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Gender Inequality and the Colonial Economy: Evidence from Anglican Marriage Registers in Urban British Africa

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Abstract

We use Anglican marriage registers from six major cities in British Africa to examine how colonial educational and occupational opportunities affected gender inequality among the sampled couples in terms of access to schooling and the formal economy. The marriage registers concern more than 30,000 Anglican converts making up a comparatively advantaged group of urban Africans aspiring to advance their economic and social status during British colonial rule through conversion to Christianity. We use the couple's signature literacy and occupational descriptors to argue that mission schools and the colonial economy opened up a gender gap in access to formal employment during the early colonial period that declined again after the 1940s through the *Africanization* and *feminization* of the civil service. We discern that the gender gap among the sampled couples closed earlier and faster in our West African cities where women's tradition of financial independence contested Christian missionary ideals of female domesticity more prevalent in our East African locations. Comparison with census data indicates that our sampled couples were forerunners for the educational and occupational developments of the average African in the sampled cities.

Keywords: Africanization, Colonisation, Development, Feminization, Gender, Inequality, Labour, Missionaries, Schooling.

JEL Classifications: N37, O18, J16

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1 Introduction

How gender unequal was access to education in urban British colonial Africa? And to what degree did women's and men's educational credentials obtained at mission schools translate into gender equal employment opportunities in the colonial economy? Christian missionaries facilitated the bulk of formal education in British colonial Africa as part of their global propagation of Christianity (Frankema, 2012; Jedwab et al., 2022; Rueda, 2023). Once it became clear that European rule would define long-term political and economic circumstances, the demand among Africans for formal missionary schooling and vocational skills expanded (Cogneau and Moradi, 2014; Dupraz, 2019; Frankema and van Waijenburg, 2023). The gendered legacy of this expansion however remains debated (Nunn, 2014; Becker and Meier zu Selhausen, 2023; De Haas and Frankema, 2018). On the one hand, in major urban centres where commercial enterprises, railway companies, the colonial administration, and Christian missionary activities clustered, formal mission education opened up employment opportunities for Christian (predominantly male) converts in the colonial economy (Frankema, 2012; Frankema and van Waijenburg, 2012, 2023; Meier zu Selhausen et al., 2018; Wantchekon et al., 2015). On the other hand, mission schools may have contributed to exacerbating or even institutionalising gender inequalities in terms of access to the new formal employment opportunities (De Haas and Frankema, 2018; Baten et al., 2021).

In particular, recent studies have shown that Christian mission education disproportionately favoured males over females (Nunn, 2014; Meier zu Selhausen, 2019; Aboagye, 2021; Baten et al., 2021; Chiseni and Bolt, 2023). The widening gender gap was not just a matter of access to education. Mission school curricula differed markedly by gender. Christian Victorian values of domesticity (needlework, cooking, hygiene, etc.) were taught to girls, whereas reading, writing, and artisanal skills were prioritised for boys (Masemann, 1974; Musisi, 1992; Leach, 2012). This separation – intended to prepare females for marriage and homemaking careers while facilitating males' access to the colonial economy instead – is

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believed to have segregated African women not only in terms of education but also with regards to access to the formal economy (Meier zu Selhausen, 2014; Wantchekon et al., 2015; Meier zu Selhausen et al., 2018). The notion of female segregation is contrasted in a growing body of literature documenting long-lasting benign effects of the presence of Christian (especially Protestant) missionaries on gender norms and women's education and economic agency in Africa today (Nunn, 2014; Fourie and Swanepoel, 2015; Kudo, 2017; Montgomery, 2017; Becker and Meier zu Selhausen, 2023; Congdon Fors et al., 2024; Okoye and Pongou, 2024). Colonial African micro data able to speak to these debates are however vanishingly rare, and the lack of systematic gender specific educational and occupational information has so far prevented a detailed study of African men and women's relative performances alongside the role of colonial agents in shaping these.

This study uses literacy and occupation statistics from Anglican marriage registers to argue that gender gaps in access to schooling and formal work followed a particular pattern over the course of the colonial period – expanding at first and then narrowing. The registers provide a unique window into a segment of the population that the colonial state was seldom or only partly motivated or determined to document. Our novel data concern more than 30,000 African couples who celebrated a Christian wedding between 1860 and 1970 in six major cities across five British African colonies: Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and the Gold Coast in West Africa, as well as Uganda and Kenya in East Africa.

The sampled Anglicans are by no means a perfect representation of the typical Africans at the time. Our converts were either townspeople or people living in close vicinity to urbanised areas on a predominantly rural continent. This makes them a tiny fraction of the colonial population, even though Anglicans made up some 20-50% of the population in the sampled cities. Our Anglican couples moreover constitute a relatively advantaged group of urban Africans looking to advance their status during British colonial rule through conversion to Christianity (e.g. Mann, 1981). Their self-selection into Anglicanism was more than just a religious promise. It was a wide-ranging commitment to Western culture, strategically placing the sampled converts before the emerging social, economic, and political opportunities that occurred during British colonial rule (Mann, 1981; Roberts, 1962; De Haas and Frankema, 2018; Ricart-Huguet, 2021). If colonial influences left imprints on the lives

of Africans, we would expect to see those imprints on the educational and occupational achievements of the sampled couples. Indeed, where census data are available, comparison suggests that our converts enjoyed higher rates of literacy and access to formal employment than the average African in the sampled cities and were plausible forerunners for the later educational and occupational developments among the broader urban populations.

The marriage registers disclose the sampled spouses' *signature literacy*. This is inferred from (the lack of) a consenting signature, documented in previous research to be indicative of school attendance (e.g. Cressy, 1977). The records also reveal the couple's occupational titles at the time of their marriage. These titles uncover the nature of the spouses' labour market engagements (formal, informal, or domestic work) and thus the degree to which the sampled women were deprived of labour market opportunities compared to their male counterparts. The occupational titles of the fathers of the spouses moreover allow us to control for the role of social background in the spouses' educational and occupational attainments. When possible, we use comparable marriage certificates of British settlers to explore whether the gender differences observed among our sampled Africans were mirrored among their local European counterparts. The wide geographical coverage of our data also discloses region specific gender patterns among urban Anglican converts across East and West British Africa.

Our novel data break new ground along four dimensions. First, earlier accounts of occupational developments in colonial Africa chiefly come from the archives of colonial administrations. Because the colonial administrations predominantly employed *male* African workers, the findings of previous studies are intrinsically biased towards the labour market performances of males.[1] Our new source material make headway by offering a *fully-balanced* comparison of educational and occupational performances of the sampled converts.

Second, because earlier studies gleaned their occupational statistics from enumerations made by colonial administrations, their information is concentrated on males and females employed in the *colonial* economy. This excludes activities performed *outside* of the colonial

[1]See Robertson, 1984, pp. 35–37, and Byfield, 2018. Other studies have reconstructed the wage developments of unskilled African male labourers (Frankema and van Waijenburg, 2012; Rönnbäck, 2014; Juif and Frankema, 2018; Frankema and van Waijenburg, 2023; Carvalhal and Palma, 2024); the heights of African male soldiers (Moradi, 2009; Austin et al., 2012; Moradi et al., 2013); the careers of policemen (Vanden Eynde et al., 2018); and the social mobility of Anglican grooms (Meier zu Selhausen et al., 2018) and white male settlers (Cilliers and Fourie, 2018).

sphere – in people's homes, on their farms, or in their family businesses (Robertson, 1984, pp. 35–37; Byfield, 2018). Although our sampled African couples were predominantly townspeople and as such positioned in the realm of the formal colonial economy, many of them still engaged in informal labour or domestic chores, especially in the case of women. In contrast to earlier representations of African labour, the sampled Africans of our study therefore also operated *outside* of the colonial economy.

Third, our Anglican marriage registers were subject to the same *systematic* record-keeping practise across all of its British African parishes, i.e. that of the Church of England. This means the gendered patterns observed in British *West* Africa are meaningfully comparable to those of British *East* Africa, including our earlier case-study of Kampala in Uganda (Meier zu Selhausen, 2014; Meier zu Selhausen and Weisdorf, 2016; Meier zu Selhausen et al., 2018). Last but not least, the *longitudinal* dimension of our data enables a fine-grained exploration of the gender specific educational and occupational performances of the sampled Africans (and British expatriates) across long parts of (and sometimes the entire) colonial era. The longitudinal contribution takes us beyond earlier so-called *persistence* studies in which colonial settlements of Christian missionaries are correlated with the performances of African women today (Anderson, 2018; Guarnieri and Rainer, 2021; Henderson and Whatley, 2014; Becker and Meier zu Selhausen, 2023; Miotto, 2023; Nunn, 2014; Chiseni and Bolt, 2023).

