

## **Influence of Religion On the Political Parties' Affiliations and Elections in Uganda: The Case of Iganga District**

**John Paul Kasujja, (Ph. D)**

Department of Humanities Education, Faculty of Education, Kabale University

doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/ijhphr.13/vol11n22841>

Published June 18, 2023

---

**Citation:** Kasujja J.P. (2023) Influence of Religion On the Political Parties' Affiliations and Elections in Uganda: The Case of Iganga District, *International Journal of History and Philosophical Research*, Vol.11, No.2, pp.28-41

---

**ABSTRACT:** *This study examined the influence of religion on the political Parties' affiliation and elections in Iganga District. The study used a cross-sectional survey research design with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study used 700 respondents identified using simple random, purposive and snow ball sampling techniques. These included religious leaders, political and traditional leaders, and voters. Data was analysed using Chi-square test of goodness of fit and thematic analysis. The study discovered that Political party affiliation is not linked to religion apart from the traditional political parties, and religious leaders and their institutions are turned into mobilization centers consequently influencing them politically. The study recommended that religious leaders should try to unite the people in the region amidst confusion and divisionism caused by politics. In addition, Religious leaders and political leaders should therefore desist from activities which compromise with their religious and leadership ethics, thus campaigns or political gatherings should take place entirely out of the worship centers. They should not allow religion to be politicized.*

**KEY WORDS:** religion, political parties, affiliation, elections, Iganga district, Uganda.

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

Many writers both academic and others, have sought to explain religion in relation to political development in Uganda. Karugire (1988), Karugire (1980), Mamdani (1978), Mudoola, D.M (1993), Kasujja and Mugagga, (2012), Tamale, M.B., et al., (2014), among others belong to this school of thought. They argue that, disunity on ethnic and religious grounds and administrative isolation of Uganda's component parts during the colonial period were the basic foundations upon which political instability was build while tracing the political history of Uganda from the attainment of independence in 1962 to the coup of the Okello's in 1985. There can be little quarrel with this explanation, because it provides sufficient background for this study. However they do not deal with the effects of religion on the development of political parties and District elections

in Iganga district. In another instance, Karugire's work begins from 1962 to 1985, and therefore leaves other years which need to be studied prompting this study necessary.

In the same vein, Mujaju, (1976:14) attributes the persistent post-colonial instability and conflicts in Uganda to religious differences germinated during the colonial period. He argues that religious groups and their activities have proved durable and divide in Uganda since the introduction of Protestantism, Catholicism and Islam before, and during the colonial period. Mujaju takes it further by illustrating how African political parties in Uganda since the introduction of Protestantism, Catholicism and Islam before and during the colonial period. Mujaju takes it further by illustrating how African political parties in Uganda in the decade before independence took on something of a religious character in terms of their constituencies and this remained the case afterwards. He believes that differences between, or among these religious groups laid a foundation for later conflicts in Uganda. Although his explanation remains historically correct, his explanation falls short of this study objective of analyzing and documenting the effect of religion on political development in Iganga district, making the study necessary.

Mamdani, (1976:46) argues that colonialism had an effect on the political development of Uganda. He contends that. "To pit one region against another, one nationality against another, one race against another, one religion against another to ensure the unity of the rulers and the division of the ruled was the conscious purpose of colonial policy....." It would indeed be odd if one were to argue that colonialism had come to Uganda to create nation states, the reverse was true as this should surprise no one, because it was in the interest of the colonial powers that the ruled should remain divided and weak. The aspects of these scholars' emphasis play a role in the political development, but are not necessarily its roots to the central cause, hence the need to analyse the effect of religion and on the political development in Iganga District.

Welbourn (1965:1), one of the first scholars to analyse the formation of political parties in Uganda observed that religion and politics in Uganda had drawn attention as early as 1890, when Catholics, Protestants and Muslims in Buganda had formed themselves into indigenous political institutions, and that this social pattern with all its consequences was reported throughout Uganda. He notes that during the election campaign of 1962, the DP was popularly referred to, and known to many as "Dini ya papa" (Religion of the Pope) and the UPC was known as the "United Protestant of Canterbury". Welbourn's study concentrates in emphasizing the fact that religion and politics in Uganda are intertwined. While Mamdani, (1976:5) does agree with the above scholar in principle. He contends that Political Parties were characteristically parochial and sectarian in outlook. However, Mamdani coins a new perspective when he argues that all the Political Parties had been manipulated by European imperialism in that, at the time of the achievement of Uganda's independence, Political Parties did not question the continuous linkage to the capitalist west. This post-independence-political scenario was, and is still characterized by imperialistic linkages from the western civilization. Further, Mamdani, (1976) contends that the intra-class struggles played a great role in the detriment and derogation of multi-party democracy in Uganda. However, what is

