunyoro's iron industry inspired the establishment of iron smelting in Buganda Kingdom. This is backed up by different archeological and anthropological studies by various scholars such as (Iles, 2013; Humphris, 2009; Iles, 2013; Humphris, 2010; Iles, 2014). The cultural contribution of iron artifacts in terms of as moral construction, proverbs, and legends and contemporary stories written by local writers demonstrates the contribution of the indigenous iron designs in the political, economic, social fabric construction, and enriching the language and naming.

Iron artifacts have served as symbols of power, authority and symbols of identity to different bantu cultures such Bunyoro, Kihaya, Karagwe, Buganda, Zulu and among other (Reid & MacLean, 1995; Reid, 2012; Schmidt & Mapunda, 1997; Kuper, 1980). Irrespective of the esthetics in design, indigenous iron forms where designed to serve utilitarian purposes and meanings. Utilitarian purposes included such knives for food preparation, spears and arrows as weapons and instruments of power for human leaders and the gods, bells for hunting activities and rearing animals, rattles for dancing and divination rituals. The realms of meaning making and the symbolism of the of these iron artefacts designs more so the arrows will be extendedly discussed in another paper extracted from the above highlighted project content.

Some of the significances of design in the indigenous lives of the Baganda mentioned above did not change, they are still the same in contemporary life since some of the cultural practices have survived the new changes caused by transformation under globalization. Therefore, indigenous designs and productions are often used as substitutes in absence of appropriate contemporary technology; hoes, knives, spears and arrows are used in absence of modern equipments in Uganda (Mutungi, 2015; Chirikure, 2017; Mtetwa et al, 2017).

Globalized contemporary space and its influence in Buganda

Globalization comprise of interconnectedness and integration of economies, societies, cultures and nations across the world. It incorporates exchange of goods, ideas, technologies, services and the people on global scale leading to more inter dependence and connectedness of regions (Pannilage, 2017). Therefore, it has facilitated for economic integration, cultural exchange,

technological connectivity, social impacts and political interdependences and environmental and cultural considerations. It has transformed the world into more of inter connected and interdependence community shaping the important spheres of contemporary space such as economies, cultures, societies, technology and governance structures of the global scale (Heimberger, 2022; Oliver, 2017; Castles, 2001).

In many other parts of the world different communities, provinces, kingdoms and empires have been merging under will or force to form one bigger unit like countries, federations, and unions such as like the East African Community (EAC), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), European Union (EU), United Nations (UN) (Laine, 2017). Similarly, country blocks were formed. Uganda as a country emerged as an amalgamation of 15 provinces Buganda inclusive, globalization as a phenomenon was the major cause of its manifestation; existence of colonialism, universalized of education, imperialism through religion and cultural assimilation, global technological advancement and among others. Indigenous states of the time like Buganda did not remain intact in terms of believes, technology, culture, leadership and social fabrics. The Baganda had to embrace cultural change and avant-gardism; culture hybridization, change in ownership of resources which has led to transformation hence indigenization and de indigenization of ideas, practices, material culture and non-material culture (Oliver, 2017; Bengtsson & Östman 2013; Huyssen, 2016).

The manifestation and consolidation globalization saw many indigenous communities change their s of seeing themselves and operating due to the changes in the geographical spaces, embracing new cultures of their colonizers and the subjects from other societies, changing their religious believes and adopting new ones and in some African societies hybridization of likes emerged (Tsanwani et al, 2017; Reid,2019).). Many cultures like the Baganda transformed from their indigenous setting into a Eurocentric appropriation; replacing the spear grass with iron sheets in roofing architectural structures, replace iron spears with guns for security purposes, replacing clay tabs (Emumbwa) with modernized medical tablets and injections (Nyamnjuh, 2004).