The findings of our study speak to several debates about the variegated influences of colonial rule on African women's educational and occupational attainments vis-à-vis those of men. First, our marriage records document that access to mission schooling among the sampled Anglican couples was fairly gender *equal* across the colonial era, except for a brief early colonial transitory period where our data suggests that the sampled males attended mission school more frequently than females. However, the gendered *rewards* to schooling – in terms of access to formal labour – grew increasingly *uneven* among the sampled couples long into the colonial epoch. We argue that this resulted from an expansion of formal jobs for men but not for women who were frequently relegated to informal work or homemaking activities instead. Our sensitivity analysis shows that these observations are robust to accounting for compositional changes across time and space. This includes controlling for the possibilities

that some of the sampled social groups (captured by the fathers' occupation) were more prone to educate their offspring or facilitate their entry into formal work, and that the tendency to convert to Anglicanism may have varied within or across the sampled locations.

Second, we observe significant regional variation in the sampled women's *alternatives* to formal work. The early colonial West African women were much more frequently involved in *informal* income-generating activities than their East African counterparts. We argue based on earlier works that these disparities were rooted in historical gender norms, with British East African precolonial traditions of female domesticity aligning much better with Christian-Victorian patriarchal values than was the case in British West Africa (e.g. Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh, 2006). Indeed, earlier accounts of British East Africa's male-controlled ideals – supposedly strengthened through mission school training (Mann, 1981, pp. 211; Musisi, 1992) – are clearly echoed in our marriage registers, with early colonial British East African women overwhelmingly recorded as homemakers and housewives or lacking an occupational descriptor.[2] On the other hand, we assert on the basis of previous studies that precolonial ideologies of women's financial independence in West Africa helped resist the missionary principles of wives as homemakers and continued to secure these women's historical tradition of participating in informal income-generating work well into the colonial period (e.g. Keniston McIntosh, 2009).

Third, the observed early colonial segregation of our sampled African women from formal work *did not* persist throughout the entire colonial era. Earlier studies have described how *Africanization* and increased *feminization* of the British public service allowed well-educated African women to increasingly enter into formal employment during the late colonial era (e.g. Simson, 2019). These descriptions are visibly mirrored in our occupational statistics – both in British East Africa and even more in British West Africa. We argue based on our Anglican marriage records of British expatriates that the changes observed among our sampled African couples followed advancements in European women's formal work participation after World War II alongside the subsequent Western liberation movement (e.g. Goldin, 1991; Humphries and Sarasúa, 2012; Schmidt and van Nederveen Meerkerk, 2012). We contend that West

[2] An important exception was the sampled women's formal employment at mission schools and hospitals, even if this type of employment concerned only a minority of the sampled women.

African women's relatively greater precolonial agency through participating in (informal) market trading may explain why we observe a more rapid shift among Anglican women in our West African cities towards formal labour participation during the late colonial era compared to British East Africa. These divergent regional trends meant that gender inequality in access to formal work was largely absent among the sampled couples in British West Africa at the time of independence while they still loomed large in British East Africa.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 describes and contextualises the urban Anglican data and explains how they are prepared for analyses. Section 3 charts and seeks to explain the trends in the educational and occupational structures of the sampled couples by gender and region. Section 4 explores how representative the sampled Anglicans were with respect to the educational and occupational developments of the wider urban population in the sampled cities. Section 5 concludes.

2 Background, Data, and Sample Restrictions

The empirical base of our study comes from Anglican marriage registers recorded by the Church Missionary Society, i.e. the missionary arm of the Church of England overseas. The mission society was founded in 1799 and employed the same record keeping system as the Church of England (Wrigley and Schofield, 1989; Meier zu Selhausen and Weisdorf, 2016). Among Protestant mission societies active in British colonial East and West Africa, the Church Missionary Society constituted about one quarter of all European missionaries and about half of all African mission staff and out-stations (Beach and Fahs, pp. 87–90, 108–113).

The marriage registers include the date and place of the wedding, the spouses' names, their marriage ages, their prior civil statuses, their places of residence, and their occupations (if any) at the time of the marriage. The records also report the names and occupations of the fathers of the spouses. Spouses were also asked to approve their marriage by leaving their signatures on the certificate. For spouses unable to write their own name, as was frequently the case during the early colonial period, consent was given by leaving an 'X' mark or a thumbprint on the certificate, with the minister writing down the name in-

stead. Known as signature literacy, someone's signature has been used in earlier works as an indication of school attendance (e.g. Schofield, 1973; Rachal, 1987; Cressy, 1977).[3] Since Christian missionaries were the main provider of formal education in British colonial Africa (Frankema, 2012), we associate a signature with having attended mission school. Figure A.1 in the Appendix details what an Anglican marriage registration contains in terms of information. Although Catholic and other Protestant mission societies competing for conversions in British colonial Africa also recorded vital events in parish registers, they typically lack registration of occupations and signatures.

Anglican vital records of African converts are predominantly found in former British colonial Africa and mostly in urban areas.[4] We collected marriage registers from a total of six major cities. For British West Africa, this includes the cities of Freetown in Sierra Leone, Accra in Ghana, and Lagos and Ibadan in Nigeria (see Figure 1). For British East Africa, the sampled cities comprise Kampala in Uganda and Nairobi in Kenya. In Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria, we preserved the marriage registers *in situ* of 14 parishes (see Table A.1). In Sierra Leone, we digitised the marriage registers from the Registrar General Office in Freetown to which the Anglican Church Missionary Society parishes were obliged to submit its copies. In the case of Ghana, we transcribed the marriage registers from the District Registry of Marriages at the Public Records and Archives Administration Department in Accra, stored in the online genealogy archive of Family Search.[5]

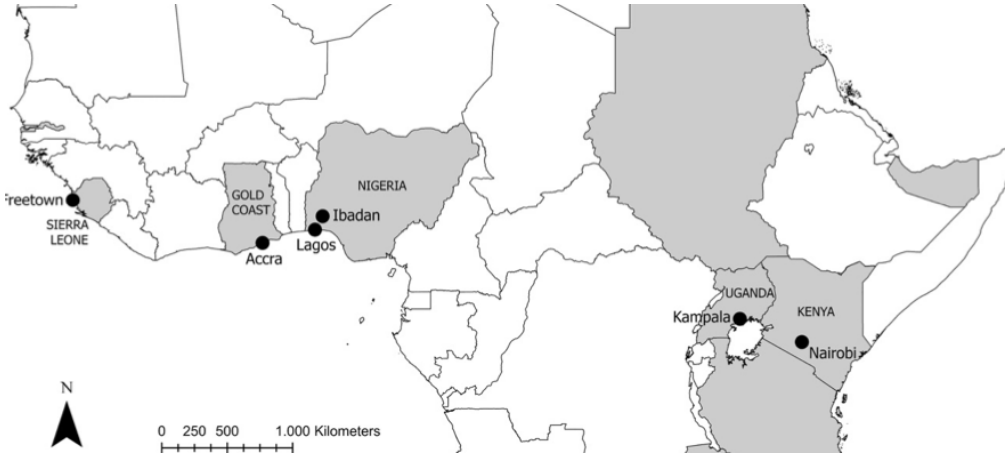
The time coverage differs from city to city (see Table A.1) with the registers jointly spanning the period 1828-1970, even if the earliest years were extremely thin in terms of

[3]It should be noted, as Cressy, 1977, p. 142, points out, that: "Signing one's name is by no means proof of literacy, just as making a mark did not necessarily exclude one from literate affairs. Many people who are counted as illiterate because they could not write their names may in fact have had some ability to read. The exact proportion in this midway zone or literacy penumbra cannot yet be calculated. The illiteracy rates [...] should, then, be regarded as absolute minima representing one uncertain cutoff point, the best that the current evidence permits. Moreover, they can be treated as a standard that is comparable across time or social or sexual differentiation." While signature literacy potentially reveals someones school enrollment, it does not disclose years of schooling.

[4]The sample sizes contained in the rural parish marriage registers that we encountered were generally too small for the purpose of longitudinal analysis.

[5]The archived marriages were officiated by both religious and government institutions. Although the Church Missionary Society had barely any presence in Ghana, where Methodist, Presbyterian and Catholic missions operated (Jedwab et al., 2021), we refer to our sample in this paper as Anglican but acknowledge that the data is sourced from marriage certificates that were reported to the colonial registrar general in Accra and are not Anglican.