common in this study is that, Political Parties in post-colonial Uganda had inherent problems rooted in the colonial period. The significance about this scholar is the fact that he does not effectively give attention to the effect of religion on the political party affiliation in Iganga District. Oded, (2000:21) argues that, the Kenya government, like the governments of Uganda, and Tanzania and other African countries prohibit the formation of Political Parties based on religion sectarianism. He notes that religious leaders, Muslims and Christians alike therefore set up religious or social organizations through which they can express their views, for example, the formation of the National Union of Kenya Muslims (NUKM) established in 1968 and was headed by two Muslims Assistant Ministers, notably Mohammed Jehazi, and Sheikh Muhammad Salim Balala. The main goal of this organization was to unify all Muslims in Kenya especially those who lived in the coast province against the ambitions of Ronald Ngala- a Christian from Giriyama ethnic group and one of the leaders of the ruling Kenya Africa National Union (KANU) Party. He therefore offers a good background to the central argument of this study, but his work falls short of our basic objective; explaining the role of religion in influencing political party affiliation in a multi-religious districts like Iganga.

Traceries press team, (2006:1) ably presents a key and controversial feature of Ugandan politics since 1986. It observed that, the Uganda 1995 constitution provided for political participation and voting, but prohibited Political Parties from sponsoring candidates. It noted that a referendum in 2000 found 91% of citizens in favour of the continuing Movement System of Government although the turnout was low and the opposition had limited opportunity to present their case. After 2001, calls for multi-party democracy in Uganda became more persistent. In July 2005 a further referendum was held to decide on the political system Ugandan would adopt. This time the government supported the change and secured a 92% vote in favour of restoring multiparty democracy. The Opposition boycotted the referendum and the turn up was as low as 47%. Parliament voted in August 2005 to lift the constitutional two-term limit on the office of president to allow unlimited terms.

The press further noted that Political Parties had already emerged in expectation of the switch to a multi-party system. The national Resistance Movement (NRM) is the existing establishment in the new guide, the Uganda People's Congress (UPC), Democratic Party (DP), and Conservation Party (CP), are Uganda's pre 1986 Political Parties which were permitted to exist, but not to contest elections. Some new opposition groups emerged including the Reform Agenda (RA) and Cross party pressure groups such as Parliamentary Advocacy Forum (PAF) which later merged, or joined to form Forum for Democratic Change (FDC).

The Tracaires' team concentrated on how Political Parties operate in Uganda, and thus their works provide a sufficient background to this study, however, the team did not point out any where the role of religion in respect of political party affiliation. Their study largely remains general and not specific; the current study has endeavored to look at the influence of religion on the political party

affiliation and elections in Iganga district. The study argues that religion, politics and elections in Iganga district have interacted intensively before, and after independence as president Yoweri Museveni of the republic of Uganda once observed;

*“The politics of Uganda at independence was an abashedly sectarian. Democratic Party was mainly for Catholics, Uganda Peoples’ Congress for Protestants outside Buganda and Kabaka Yekka Party for conservative Baganda Protestants in Buganda. It is difficult to discuss politics in independent Uganda excluding the issue of religion.....” (org/wiki/yowerimuseveni).*