Buganda, a kingdom located in the central and southern present-day Uganda, occupies an intriguing position in the country's contemporary space. As one of Uganda's four traditional

kingdoms, alongside Bunyoro, Toro, and Busoga, Buganda holds significant cultural, historical, and political importance both within Uganda and on the international stage (Reid,2012). In the context of globalization, Buganda has experienced both challenges and opportunities. On one hand, globalization has facilitated the spread and commercialization of Buganda's culture, traditions, and values to a global audience. This includes the promotion of Buganda's rich cultural heritage, such as its traditional music, dance, language (Luganda), art, and craftsmanship through tourism and education.

Organizations and individuals from Buganda have embraced digital platforms, international events, and cultural exchanges to showcase Buganda's unique identity and foster cross-cultural understanding. However, these avenues of globalization have also brought about changes and pressures that impact Buganda's cultural landscape. Rapid urbanization, technological advancements, and increased interconnectedness have influenced traditional practices, lifestyles, and social structures within Buganda.

These changes raise questions about how Buganda's cultural heritage adapt and thrive in the face of modernization and globalization without losing its essence and authenticity. In the globalized contemporary space, Buganda continues to navigate a delicate balance between preserving its cultural heritage, promoting economic development, and engaging with the wider world; characterized with multi faced patronage, multiple power base other than in past where the Kabaka was the trust of everything. Efforts to revitalize traditional industries such as iron works, promote tourism, and support cultural education and preservation has played a crucial role in ensuring Buganda's material cultural legacy endures while embracing the opportunities and challenges of globalization.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was qualitative in nature and therefore ethnographic research approach was employed for the immersive fieldwork; interviews and participant observation methods were useful in collecting data from selected respondents in the contemporary community of the Baganda (Nurani, 2008; Ejimabo, 2015). They consisted of knowledgeable Baganda about indigenous iron artifacts designs. The approach was prudent for establishment better understanding of the cultural

practice significance, and the resilience regarding continued production and use in the globalized contemporary space. The ethnographic approach was further important in providing rich contextual insights and fostering collaboration with the selected participants (Menzies, 2001).

Participants in the categories of users and blacksmiths were selected from Kyagwe and Buddu counties of Buganda kingdom. The counties are believed to have been the first major hubs of iron smelting in Buganda before Buganda annexed Kooki county. The counties endowed with lager deposits of iron ore locally known as *Amatale* and forests to provide trees as raw materials for charcoal production; important resource in iron smelting forging. The highlighted counties occupy the geographical spaces of contemporary districts in Uganda for example Kyaggwe is parts of greater Mukono and Buddu is cover some part of greater Masaka.

Two sampling techniques where used in identification and selection of respondents under the two highlighted categories and these where purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was for identification of participants in the user category for their experience and broader knowledge about the acquisition and the function of indigenous ironworks of the Baganda. (Barratt & Lenton, 2015). Therefore, the experience of respondents was highly considered in forming a sample. Snowball sampling technique was used in accessing respondents in the blacksmiths category who are rare in public and their workshops are in hard to reach places. Respondents in the category of blacksmiths were identified through recommendations from their fellow blacksmiths and sometimes the dealers could also provide important information that could lead to some other blacksmiths in remote villages.

The fifteen (15) interviewed participants comprised of; six (6) merchants three (3) from each county specializing in indigenous iron objects, four household users two from each county, and five (5) contemporary smelters three (3) from Buddu and two (2) from Kyaggwe county. All respondents were between the age of 18 to 75 years of age this was considered in line with labor laws of Uganda which permit only those above 18 years of age to work under hard labor, and iron smelting and forging as a skill is not exceptional. Except blacksmiths category which is known culturally to be practiced by men, gender balance was observed in other two sub categories; merchants and household users. The trading and using of indigenous iron artefact in the contemporary work is not discriminative under gender.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants who consented to volunteer in the study (Sin, 2005), and their activities were observed to support the information obtained through interviews; a combination of the two methods was prudent to attain triangulated data. As a qualitative data collection technique, interviews were important in eliciting elaborate responses from participants (Absentees, 2014; Roulston & Choi, 2018). Therefore, an interview guide with semi structured questions was utilized to attain flexibility and ability to ask follow up questions as well as probe deeper into subtopics basing on participant's response (Kallio et al, 2016). This approach provided for more detailed and nuanced data collection while still maintaining some structure.