Figure 1: The sampled cities in British colonial Africa (grey-shaded)



observations. The total number of marriages of Africans include 27,556 couples prior to our data restrictions conducted further below. Where possible, i.e. in Lagos and Nairobi, we supplemented the registers of African converts with comparable statistics for European (primarily British) couples who married in the colonies. The European pre-restriction sample includes 2,845 couples who solemnised their Anglican marriage between 1913 and 1969. Our full sample thus comprise 30,401 registers concerning African and European couples alike.

2.1 Urban background information

After the gradual abolition of the slave trades in the early 19th century, West Africa was the first region in sub-Saharan Africa to transition to tropical commodity exports and to be targeted by missionary efforts that preceded developments in East Africa (Frankema et al., 2018; Jedwab et al., 2022). Freetown in Sierra Leone with its natural harbour became a major relocation settlement for almost 100,000 liberated slaves in the aftermath of the abolition of the slave trade and Britain's first African crown colony in 1808 (Lovejoy and Schwarz, 2015, pp. 2–5). The missionaries of the Church Missionary Society who arrived in 1804 found the liberated and resettled slaves on Freetown Peninsula, the majority of which were Krio, more receptive to Christianity than the local Muslim population. Freetown became the country's chief port and focal point from where local missionaries were trained and diffused within British Africa. Missions expanded rapidly also in Lagos, initially a Yoruba fishing

settlement and slave trade centre, located on an island off the coast of Southern Nigeria, after the British annexation in 1861 to protect her interest in the palm oil-kernel trade (Ajayi, 1965; Hopkins, 2019). The first Anglican mission in the Yoruba city-state of Ibadan, about 100 km into the hinterland of Lagos, was founded in 1852 and integrated in the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1893. The extension of the railway from Lagos to Ibadan transformed Ibadan into a major regional trading centre of rubber and cocoa (Mabogunje, 1962). Accra along the British West African coast became the capital of the British Gold Coast in 1877 and the colony's foremost port and terminal of the Accra-Kumasi railroad in 1908.

In contrast to the coastal British West African urban centres, the more recently founded British East African cities of Kampala and Nairobi, located in the rural hinterlands with limited involvement in external trades, had barely any urban settlement in their areas by the onset of British colonial rule in the 1890s. Nairobi emerged as an administrative centre of the colonial administration and the Uganda Railway in 1899. Centrally located in Kenya, it became the colony's main administrative and distributional trade centre. It attracted sizeable populations of British settlers and expatriates as well as African male casual labourers and Asian traders who mushroomed into the largest non-coastal urban centre (Van Zwanenberg and King, 1975, pp. 263–267). Kampala, the densely populated centre of the Buganda kingdom's political and administrative activities, formed the heart of intense missionary efforts since the mid-1880s. When the British Protectorate was established in 1894, Kampala hosted both colonial and Buganda urban administrations and became the centre of impressive missionary expansion through African initiative (Burton, 2002, pp. 15).

With limited European presence in the sampled cities, except Nairobi, colonial administrations and missionaries relied heavily on educated Africans in bureaucratic, educational and ecclesiastical functions. Our cities eventually became the most urbanised, best connected, and most commercialised locations in the colonies. West Africa was however relatively more commercialised and urbanised during the 19th century, preceding developments in East African territories by about three decades (Meier zu Selhausen, 2022; Frankema et al., 2018; Jedwab et al., 2022). Similarly, per-capita GDP levels and urban real wages were consistently higher in West Africa's Southern Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Ghana by the early 20th century than in East Africa's Kenya and Uganda (Frankema and van Waijenburg, 2012; Broadberry and Gardner, 2022).

Table 1: African population size by city and Christian shares in 1931

	Freetown	Lagos	Accra	Kampala	Nairobi
Population	96,422	122,747	60,726	93,722	81,597
Share Christians in population	45%	45%	10%	70%	57%
– Share of Christian Protestants	93%	71%	na	54%	44%
– – Share of Protestant Anglicans	50%	47%	na	100%	na
Share Anglicans in population	21%	50%	na	38%	na

Notes: The religious composition of Accra and Nairobi are not provided in the 1931 and 1948 censuses. Accra's Christian share represents the Eastern Province of the Gold Coast Colony. Nairobi's Christian share is for the entire Kenya. Ibadan's religious composition is not stated in the census. *Sources*: Sierra Leone (1931, p. 44); Nigeria (1932, p. 16); Uganda (1933, p. 69); Watt (1966, p. 35).

The sampled cities in 1931 were among the largest urban centres in the sampled British colonies, with populations ranging between some 60,000 and 120,000 residents (Table 1). Historical West and East Africa differed not only in terms of demographic and economic development. An oft-cited distinction relevant to our study – one that dates back to pre-colonial times – concerns women's roles in the public domain and in economic activities more generally (Denzer, 1994; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, p. 19; Byfield, 2018). Although domestic work was the preserve of married women, West African women's involvement outside the domestic sphere were in many ways comparable to those of men (Keniston McIntosh, 2009, pp. 18–19; Cooper, 2013, pp. 348–349). Unlike in Victorian Britain and in many other regions of British East Africa, 19th-century women in much of coastal British West Africa were fully engaged in the economic life of their communities – as cultivators, traders, or crafts-manufacturers, granting them high levels of autonomy. In the urbanising societies of coastal towns, such as our sampled cities of Freetown, Accra, Lagos, and Ibadan, women organised themselves in powerful market associations and dominated local and partly long-distance market trading of fish, foodstuff and imported goods, affording them status and significant contributions to household earnings (Falola, 1995; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, p. 3; Berger, 2016, p. 11, 14; Byfield, 2018).

East African women in contrast seldom enjoyed comparable degrees of autonomy in income-generating activities outside of their homes. In central Kenya patrilineage, opportunities for female cooperative trade, partnerships, and entrepreneurship was largely restricted to the barter of foodstuffs and beer near the homestead, while men monopolised long-distance trade in livestock and food crops and controlled women's profits from local trade (Marris and Somerset, 1971, pp. 30–43; Kitching, 1980, p. 11–12; Robertson, 1997, p. 66–67). In Uganda, checked by cultural constraints on their agency, women were more rarely engaged in commercial activities and commonly relegated to domestic work and food farming instead (Southhall and Gutkind, 1957, p. 176; Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh, 2006, p. 57).

2.2 Opportunities and challenges of conversion to Anglicanism

It is imperative to understand what conversion to Anglicanism meant. First, in the five sampled capital cities for which religious information is available in the 1931 colonial censuses (see Table 1), Anglicans made up about half of all Protestants who themselves made up the majority of the Christian population, which in turn consisted of about half of all of urban African residents. The exception is Accra where the Church Missionary Society was barely present while the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Catholic missions operated instead.

Second, an Anglican wedding was not just a pledge to Christianity and the Anglican Church, but a commitment to Western culture more widely. There were both opportunities and requirements related to such a commitment, as pointed out in earlier studies of Christian conversion in Africa (Saleh, 2018). In British Africa, devotion to the Anglican Church opened opportunities for self-advancement and career-building which began in mission schools and churches (Berman, 1974; Mann, 1981; Peterson, 2016; De Haas and Frankema, 2018).

In particular, though it was not always strictly interpreted this way by the missionaries (Peterson, 2016), reading was usually a precondition for an adult baptism which in turn was required for an Anglican church wedding to take place. Reading skills were taught at mission schools, and Anglicans this way acquired an educational advantage compared to non-converts. Furthermore, the strict adherence to the Christian and Western lifestyles, such as the adoption of a Christian name alongside comprehension of the metropolitan language, placed Anglican converts and their offspring in privileged positions when it came

to occupational opportunities in the colonial economy (Roberts, 1962; Mann, 1981; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, p. 45; Peterson, 2016; De Haas and Frankema, 2018; Meier zu Selhausen et al., 2018). This does not imply that African Anglican converts were raised to the highest social ranks in British colonial Africa, which was a reserve of European administrators and local chiefs. But the careful process of self-advancement including mission education and involvement in Western religion and professional life set Anglican converts apart from their non-converting counterparts (Peterson, 2016; De Haas and Frankema, 2018; Mann, 1981; Meier zu Selhausen et al., 2018). Indeed, comparison of the sampled couples with the wider urban population of the sampled cities in Section 4 highlights that our Anglicans were superior in terms of literacy and access to formal work. A Christian marriage this way "provided a major justification for their claim of these privileges" (Mann, 1981, p. 228).