## **RELIGION AND ELECTIONS IN POST INDEPENDENT UGANDA**

Whereas religion influences Political Party affiliations, it goes beyond Political Parties to the political activities, like elections. For this, Bwengye (1985), in his study about the 1980 national elections in Uganda, argues, that although there was a National Legal Electoral Commission, its’ role had been usurped by the chairman of the Military Commission (Paul Muwanga) who became the defector electoral commission. He decided and directed the electoral process to suit his own whims and those of Obote, his master. Thus the electoral commission became a stooge of the Uganda People Congress. He further argues that the 1980 elections were characterized by manipulation, intimidation, harassment, and vote rigging, for example, during the registration exercise, most registration officials developed hostility against non-Uganda People Congress members. it is clear that the returning officers favoured Uganda People Congress candidates as the element of delay was used exclusively against the non-Uganda people’s congress candidates. Karugire, (1988) supports the above argument that the 1980 elections were rigged to give alteration of constituencies, changing polling stations, distribution of extra ballot papers to unknown Uganda People’s Congress supporters and denial of registration to known Uganda People Congress party opponents. There can be little quarrel with this explanation indeed the study argues that the 1980 elections laid the foundation for future rigging of the elections, this was witnessed in the 2001 and 2006 national elections. This view was supported by FDC Presidential candidate Kizza Besigye, speaking April 30<sup>th</sup> at Masaka Recreation Ground during Masaka “Tweyanziza” forum. He said that,

*“It is just a matter of time, and time is about for him to go. When we went for elections, which of course were rigged, and we even went to the courts of law, the idea was merely to give him a change to go peacefully and for you people, to see him waving at you as he went. But since he chose the other method of leaving power by stealing the election, then so will it be. You might never see him waving at you, but he will go. Your present suffering under his regime will not go as far as 2011” (The Daily Monitor, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006).*

By rendering the electoral system fraudulent, orderly change of government becomes impossible and therefore violence became an integral part of the political system in Uganda. However it is worth nothing that their study falls short in explaining the role of religion in influencing elections of multi-religious District like Iganga. Governments have been known for attempting to compromise the positions of religious leaders and consequently the institutions they lead by extending special gifts to their institutions, for example expensive vehicles to the leaders, funding of projects, religious institutions are turned into mobilization centers, consequently influencing these religious institutions politically. Elections in mult- religious districts like Iganga make people to elect persons who belong to the same religious affiliation. This trend abuses the norms and values of friendship, social justice, unity, leads to frustration which often culminates into violence, and in the long run hinders political development. The purpose of the elections should be to promote the ideals of democracy, peace and justice as practically all people invest in the electoral process in terms of material resources as well as in terms of their honor and emotions, in the expectation that the process will be a fair contest between parties and leaders.

Oded, (2000): 165) argues that during Kenyatta's time, the president made efforts to obtain Muslim support during elections despite his suspicion of them. He showed that Kenyatta did not visit Muslim leaders during his stay in Mombasa, but also participated in Muslim religious festivals such as the Maulidi (the Prophet's birthday) and delivered speeches in Kiswahili. For example, during the president's visit to the coast before elections to the ruling KANU party in 1971 he met with political religious leaders, including Chief Kadhi, Sheikh Abdullah Saleh, Alfarsy, who was the highest Muslim religious authority in Kenya: residing in Mombasa. There can be little quarrel with this explanation, because it provides an important background for elections in Iganga district. In another instance his works points at only one religion, other religions have also their own impacts.

On the other hand, Bartholomew, (2006:1) shows the role of religion in politics. He argues that Pastor Robert Kayanja of Rubaga Miracle center Cathedral is also a strong supporter of President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and the first Lady Janet, K. Museveni who have attended events connected with Keyanja's religious activities. Such as the one reported by East Africa procurement news in 2004. He hosted President Yoweri Museveni and his family and also donated Uganda shillings 25 million to the Uganda Women's Effort to Save Orphans (UWESO) which is patroned by Mrs. Janet, K. Museveni. This was at the church's dedication ceremony, at which the president and his wife were the chief guests. The President gave the church 100 cows from one of his farms. Much as Bartholomew tried to present a very scholarly piece of work expounding on how religion is used as a tool by politicians, his works remain largely on one religion and he did not particularly look at the role of religion in state elections, which is one of the basic aims of this study. The researcher argues that religion influences state elections. Just before the 2006 elections, the Uganda's New Vision online publication reported from president Museveni's final rally, "*We have*



*already won this election.*” Museveni declared, echoing statements by Kigongo, Amama Mbabazi and Rev. Bentungwa and Pastor Keyanja who prayed for and blessed him.

Pastor Robert Kayanja is reported as saying last year (2006), when discussing the upcoming Uganda elections on television,

*“It was so clear to me. We shall have five presidential candidates; one will die, one will quit, three will remain. And it will be 61:8 percent for the winner....”* But here is what 2006 election actually turned out. Mr. Museveni won 59% of the vote; while main rival Kizza Besigye took 37% three other candidates had shared over 3% of ballots cast, and candidate died. (Electoral Commission: Personal communication).