Participant observation as a data collection technique enabled possibility of observing the participants in their natural environment and their artifacts, their behaviors, interactions with the artifacts physical on nonphysical without artificial manipulation (Iacono et al, 2009; Vidich, 1955). Where possible active role was taken to gain deeper insights into processes, behaviors and nature of the art artifacts. Observation checklist was developed with outlines extracted from key subtopics. The data collected was analysed using qualitative content analysis to emphasize in-depth interpretation and subjective understanding the phenomena under study (Selvi, 2019). Thus, Themes, pattern and meanings were identified through coding and thematic analysis, allowing richer insights into the context and statures of the contents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study paper purposefully focused on examining the resilience of Baganda people in production and consumption of their indigenous iron designs in the globalized contemporary space. this re-echoes on the continuation and translocations in indigenous iron production for contemporary use. Therefore, the study findings are presented and discussed under two major thematic approach crafted from the study specific angles of focus; resilience and adaptations in production and consumption of indigenous iron designs, their continuous relevancy, and how the Baganda view these designs in today's globalized world.

Resilience strategies

The Baganda is one of the cultures that have continued to live in unceasingly changing environment which is getting more influences from different regions of the world as a result of globalization. Since the advent of globalization, the Baganda have experienced transformations inspired by cultural change and avant-garde ideas. The changes have greatly distorted their political, social and, economic life, from indigenous settings to contemporary settings. However, indigenous iron designs have proven to be resilient cultural components rooted in their lives marriable to their new cultural perspectives as an impact of globalization. Cultural practices related to indigenous iron designs such as hunting, agriculture, divination practice, performance of last funeral rights, kingdom activities among others have led to the continuous demand for the indigenous iron artifacts that best suit need. This is evident in most responses

Resp: Bs 1,2, and all Us; “Even though there some new life perspectives that might have caused the change in our live as the Baganda such as new religions, wars, education, and coping manners from Arabia and Europe cultures, we have not given up to our identity. We still love our cultural practices as we still appreciated them before the restoration of our Kingdom”.

The resilience of the Baganda is continuously maintaining some indigenous cultural practices learned and adopted for generations. This has sustained the continuous demand and supply of iron artifacts since in some cases specific designs are required in performance of cultural activities. Therefore, the demand for iron forms re assures need for production and trading of indigenous iron designs get sustained. This in line with what some respondents bellow.

Resp: Bs 1 and 4 narrated; Much as we got some new items from the foreigners that we could substitute with our locally produced items, our ancestral spirits still insisted on use of some items such as the ganda spear, the ganda knife, the ganda basket and the backcloth. These indigenous artefacts are so important in *Okwabya olumbe* (performance of last funeral rite), *Okusumika osika* (instating the here, *Okusumika kabaka* (coronation of the kings), and *Okusamira* (traditional worship).

The production, supply and trading of the indigenous iron artefacts of the Baganda enabled survivals of designs for indigenous iron artifacts to date and their role in the relevant cultural

practices of the Baganda to be feasible. This led to continuity of identity for the ganda culture through the unceasing production in the realm of iron artefacts for different purposes.

Whereas the Baganda had a variety of designs in the indigenous technological field of iron works, many of them started facing extinction due to the shift in the culture construct. This emanated the change, transformation and reformation of the society pedaled by globalization ideas. However, there are some designs which have survived to date such as the arrows, spears, rattles, needles and Knives.

Resp; Bs 2, 3 and Us5: We used to make different iron crafts with our skilled grandfathers for different use in our everyday life in the Kingdom of Buganda. However due to the change in lifestyle some cultural practices have vanished [...] we no longer see the relevance of producing some iron artefacts because there is no demand for them. We stick to those which are on high demand by dealers and the cultural institutions.