One critical prerequisite to Christian church marriage was that African Anglican converts "had to model their marriages – and their religious lives – after a British template," something that often conflicted with African customary marriage practices (Peterson, 2016, p. 96; Mann, 1981). For example, the Christian ordinances strictly forbade polygamous relationships and, if standing, such relationships had to be dissolved prior to the Anglican marriage (Strayer, 1978, p. 79; Hansen, 1986, p. 274; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, p. 79). Moreover, mixed marriages, e.g. between an Anglican and a Roman Catholic, were barred, and the children of polygamous or earlier marriages were refused an Anglican baptism and denied lineal inheritance by the colonial legislation (Taylor, 1958; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, pp. 94–96; Peterson, 2016). Nevertheless, both customary marriage and bride wealth payment often continued to precede celebration of an Anglican church marriage (Mann, 1981; Kanogo, 2005, p. 141; Taylor, 1958, pp. 177–178).

An Anglican marriage thus tended to separate those Africans who were prone to a Christian-inspired Western lifestyle from those more inclined to maintain customary matrimonial practices. The inclination to convert to Anglicanism and commit to Christian ideals may have varied across time, space, and social groups – a matter we address in Section 3.

2.3 Sample restrictions

The full data sample was truncated as follows. Registers with missing occupational information of the husband (4%) were excluded since these did not allow us to study the gender gaps in occupational performance. Registers including an occupational descriptor for the husband but not the wife (23%) were retained on the assumption that the bride was a housewife. The occupational titles of king, prince, pensioner, prisoner, retired, unemployed, and student (<1% in total) were also dropped from the sample since these titles prevented a categorisation of the occupational descriptor into formal, informal, and domestic work.

In order to avoid repeated entry, we only included men who were bachelors and women who were spinsters (dropping 13%). Similarly, we removed males and females under the age of 15 or over the age of 50 (<1%) in order to avoid faulty age reporting or marriages taking place under unusual circumstances. About 25% of the sampled spouses (due to Church-minister idiosyncrasies) had missing age information. Rather than discarding these, we opted to impute their ages by assigning them the average age of their local peers who married during the same decade. Our findings below are qualitatively similar if we discard the marriages with missing age information instead or include spouses below and above 15 to 50 years of age. Note that age information is required in order to assign the couples' educational and occupational information to birth cohorts further below.

The sample restrictions left us with a sample of 22,352 African and 2,588 European (predominantly British) husbands and wives whose marriages were recorded between 1860 and 1970. The total number of observations across time is illustrated in Figure A.2 and the number of observation by city in Figure A.3 in the Appendix. For the graphical presentation of the data, we required a minimum of ten marriages in each location and five-year interval.

2.4 Occupational categorisation

One of our main aims is to examine whether and to what degree women were marginalised relative to men in terms of access to formal work. To this end, we split the sampled occupational titles into three categories – formal, informal, and domestic work – using the same approach as in our earlier study of Kampala in Uganda (see Meier zu Selhausen and Weis-

dorf, 2016). Note that it was common for Anglican converts to first celebrate a customary marriage and later a Christian one (e.g. Mann, 1981). Because we capture the couple at the time of their Christian marriage, we assume this meant their occupational descriptors applied also post marriage.[6]

Formal and informal work both concern income-generating activities, while domestic work refers to unpaid household chores. Formal work involved jobs that paid a salary. During the colonial period, formal work for women predominantly meant work either within the mission society or the colonial bureaucracy, including occupational titles such as teacher, nurse, secretary, and clerk (see Appendix B). Informal work mostly appeared as self-employment outside the realm of the colonial economy. Women's informal income-generating activities included occupations such as weaver, trader, and baker. Tables C.1-C.4 in Appendix C reports the top-10 most frequent occupations by gender, location, and time period for both Africans and British expatriates.[7]

Domestic work was an exclusive territory of women. The two most common occupational descriptors falling within this category were homemaker and housewife.[8] The titles of basket maker, seamstress, and needle worker also appear in the category of domestic work. While these home craft occupations may evoke the impression of informal income-earning activities, earlier studies have emphasised that these occupations were non-commercialised and conducted from and for the home. Indeed, commercial sewing and the use of sewing machines was largely a domain of male tailors until the 1950s (Little, 1972, p. 33). Women's home craft occupations can instead be interpreted as missionary success in instilling Victorian ideologies of domesticity into women's occupational identification (Musisi, 1992, p. 181; Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh, 2006, pp. 54, 103–104; De Haas and Frankema, 2018, p. 989). Some scholars have argued that women's seamstress work in Southern Nigeria

[6]Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh (2006, p. 58), has argued that the Christian Mission Society encouraged educated young women to continue (mission) work after marriage.

[7]The literature describes a large number of women who migrated to sampled cities where they participated in the informal economy, selling beer and sexual services to working men (Stichter, 1977; White, 1990). Since those activities were not suited for a respectable Anglican bride it is no surprise that occupational titles, such as prostitute, sex worker, and brewer are not found in our Anglican marriage registers.

[8]Housewives and women with undeclared occupations could of course have served as full-time help in an informal family business headed by the husband. Re-coding housewives and undeclared occupations as informal income-generating work instead has no bearings on our conclusions regarding women's participation in formal work or the gender gaps herein.

became increasingly commercialised after 1930 (Denzer, 1992, p. 128; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, p. 71). We accordingly tried to re-code seamstress from domestic to informal work in this region and time period. But since this recording procedure made no difference to our qualitative conclusions below, we kept seamstress in the category of domestic work throughout for consistency. Table A.2 reports the summary statistics of the sampled individuals' educational and occupational performances across the six cities. The patterns and trends are described below.

3 Educational and occupational trends

This section explores the educational and occupational developments of the sampled couples by gender across time and space. We first examine the evolution in access to mission schooling captured by signature literacy rates; how the sampled males and females differed in this regard; and how British West and East Africa – represented by Freetown and Kampala – varied in terms of gender inequality herein. While the timing of the arrival of missionaries, and hence the starting point of mission schooling differed by region, the patterns of gender inequality were surprisingly similar displaying an inverse u-shape. The size of the peak in educational gender inequality meanwhile varied considerably by region. That is, the gender gap in access to mission schooling among the sampled couples was twice as large in the relatively patriarchal sampled East African cities than in the more female emancipated sampled West African locations, as we discuss further below.

Second, we investigate the evolution of labour force participation in both formal (and for women informal work) across time and space alongside the gendered differences herein. The gender gap in formal employment among the sampled couples were much more pronounced and long-lasting than the gender gap observed in access to mission schooling. The differences between men and women's access to formal employment were large across all of the sampled cities of British colonial Africa and persisted until after World War II. Women's subsequent increased work opportunities in the colonial economy appear to have spread first in our four British West African capital cities and – with several years delay – in British East Africa's Kampala and Nairobi.

Although the sampled women were frequently barred from access to formal labour – both in our sampled East and West British African cities and up until the 1930s – there were clear regional differences with respect to how women spent their time instead of participating in the formal economy. In particular, the sampled West African women were far more often employed in informal income-generating activities compared to their East African counterparts who engaged almost exclusively in domestic activities instead. Most if not all of the differences observed in our data conform to the narratives presented in earlier studies, as detailed below.

3.1 Gender differences in signature literacy

Two of our sampled cities – Freetown in British West Africa and Kampala in British East Africa – provide a remarkably long-term insight into the trends of educational development among the sampled couples during the colonial era.[9]

Panels A and B of Figure 2 show how male and female literacy rates evolved by birth cohort at the age of 10 between 1860 and 1970 in the two cities. Panel C compares the inter-city gender gaps. The gaps were constructed by giving the value one for a signature and zero for a mark or thumbprint, then computing the literacy rate by gender in each city, and finally subtracting the female literacy rate from that of males. Panel C this way reports the estimated percentage point differences in male and female literacy attainment. Panel A of Figure E.2 illustrates the comparable marital gender gap between couples by the year of marriage, showing a very similar pattern to that between birth cohorts. We consider how the sampled couples perform vis-a-vis the wider urban population in Section 4.

The panels in Figure 2 jointly convey four main messages. First, Figure 2 displays a genuine schooling revolution, attesting to how closely entrenched our Anglican spouses were with the Christian missionary movement who provided the bulk of basic education in British Africa. The sampled Anglican converts effectively went from zero to almost complete literacy (as measured by their signatures) over the course of half a century. The timing of the onset of literacy was strongly associated with the arrival of Christian missionaries. Starting in British West Africa in the early 19th century, Protestant missionaries later expanded into

[9]We use the literacy information for the couples in the remaining cities in our later sensitivity analysis.