Mary, (2006:6) while commenting on the 1996, 2001 and 2006 presidential elections in Uganda notes that, President Museveni won 74% of the vote in the 1996 elections and 69% of the vote in 2001. She argues that the 2001 elections were marred in places by violence and intimidation and Museveni’s main rival Dr. Kizza Besigye subsequently let the country to spend the next four years in South Africa. She further pointed out that Museveni stood again in the elections held in February 2006, the first multi-party elections since 1980 and won with 59% of the vote, his nearest challenger, Dr. Kizza Besigye gained 37%, and that the 2006 elections were characterized by arrests and detention of the major opposition figure (Besigye) as well as antagonizing his campaign rallies and an equal access to state resources which raised some concerns about the election process. The researcher appreciates the works of that eminent scholar; however, her views neglected the role of religion in Iganga district.

The president work therefore has endeavored to look at how religion has influenced state elections. The study contends that religion and politics are two aspects that inevitably collide every election year despite some pleas, its best to keep them apart. Worshipping places like mosques and churches have been ruined into mobilization centers for campaigns. It is common to-day after prayers politicians are allowed to greet or wave the congregation either in the mosques or churches. This naturally tends to cause hatred and division amongst the people. Therefore, religion should not be politicized.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study utilized a cross sectional survey design with both qualitative and quantitative approaches as Amin, (2005: 212) recommends. The study was carried out in Iganga District because it is a multi-religious district which has a parent population of 700 religious leaders, and political leaders (District statistician personal communication). The study targeted, Religious leaders, political leaders, traditional religious leaders and opinion leaders, determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Table. The study employed simple random, purposive and snow ball

sampling techniques as (Onen& Yuko 2005:35). The study used questionnaire and interview guide. Data collected was analysed using Chi-square Test of goodness of fit given by the following formula;

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe}$$

Where by

$X^2$ =Chi-square

Fo= Frequency observed

Fe= Frequency expected

$\Sigma$  =Sun totals.

Documents from qualitative data were also qualitatively analyzed and it involved critical examination of every document and developing meaning out of it and incorporated the developed meaning into a theme that corresponds to the context of the study.

## FINDINGS

### Religion influences political party affiliation in Iganga district.

The findings in this section are presented, and the respondents were classified as Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly disagree, Disagree. The results of the analysis are presented in table 1.1 and 1.2.

**Table 1.1 Respondents perception about religion on political party affiliation**

RELIGION AND POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION		COUNT	COL%
Political parties are religiously founded	Strongly agree	14	5.7%
	Agree	30	12.1%
	Disagree	124	50.2%
	Strongly disagree	79	32.0%
Total		247	100.0%
Political parties were formed to forge national unity	Strongly agree	37	15.0%
	Agree	110	44.5%
	Disagree	66	26.7%
	Strongly disagree	34	13.8%
Total		247	100.0%
Political parties' members are segregated along religious lines	Strongly agree	16	6.5%
	Agree	71	28.7%
	Disagree	115	46.6%
	Strongly disagree	45	18.2%
Total		247	100.0%
Political leaders hate fellow politicians from religious denominations different from theirs	Strongly agree	21	8.5%
	Agree	77	31.2%
	Disagree	101	40.9%
	Strongly disagree	45	19.4%
Total		247	100.0%
	Strongly agree	21	8.5%

Each political party supports the activities of the founding religion	Agree	77	31.2%
	Disagree	101	40.9%
	Strongly disagree	48	19.4%
Total		247	100.0%
Political party affiliation is along religious lines	Strongly agree	9	3.6%
	Agree	53	12.5.0%
	Disagree	123	49.8%
	Strongly disagree	62	25.1%
Total		247	100.0%

Table 1.1 shows the following findings: Item 15: out of a random sample of 247 respondents, 198 disagreed with question 10 and only 44 agreed. Item 11: out of a random sample of 242 respondents, 198 supported the view, while 97 did not. Item 12, and 181 rejecting respectively. This implies that few respondents supported the views with 85, 97 and 60 agreeing respectively. To establish whether opinions differ in respect to item 10-14 of the questionnaire, the researcher used chi-square test of goodness of-fit to test the hypothesis and the results are presented in table 1.2