Some cultural activities among the Baganda which required use of the iron designs are no longer practiced because of cultural changes. Hunting which made spear and arrows to be on high demand is no longer highly active due to the clearing of the different forests and introduction of different tough constitutional laws protecting the wild life. This has not only affected cultural promoters, hunters and other participants but also the dealers in the iron artefacts.

Most of the craft shops recorded a big reduction in the number of clients they used to supply with the hunting iron tools such as the arrows and spears. A similar scenario happened to different practices such as agriculture, wood curving, security and defense, and among others when modern sophisticated tool were introduced. this is observed in the re enforcing of Kabaka's (King of the Baganda) security with modern weapons as opposed to the use of indigenous iron artefacts as it was in the old times (Kekimuri, & Wathum, 2024).

As a result of globalization, the iron industry of has experienced a significant impact on the design of indigenous artifacts in several ways. Global trends have influenced iron works; Blacksmiths often draw inspiration from global design trends, incorporating new materials, techniques, and aesthetic components into their idea production. This has nurtured a fusion of

indigenous, traditional and contemporary elements, catering to broader markets while maintaining cultural substance. Blacksmiths and dealers reach a wider audience through online platforms, international exhibitions, and collaborations with global brands. This exposure has provided opportunities for economic growth and cultural exchange.

Resp; Bs 1, and Us2 and4:..invitations are always received from different event's organizers both at local and international levels. They dominantly for cultural exchange to show case our collections and elaborate their relevancies to the world. The white men come and interview us and try to work with us in our workshops. We earn from the productions and the funds we attain from different organisations.

Globalized contemporary space has been a catalyst to the standardization of indigenous artifacts to meet mass-market demands. Though, there is also a growing trend towards customization and personalized designs, catering to niche markets and preserving the uniqueness of indigenous craftsmanship. The Baganda have owned their indigenous iron designs as a collective sharing it openly to different generations in Buganda and beyond on international scenes.

Mmodern technologies have been accessed through cultural exchange programs. As a result, production of indigenous iron designs by globalized tendencies has been established this incorporates use of digital design tools, 3D printing, and sustainable practices enhancing efficiency, quality, and environmental conservation. Therefore, the ideas of producing, consuming, and relevance indigenous iron designs of the Baganda are still interpolated in the minds of different generations through oral tradition irrespective of being excluded in modern education curriculums

The globalized contemporary space has served as a breeding ground for ccultural aappropriations among the Baganda. Whereby indigenous iron designs and motifs are used without proper acknowledgment for their indigenous cultural significance but rather giving them a new purpose and sometimes crafting a hybrid purpose. The respondents affirmed that

Resp; Bs 2, 3: Now days spears, arrows and rattles are used out of activities we used to know them for. Now days not only bought by divine healers and other culturalists

but also people buy them for different reasons such as using them as ornaments in the interior décor, decorative components of furniture tables, wall hangings etc.

Since the manifestation of globalized space, the production and consumption of indigenous iron designs has proven to be a practice which has survived challenges. The Baganda have continued practicing and promoting iron works through oral tradition. This has been done through incorporating the iron information through their myths, proverbs, their indigenous religion. Iron works have also inspired many names such as Nampijja, Lwasampijja, Sempijja and among others. This has fostered the preservation of the knowledge about iron works; material, production, designs and functions.

Contemporary adaptations

Globalization has not only changed the way of the Baganda live and perceive things but also how they make, use and interpret indigenous iron designs to themselves. Its influence has been observed in different cultural related practices that form the general fabric of any surviving cultural practice of the Baganda as a people in the globalized contemporary space. The key players in the indigenous iron industry have endeavored to embrace contemporary ideas as the indigenous iron industry takes a new twist of survival. Contemporary adaptations of indigenous iron artifacts designs incorporate blending traditional craftsmanship with modern techniques and materials to create innovative and culturally relevant forms. Various approaches to contemporary adaptations of indigenous iron artifacts designs have been embraced by different stakeholders among the Baganda; black smiths, the *Bakopi* (commoners) and the *Balangira* (Ruling clan).