East Africa where they set up schools in the late 19th century. Second, the gender inequality in literacy followed an overall inverted u-shaped pattern. That is, men generally began to attend school earlier than women, yet women relatively quickly caught up with their male counterparts.[10] Third, the length of the literacy revolution alongside the gender differences herein varied by region. In Freetown, the process took somewhat longer, and the gender gap thus extended across more years than in Kampala. Fourth, whereas the gender gap among the sampled couples in West African Freetown barely exceeded 20 percentage points, the gap was more than twice as high among their peers in East African Kampala, peaking at over 40 percentage points. At the peak, for every five literate men, only three out of five of the sampled women in Kampala were literate against four out of five Freetown women. We consider the probable reasons behind the peaks in educational gender inequality, and why it was larger in British East Africa, further below.[11]

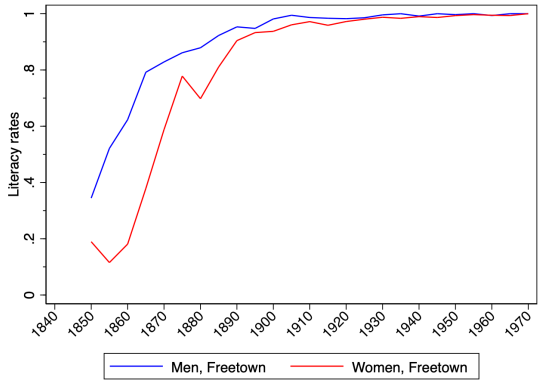
Are the patterns observed in Figure 2 an artefact of changes over time in the combination of couples included in the sample or in the local tendencies to convert to Anglicanism? For example, because the sampled couples came from a variety of social backgrounds, and because certain social groups may have been more prone to educate their children or better able to pay for their schooling, it is possible that the trends displayed in Figure 2 could have resulted from shifts in the composition of the sampled social backgrounds across time and space. Moreover, irrespective of such social differences, the attitude towards mission schooling might have varied by location, ultimately reflecting the inclination among the local population to adopt a Christian lifestyle by converting to Anglicanism.

[10]It is tempting to think the u-shape is mechanical because we know from history that men and women both eventually became literate. Women's literacy catch-up with men was however not guaranteed from the onset, i.e. when men first learned how to read and write.

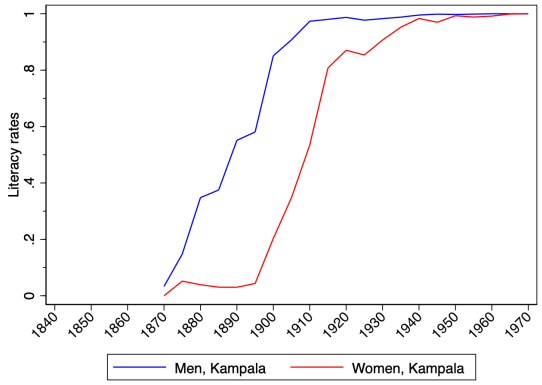
[11]It should be noted that, since signature literacy does not convey information about someone's years of schooling, the absence of a gender gap in signature literacy is not synonymous with the absence of a gender gap in years of schooling.

Figure 2: Signature literacy rates and gender gaps herein by birth cohorts

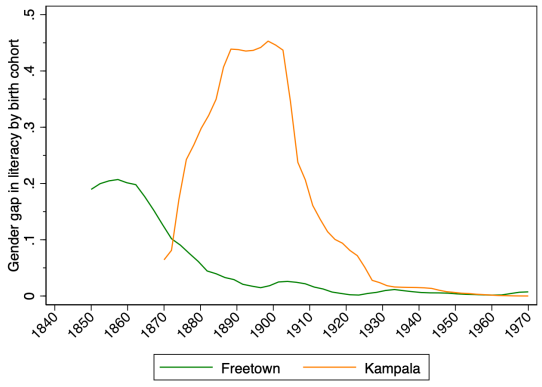
A) Freetown (British West Africa)



B) Kampala (British East Africa)



C) Gender gaps in Freetown and Kampala



Notes: Literacy rates are inferred from spousal signatures (or lack hereof) on the marriage certificates serving as proxies for their school attendance. The gaps were constructed by giving the value one for a signature and zero for a mark or thumbprint, then computing the signature literacy rate by gender in each city, and finally subtracting the female literacy rate from that of males. The graphs are based on five-year averages by birth cohort at age 10.

We account for these aspects by predicting the likelihood of signature literacy in a regression model with time and location fixed effects while restricting the sampled couples to certain social groups based on the occupations of the fathers of the spouses (see Tables C.6-C.9). Appendix E shows that the patterns observed in Figure 2 are qualitatively identical to the patterns observed and reported in Figures E.1 and E.2, which are limited to grooms and brides whose fathers were farmers. They also control – through interacted time and location fixed effects – for the possibility of local time-varying differences in attitudes towards converting to Anglicanism or sending one's children to mission school.

3.2 Occupational gender differences

To what degree did our Anglican grooms and brides' educational credentials translate into work opportunities in the colonial economy? Turning to the sampled men and women's labour market participation, we start by presenting the occupational structures before and after 1930. This time-separation has two reasons. First, it allow us to take a deeper look at the occupational structure in what is commonly termed the early and late colonial periods. Second, the 1930s marked the starting point of a significant change in the sampled women's formal work participation, as will become evident below.

Two key insights transpire from studying the sampled occupational structures. The first is that access to formal work for men rapidly increased in the early part of the colonial period with the rise of the colonial economy. The second is that access to formal work for women escalated much later, i.e. in the latter part of the colonial period in response to the *Africanization* and *feminization* of the colonial economy – events discussed in detail below.

The sampled men and women's work related landscapes looked very dissimilar prior to 1930. Table A.2 reports the shares of the sampled men and women by their work categories, showing that the sampled males were much more often engaged in income-generating activities than females were during this period. The sampled men predominately worked as clerks in the colonial administrations, missionary schools, and churches; in various artisanal crafts and building occupations; or as traders and merchants (see Table C.1).[12] In Accra, Ibadan,

[12]Kampala stands out with one in ten men being chiefs or sub-chiefs, attesting to British indirect colonial rule in Uganda and the strategic alliance between the Anglican Church and Ugandan chiefs (see Meier zu

and Kampala about one in four men were farmers. The relatively many farmers reflect the moderate size of the sampled cities during the early colonial period and the fact that many couples resided in rural suburbs. The frequency of boat- and fishermen in Freetown mirrors the city's status as a major port.

The sampled women's occupational range prior to 1930 were considerably narrower than men's, with the vast majority of females involved in domestic activities (see C.2). The dominance of housewives including seamstresses and mat makers testifies, as discussed in earlier works, to a mission school triumph of instilling the British Victorian middle-class ideology of domesticity into Christian African women – a sharp contrast to the formal labour market access that their male counterparts enjoyed (Leach, 2008; Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh, 2006; Cooper, 2013, p. 348; Turshen, 2016, p. 50).

This pattern of female domesticity broke down after the 1930s along two lines. First, the sampled women were able to expand their representation in mission schools and hospitals as teachers, nurses, and midwives (see C.4). Second, the feminization of the civil service offered inroads for the sampled women into other waged professions as clerks and typists in the colonial bureaucracy (e.g. Simson, 2019). During the late colonial era, with colonial independence looming on the horizon, British colonial officials began to support the higher education and employment of Africans in professional and administrative positions thus further expanding women's access to formal work (Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh, 2006, p. 91). We explore the types of formal occupations that the sampled women accessed after 1930 in more detail in Section 3.3.2.

3.3 Gender gaps in formal labour

We established a brief transitory gender gap above in access to schooling, which was largely closed by the 1930s. The same was not true of the gender gap in access to formal work. The reality was that the sampled women's access to schooling translated poorly into access to formal work.

Figure 3 displays the shares of the sampled couples engaged in formal work by gender and location. Where missionaries arrived ahead of the colonisers, such as Ibadan and Kampala,

Selhausen and Weisdorf, 2016; De Haas and Frankema, 2018).

the impact of westerners on the labour markets is not only very clear but also highly gender specific. Starting from zero, the share of the sampled males engaged in formal jobs, often as clerks, teachers, and catechists (see Table C.1), in Accra and Kampala, for example, almost immediately shot up as soon as formal labour opportunities emerged within the colonial economy. The massive gender gap in formal employment that subsequently materialised was not unique to Kampala. Despite the lack of coverage in other regions going back to the beginning of the colonial periods, the graphs for Lagos and Nairobi suggest that similar patterns of rising gender inequality formed with the onset of colonial rule across all the sampled urban centres in British colonial Africa. Indeed, if we take stock around 1930, more than 60% of the sampled men were employed in formal work across our urban British African locations while barely more than 10% of the sampled women had followed suit.