**Table 1.2 Results of the chi-square goodness-of-fit in relation to the respondents’ perception about influence of religion on political parties’ affiliations.**

RELIGION AND POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION		Count	Expected	Residual	$\chi^2_{obs}$	Chi-square values at df=12 $\chi^2_{crt}$
Political parties are religiously founded	Strongly agree	14	61.8	-47.8	20.0	21.03
	Agree	30	61.8	-31.8		
	Disagree	124		62.3		
	Strongly disagree	79		17.3		
Total		<b>247</b>				
Political parties were formed to forge national unity	Strongly agree	37	61.8	-9.3		
	Agree	110	61.8	53.3		
	Disagree	66	61.8	-16.8		
	Strongly disagree	34	61.8	9.3		
Total		247				
Political parties’ members are segregated along religious lines	Strongly agree	16	61.8	-45.8		
	Agree		61.8	9.3		
	Disagree	71	61.8	53.3		
	Strongly disagree	115	61.8	-16.8		
Total		<b>247</b>				
Each political party supports the activities of the founding religion	Strongly agree	21	61.8	-40.8		
	Agree	77	61.8	15.3		
	Disagree	101	61.8	39.3		
	Strongly disagree	48	61.8	-13.8		
Total		<b>247</b>	<b>247</b>			
Political party affiliation is along religious lines	Strongly agree	9	61.8	-52.8		
	Agree	53	61.8	-8.8		



	Disagree	123	61.8	16.3		
	Strongly disagree	62	61.8	3		
<b>Total</b>		<b>247</b>				

when the observed and expected frequencies in table 1.2 were analyzed using chi-square test of goodness-of-fit at a level of significance  $\alpha=0.05$  and the degree of freedom= 12. It was established for all cases the  $\chi^2$ observed value was less than the critical value. Therefore there were significant differences in the opinions of the respondents for each of the items (10-14). The above findings indicate that the majority of the respondents were not in line with hypothesis two of the study implying that religion has no significant influence on the political party affiliation in Iganga district.

The hypothesis findings were also supplemented with the results from the interview responses when the respondents were asked whether political parties were religiously founded. Religious leaders pointed out that,

*“No, mainly parties are formed because of other reasons like to promote unity and oneness. The issue of one’s religion is basically not important.”* (Interviewed in December, 2021).

Whereas political leaders argued that,

*“Movement (NRM), Conservative Party (CP) justice, Economics, Education, Morals, African Unity (JEEMA), but they do not have any religious inclinations. This is now history...”* (Interviewed in November, 2021).

While opinion leaders stressed that,

*“Not, that bias is now hard to define since there are many political parties mushrooming and most people do not base on their religious affiliation to join a particular party...”* (Interviewed in May, 2021).

Religious leaders asserted that,

*“No, in any case, if it is there, it is minor, this is now history people no longer base on religion, if that is case then JEEMA would have won or most people would be supporting it since Iganga district is dominated by the Muslims...”* (Interviewed in May, 2021).

Similarly, the respondents were asked whether it is possible to find members of the church/mosque supporting different political parties. On this, the religious leaders pointed out that,

*“Religious institutions like churches and mosques have congregation from different areas with different background, tribes hence forcing them to support different political parties.”* (Interviewed in January, 2022)

While opinion leaders argued that,

*“it is very possible because of different reasons firstly, family background, for example, certain families support particular political parties hence whoever belongs to that family has to belong to that same party. The second reason could be that today we have multi-party system of government, this therefore, suggests why we support different political parties”* (interviewed in December, 2021).

While political leaders revealed that,

*“It is possible and is a normal practice in all the religious institutions because people do not look at religion but other factors, for example, some parties are still young and for that matter cannot inspire one to join it”* (Interviewed in December, 2021).

The findings from qualitative and quantitative data have shown that religion has no significant influence on the political party affiliation in Iganga district.

### **Religion influences elections in Iganga District.**

The results in this section were in line with regard to the hypothesis stated as religion influences elections in Iganga District. The null hypothesis of this study that was tested stated that: Religion has no significant influence on state elections in Iganga district. To test this hypothesis the researcher used 5 items of the questionnaire. The respondents expressed their degree of agreement or disagreement as Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree and Strongly Agree and the results are indicated in tables 1.3 and 1.4.