Materiality as an important component of iron designs has been affected by various environmental policies set by both Uganda government and international bodies. The policies have contributed to the barring of blacksmiths from extracting materials such as iron ore, trees for charcoal, and other related natural materials from the different consecrated areas. This is affirmed by all respondents in the category of Black smiths

Resp: all Bs; We are no longer allowed by Nation Environment Management Authority and National Forest Authority to excavate iron ore and forests-based materials for

our productions. but we rather we try make use of available scrap and materials to enable our production.



Figure 2: Ganda rattles presented in metals of different colours for different gods

The limitation in accessing locally has inspired blacksmiths to think of alternative material that can substitute the indigenous materials. Now charcoal in some workshops was replaced by electricity, and welding tools and welding rods. Material Innovation has led to exploration of new materials and technologies that can complement and replace traditional iron smelting but not the designs. For example, incorporating iron, brass, copper stainless steel, aluminium, and alloys enhance durability. This is done in consideration of maintaining the essence of indigenous designs please refer to figure1; some of the highlighted materials in this paragraph were used in making rattle designs above.

Taking advantage improvised materials such as scrap saves blacksmiths from some of the huddles, they used to face in the iron smelting process. the already processed metals are easier to forge and does not require a lot of charcoal to heat them. The materials further manifest

ssustainable practices with emphasis on the production process, such as using recycled iron or implementing eco-friendly techniques like low carbon emission forging methods. This aligns with contemporary values of environmental responsibility and resource conservation which policies are pushing forward as the affecting material accessibility for iron smelting.

Resp: all Bs; All blacksmiths affirmed that the old way of making iron from iron core used to be a bit longer and complicated compared to just getting old used metals to forge items. Though use of already made mettles compromise the strength tangible and the intangible values, because not all indigenous iron forms are made in the same way. Some forms are made for spiritual purposes and therefore the materials manifest their powers

The above response highlights that indigenous artform are not only valued for their functionally which necessitates the physical strength but rather other components such as originality of the materials, meanings and ritual imbedded in the iron smelting process, and the meaning the materials and design forging.

Resp: Bs 1 and 3;...when we were smelting and forging iron artifacts a lot used to happen beyond the physical we see in the productions. The stories we used to tell to each other, celebrations we used to make a group of smelters all used to cultivate our bondage and social capital and the practice.

The above statements Infuse storytelling elements into the design narrative, highlighting the historical, cultural, and symbolic meanings behind indigenous iron artifacts. This adds depth and context to contemporary adaptations, fostering a deeper connection with audiences_the aspect we miss when chose to substitute the indigenous iron with modern materials and methods

Indigenous designs are not only manifested in the unusual materials but also have been agents of art fusion what has expanded their relevancy in the contemporary space. Artistic Fusion has fostered malt purpose ideas by contemporary artists and designers to infuse indigenous ironwork with modern artistic expressions. This has been occasionally involve incorporating abstract motifs, geometric patterns, or incorporating other art forms like sculpture or painting into iron artifacts. This has further led to customization; offering made-to-order designs that blend

indigenous motifs with personal modern preferences such as commemorative sculptures, corporate installations, or public artworks.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study findings suggest that although the Buganda kingdom has undergone significant changes due to globalization, leading to the transformation of indigenous spaces into modern ones, indigenous artifacts have remained significant for cultural practices, domestic use, and as sources of inspiration for new innovations. Indigenous designs of iron artifacts in the globalized space have continued to represent a fascinating intersection of traditional craftsmanship, cultural heritage, and modern artistic expression as subjects of endurance. These artifacts include tools, weapons, ornaments, and ceremonial objects made using indigenous ironworking techniques that have been passed down through generations. In contemporary contexts, indigenous iron designs are often valued not just for their functional or decorative purposes but also for their symbolic and cultural significance. They serve as a means of preserving and showcasing indigenous knowledge, history, and identity.

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