Turning to the gender gaps, Panel A of Figure 4 compares the shares of women engaged in formal work across the sampled cities, showing that women's work patterns were strikingly similar across vast geographical distances. The graph reports the shares by birth cohorts at the age of 25, the most common age at marriage for the sampled women (see Figure D.1). Figure F.1 shows the comparable marital gender inequality in formal employment, displaying a pattern very similar to that of gender inequality among birth cohorts.[13]

Figures 3 and 4 jointly reveal that the late colonial period saw considerable changes across the board in women's access to formal work. Hovering around 10% up until the 1930s, women recorded in formal employment rose to some 20% during the 1940s and 1950s to reach well over 50% in most of the sampled urban centres at the time of independence. Men's shares also rose modestly during this period but not as much as for women. Panel B of Figure 4 thus shows the consequence of women's catching up to men in terms of access to formal labour. The gender gaps gradually shrunk from some 50 percentage points in the 1930s down to about 20 percentage points around independence. Again, it is remarkable how similar the gender gaps in access to formal work were among our Anglican converts in the six sampled British African cities – following an inverse u-shape.[14] The gender gap in formal

[13]Note that formal work does not universally require longer education or vocational training compared to informal work. This means the absence of a gender gap in formal employment would not cover up a gender gap in formal work training in the same way that the absence of a gender gap in literacy could potentially cover up a gap in length of schooling.

[14]It is once more tempting to think the u-shape is mechanical because we see women eventually catch up

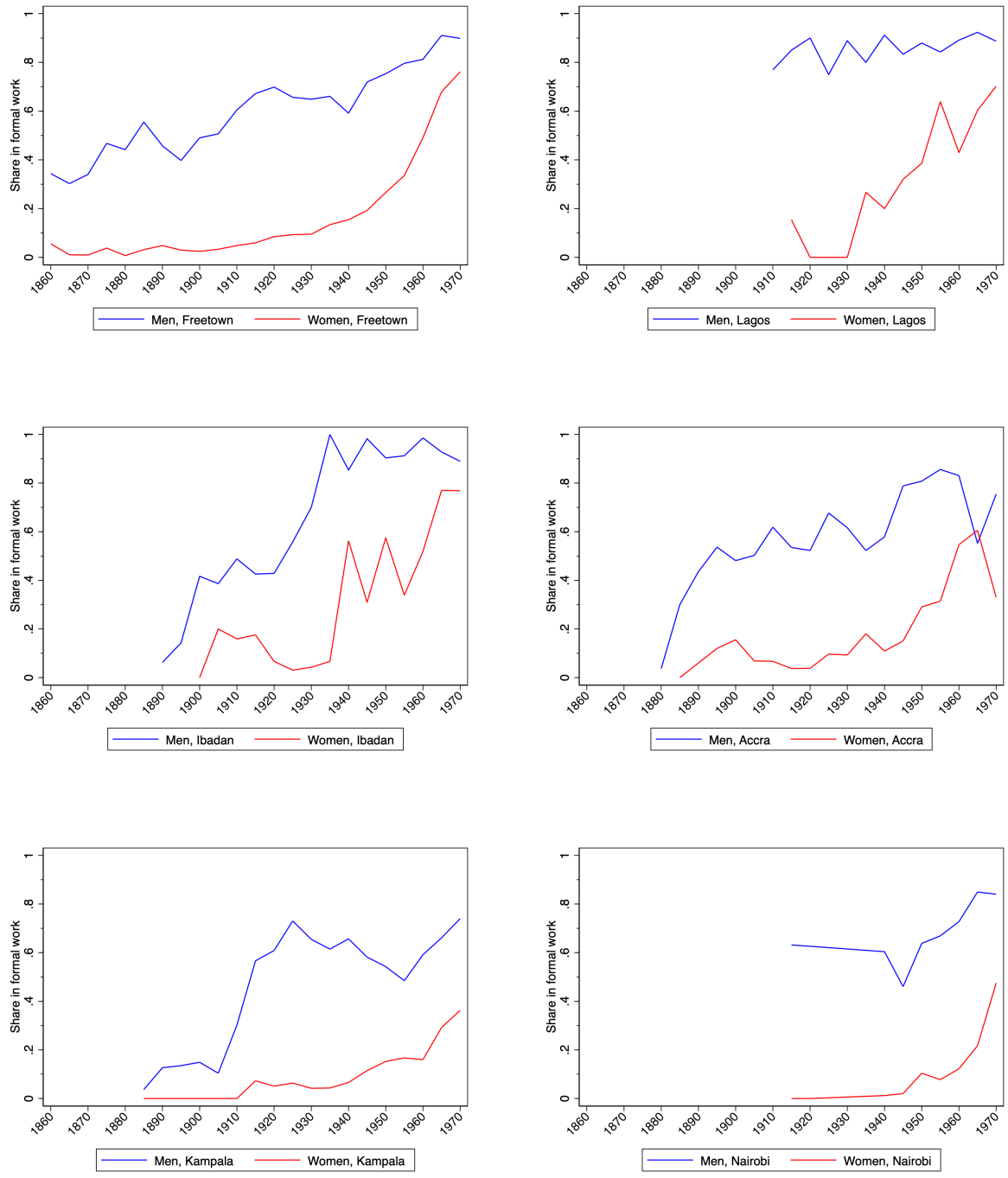
work in East African Kampala and Nairobi, which became British colonial administrative and commercial centres some decades later than West African Freetown and Accra, quickly mirrored that of the West African counterparts.

As with the couples' literacy performances, the patterns displayed in Figures 3 and 4 could be an artefact of changes over time in the combination of couples included in the sample or in the local tendencies to convert to Anglicanism. For example, because the sampled couples came from a variety of social backgrounds, and because certain social groups may have encouraged or discouraged their children's formal work participation more than others, it is not implausible that the trends observed in Figures 3 and 4 suffer from compositional shifts. Equally, couple specific circumstances, such as literacy status or age at marriage, might be correlated with their likelihood of being tagged with a formal work descriptor at the time of the wedding. Furthermore, and irrespective of the matters listed above, parental attitudes towards formal employment might have varied locally, e.g. with the propensity to adopt a Christian lifestyle by converting to Anglicanism.

These aspects can be accounted for by predicting the likelihood of formal work participation in a regression model with time, location, and marriage age fixed effects while restricting the sampled couples to certain literacy characteristics and social backgrounds (as captured by their father's occupations). While there are limits to how far the data can be exploited in this regard, Appendix H shows that the patterns observed in Figures 3 and 4 are qualitatively identical to the patterns estimated using a regression model and reported in Figures G.1 and G.2. Specifically, Figure G.1 shows that literate spouses whose fathers were farmers display the same trends as the average sampled male or female, even if the literate spouses of a farming background sometimes, i.e. in Freetown, Lagos, and Accra, show a relatively lower propensity to enter into formal labour. Similarly, the Panels in Figure G.2 echo those of Figure 4 also when we restrict the sampled couples to those that were literate and whose fathers were either farmers (Panels A and B) or engaged in informal work (Panels C and D) or in formal work (Panels E and F).

to men in terms of participation in formal employment, at least in some of the sampled locations. Women's catch-up with men was however not guaranteed from the onset, and the gender gap will thus not mechanically close over time.

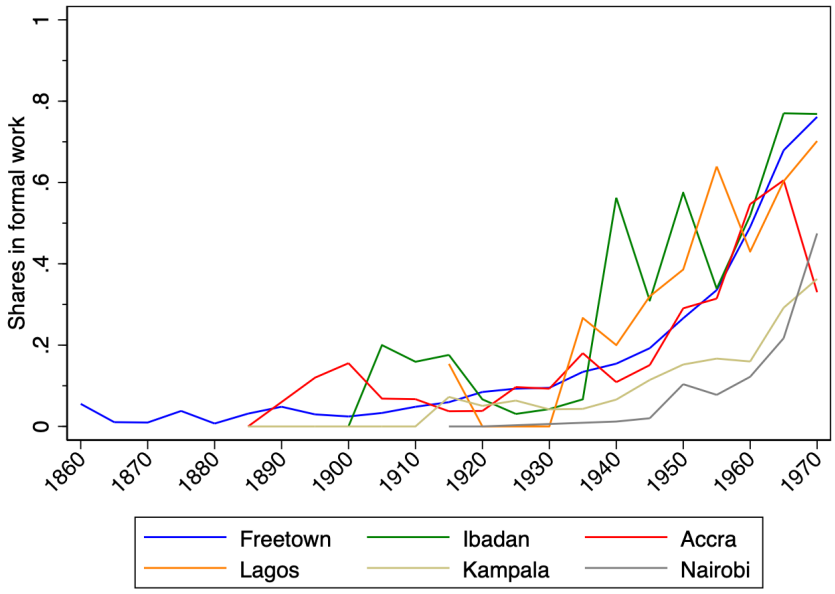
Figure 3: Shares employed in formal work among the sampled couples