**Table 1.3 Respondents’ perception about religion on elections in Iganga district.**

RELIGION AND STATE ELECTIONS		COUNT	COL%
Leaders appoint their religious henchmen into important posts	Strongly agree	51	20.6%
	Agree	88	35.6%
	Disagree	73	29.6%
	Strongly disagree	35	14.2%
Total		247	100.0%
People find it comfortable to elect leaders of their religious faith	Strongly agree	59	23.9%
	Agree	121	49.0%
	Disagree	47	19.0%
	Strongly disagree	20	8.1%
Total		247	100.0%
Leaders influence the trend of state elections	Strongly agree	35	14.2%
	Agree	109	44.1%
	Disagree	76	30.8%
	Strongly disagree	27	10.9%
Total		247	100.0%
Most religious denominations vote as a block	Strongly agree	26	10.5%
	Agree	84	34.0%
	Disagree	109	44.1%

	Strongly disagree	28	11.3%
Total		247	100.0%
Relationship between religious is negatively affected due to their support for particular candidates	Strongly agree	32	13.0%
	Agree	117	47.4%
	Disagree	74	30.0%
	Strongly disagree	24	9.7%
Total		247	100.0%

Table 1.3 shows the following findings: item 1: Out of random sample of 245 respondents 179 agreed with the question and only 66 were in disagreement with the question. In items 2, 3 and 4, the majority of the respondents supported the three questions with 138, 184 and 147 respectively. This implies that few random samples of 241, the respondents' findings showed that 108 supported the view, and 133 did not. To establish whether the views of respondents are different in respect to items 1-5 of the questionnaire, the researcher used chi-square test of goodness-of-fit to test the hypothesis and the results are presented in table 1.4.

**Table 1.4 Results of the chi-square goodness-of-fit in relation to relation to respondents' perception about religion on elections.**

RELIGION AND STATE ELECTIONS		Count	Expected	Residual	$\chi^2_{obs}$	Chi-square values at $df=12$ $\chi^2_{crt}$
Leaders appoint their religious henchmen into important posts.	Strongly agree	51	61.8	-26.8	310.2	21.03
	Agree	88	61.8	47.3		
	Disagree	73		14.3		
	Strongly disagree	35		-34.8		
<b>Total</b>		<b>247</b>	<b>247</b>			
People find it comfortable to elect leaders of their religious faith	Strongly agree	59	61.8	-35.8		
	Agree	121	61.8	22.3		
	Disagree	70	61.8	47.3		
	Strongly disagree	49	61.8	-33.8		
<b>Total</b>			<b>247</b>			
Leaders influence the trend of state elections	Strongly agree	35	61.8	-26.8		
	Agree	109	61.8	47.3		
	Disagree	76	61.8	41.3		
	Strongly disagree	27	61.8	-34.8		
<b>Total</b>		<b>247</b>	<b>247</b>			

Most religious denominations vote as a block	Strongly agree	26	61.8	-35.8
	Agree	84	61.8	22.3
	Disagree	109	61.8	47.3
	Strongly disagree	28	61.3	-33.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>247</b>		
Relationship between religious is negatively affected due to their support for particular candidates	Strongly agree	32	61.8	-29.8
	Agree	117	61.8	55.3
	Disagree	74	61.8	12.3
	Strongly disagree	24	61.8	-37.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>247</b>		

When the observed and expected frequencies were analyzed using chi-square test of goodness-of-fit at a level significance  $\alpha=0.05$  and degree of freedom= 12. It was established that for all cases the  $\chi^2$ observed value was greater than the critical value ( $310.2 > 21.03$ ).

The above findings portray that the majority of the respondents were in line with the study hypothesis implying that, religion influences state elections in Iganga district. The hypothesis findings were also supplemented with the results from the interview responses. When the respondents were asked whether politicians enter places of worship and address followers on state elections, opinion leaders acknowledged that,

*“Prophet Mohammed (P.BU.H) was a religious as well as a political leader, so we have to emulate his example...”* (Interviewed on January, 2021).

While religious leaders revealed that,

*“We do allow because I believe the place of worship is a free area, hence politicians are allowed to air out their views. Also places of worship gather many ....”* (Interviewed in December, 2020).