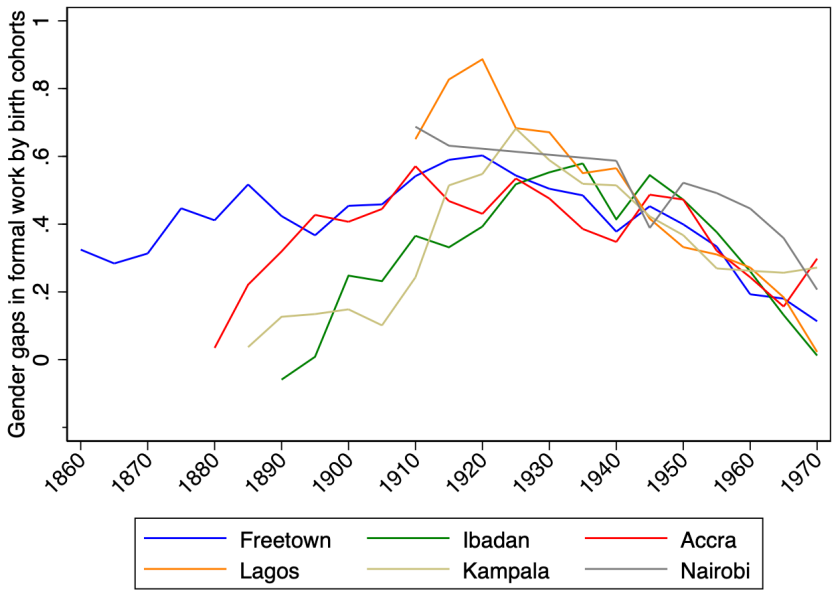
Notes: Formal (i.e. waged) work is categorised as explained in the text. The graphs are based on five-year averages by birth cohort at age 25.

Figure 4: The sampled women's formal labour force participation and gender gaps

A) Women's formal labour force participation



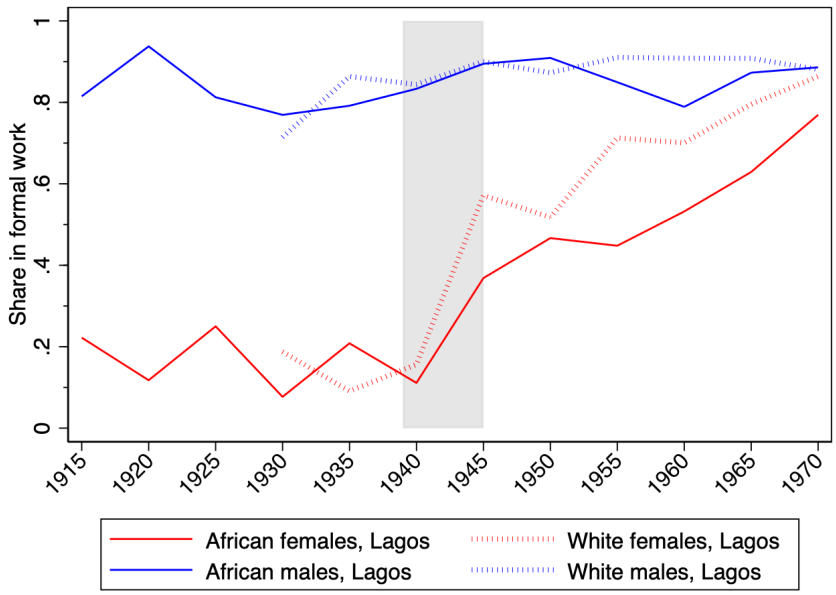
B) Gender inequality in formal labour force participation



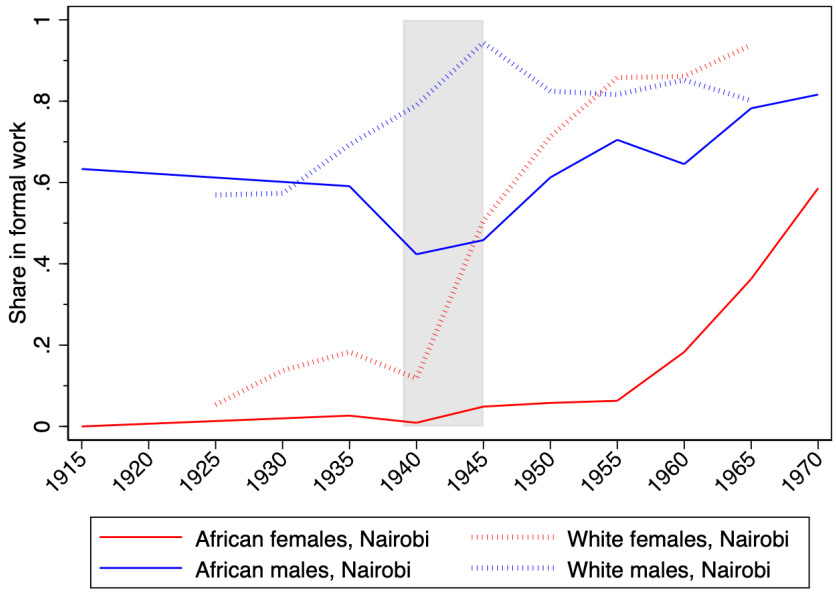
Notes: Formal (waged) labour force participation is categorised as explained on page 13*ff*. The gaps were constructed by giving the value one for a formal occupation and zero otherwise, then computing the formal employment rate by gender in each city, and finally subtracting the female formal employment rate from that of males. The graphs are based on five-year averages by birth cohort at age 25.

Figure 5: African and European shares of employment in formal work by year of marriage

A) Lagos (British West Africa)



B) Nairobi (British East Africa)



Notes: The grey areas signify the official years of World War II, marking a break-point in women's access to formal jobs. Formal work is categorised as explained in the text. The graphs are based on five-year averages by year of marriage.

3.3.1 Comparison between our African and British Anglican spouses

Our sample of British settlers marrying in the Anglican churches of colonial Lagos and Nairobi allow us to compare patterns between our African and British Anglican spouses. The comparison help uncover whether the rising participation in the sampled African women's formal employment post 1940 was specific to Africans or a more widespread phenomenon. For example, in Britain in the 1930s and 1940s, a narrowly male breadwinner model became increasingly challenged when attitudes towards married women's labour force participation gradually changed (Hatton and Bailey, 1988; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, p. 71). The 1940s also represented a broad turning point for married women's labour force participation across Europe and North America, with a significant expansion post 1950 in clerical work in particular (Killingsworth and Heckman, 1986; Goldin, 1990, 1991; Humphries and Sarasúa, 2012). Was this tendency paralleled in the labour patterns among female British African expatriates and ultimately the sampled African Anglican wives?

Figure 5 illustrates how the shares in formal work of British female expatriates in Lagos and Nairobi hovered around 10% to 20% up until the late 1930s (solid red lines). This was barely more than their sampled African counterparts (dotted red lines) who found themselves employed in comparable occupations to their British peers (Appendix C). One reason for the relative lack of British female employment opportunity was that the British Colonial Service until the 1921 reserved all posts to British men, except those specifically designated to women (Martindale, 1938, p. 192). World War II marked a clear starting point for women's increased access to formal labour, first among the sampled British female expatriates, some of whom entered into clerical military positions,[15] and among the sampled Africans during the subsequent decades. This suggests that the documented surge in formal work among our Anglican African women followed the upward trend in formal job participation happening among married women in Western Europe after World War II more generally, plausibly

[15]During World War II in Kenya, for example, the shortage of manpower and feeling of solidarity drew British settlers into government positions (Spencer, 1980). Among Anglican British women in Nairobi, we observe that 22% of all formal (medical and clerical) occupations in the 1940s were associated with the British military forces compared to zero in the previous decade. Among British men married in Nairobi during the 1940s, 44% served in military positions compared to 4% in the previous decade. While military conscription among Africans was common practiced in British colonial Africa (Killingray and Rathbone, 1986), this was not reflected in the occupational titles of our urban Anglican spouses.

also reflecting a shift in British colonial policy towards accepting metropolitan women's occupational liberation.