While political leaders argued that,

*“Yes, because this is taken as a golden opportunity as a lot is expected from them inform of donations and gifts.....”* (Interviewed in January, 2021).

Similarly, the respondents were asked whether during election time their religious institutions ever received gifts from the candidates. Opinion leaders acknowledged that,

*“Election time is always treasured by many people as different gifts are extended to both churches and mosques and to mosques and to individuals. For example, iron sheets cement, bricks are*

*donated to religious institutions, whereas, different individuals receive gifts such as scope, cooking oil, sugar and money.*” (interviewed in December, 2020).

While religious leaders revealed that,

*“Religious institutions like churches and mosques receive token of appreciation. In a bid to solicit for votes, candidates extend gifts like tap line, cement, holy books like Bible and Quran.”*

(Interviewed in January, 2021).

While political leaders argued that,

*“We do extend gifts to religious institutions because where there is money, there is always an impact”* (Interviewed in December, 2021).

The findings from both qualitative and quantitative data have portrayed that religion influences state elections of Iganga district. From the above findings, the study discovered that, religion has an influence on leadership, and also religion has a significant influence on state elections in Iganga district.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study therefore concludes and recommends as follows;

Political party affiliation is not linked to religion, only traditional political parties: Democratic Party and Uganda People Congress had a religious dimension. Religious leaders should try to unite people amidst confusion and divisionism caused by politics. They should use religious teachings to remind followers to take their responsibilities against leaders who campaign basing on religious affiliation and materialist gifts offered to them after prayers.

Religious leaders and their institutions are turned into mobilization centers consequently influencing them politically. Special gifts are extended to them for example funding of projects, cement, iron sheets, bricks thus influencing them and indirectly their followers on who to vote. Stake holders (religious leaders and their congregations) should realize that religious centers are holy places for worship and not political grounds. They should therefore desist from activities which compromise with their religious ethics, thus campaigns or political gatherings should take place entirely out of the worship centers. They should not allow religion to be politicized.

## **Disclosure Statement**

The authors report that there are no competing interests to declare.

## **REFERENCE**

Amin, M.E (2005). Foundation of Statistical inference for social Sciences Kampala Makerere University Press.

- Bartholomew, R (2006). The Contemporary Religion. <http://dolphin.upenn.edu/-irusa/sir/irjournal/leefers.pdf>.
- Bwenge, F., (1985). The Agency of Uganda from Idi Amin to Obote, Regency Press Limited.
- Karugire, S (1980). A political History of Uganda. Nairobi: Heinmann.
- Karugire, S., (1988). The roots of instability in Uganda. Kampala: New Vision Printing.
- Kasujja, J.P., & Mugagga, A.M., (2012), Ethnocentrism and national elections in Uganda. Nkumba Business Jamal, Vol. 11. ISSN: 1564-068x.
- Krejcie, R.V & Morgan, D.W (1970). Determining sample size for research activities educational and psychological measurements. 30,608 Sage Publications.
- Mamdani, M.J.S (1976). Politics and class formation in Uganda. London Monthly Review Press.
- Mary, C (2006). Uganda's Presidential Elections. London council Foreign Relation Press.
- Mudoola, D.M (1993). Religion, Ethnicity and Politics in Uganda. Kampala Fountain publishers.
- Mujaju, A. B (19976). Internal Conflict and its international context in Kuman Rupensighe (ed) conflict resolution. London: James Curry.
- Oded, A., (2000). Islam and Politics in Kenya: Nairobi; Heinemann.
- Onen, D & Yuko, O.W (2005). A general guide to writing research proposal and report. Kisumu: Options Press.
- Sssali, J.M (2006 May 2<sup>nd</sup>) Masaka Tweyanziza. Daily monitor page 4
- Tamale, M.B., Kasujja, J.P.,& Nakabuye, M.P., (2015), Internal migrations, multiparty politics and elections on the political development of Uganda, the case of Kampala District. (DRJSSES) Vol. 2 (x) pp.x-xx February 2015 ISSN: 2449-0806.
- Touliatos, J.S & Compton, N.H (1988). Research methods in human ecology/home economics. Ames: Iowa state University Press.
- Tracaires, N (2006) Uganda's elections: Irish Development Agency Working
- Wellbourn, F (1965). Religion and Politics in Uganda East Africa Publishing