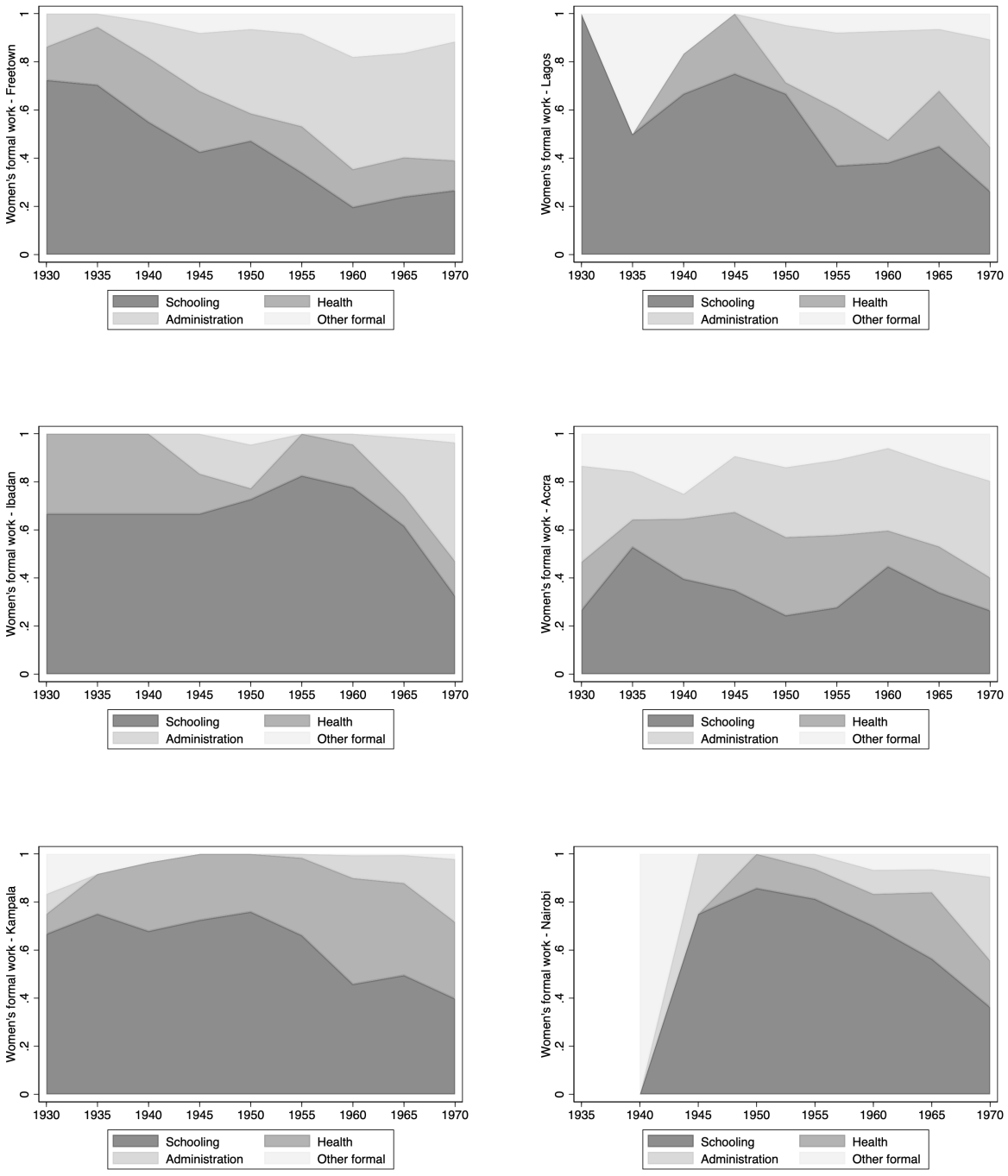
It is again noteworthy that the increased access to formal labour among the sampled African women took considerably longer in Nairobi in British East Africa compared to Lagos in British West Africa. Among the plausible reasons for this is that formal job opportunities in our sampled East African cities – for the sampled men and women alike – were generally fewer than for their West African peers (e.g. Figure 5). This also explains why the mildly lower rates of female formal work participation in our East African locations (Figure 4, Panel A) do not manifest in higher rates of gender inequality there compared to our West African cities (Figure 4, Panel B).

3.3.2 Women's formal work after the 1930s

What type of formal work did our sampled women enter into after the 1930s? And what caused the observed changes? Figure 6 compares our six British African cities with regard to the main types of formal work that women engaged in at these locations. The graphs show that the lion's share of salaried Anglican women for most of the colonial era were involved in teaching at mission schools across all of the sampled cities (see also Table **??**). Missionary schools thus presented an almost exclusive source of wage-earning opportunity for Anglican wives until the late 1940s. Smaller shares were employed in healthcare and administrative work. Also, while administrative work in Freetown in British West Africa, for example, was a main source of expansion in women's formal work, employment in healthcare was largely responsible for women's growing formal activities in Kampala in British West Africa.

These findings echo observations made in earlier studies. Expansion in the areas of healthcare and female education during the late colonial era was one reason. That is, while mission hospitals and dispensaries provided the bulk of African healthcare during the early colonial era, by the 1930s colonial governments had expanded their investment into health which increased the demand for female maternity and nursing personnel (Kanogo, 2005, pp. 188–192; Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh, 2006, p. 61; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, pp. 175-176; Prevost, 2010, p. 183; Doyle et al., 2020; Cilliers and Bolt, 2023).

Figure 6: The sampled African women's formal work categories, 1930-70



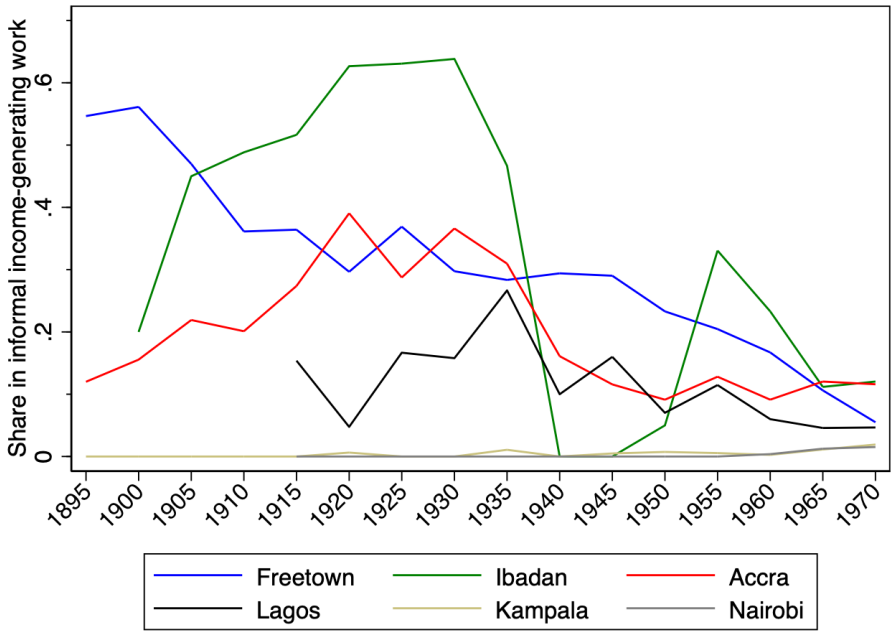
Notes: The graphs are based on three-year averages and report women's formal work at the age of 25.

Moreover, the anticipation of independence made colonial governments increase their focus on female education as early as the 1940s (Baten et al., 2021), which led to a rise in the recruitment of female school teachers (Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh, 2006, p. 101; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, pp. 170, 176-177; Byfield, 2018, p. 156; Whitehead, 1999; Tripp, 2004). A second reason for the increased access to formal work for women was decolonisation. This not only led to an increased *Africanization* of the administrative bureaucracy post World War II (Cooper, 1996, pp. 443-448; Furedi, 1973a), but also to a *feminization* of the civil service with government offices increasingly hiring African women's as secretaries and clerks (Simson, 2019, 2020).

In the late 1940s, there was an increased readiness of secondary schools to teach girls commercial subjects and clerical work including bookkeeping, shorthand writing, and typing (Keniston McIntosh, 2009, pp. 72-73). Their formal education and proficiency in English made the Anglican converts well-positioned to move into a growing range of well-paid occupations. For example, telephonists, secretaries, typist, and stenographers were progressively hired by the colonial government and private businesses in West Africa from the late 1940s onwards, as Table B.1 suggests. Comparable developments were observable in our East African cities though only from the late 1950s onwards (Figure 3). These patterns resonate with those reported by Furedi, (1973b, p. 277) that "it was not until after 1952 that women came to constitute an important part of Nairobi's African labour force."

The lagging behind of our Anglican brides in East African Kampala and Nairobi by almost two decades could be due to the presence of significant South Asian migrant populations in these cities. The migrants dominated commercial trading and lucrative semi-skilled colonial civil service positions, which – together with the large British settler population in Nairobi – constrained not only female Africans but also their male peers from participating in the emerging formal job opportunities (Jamal, 1976; De Haas and Frankema, 2018). The steep rise in women's formal labour participation observed in our data from the 1940s onward suggests that well-educated Anglican women were in pole position to access formal jobs once the colonial economy increased its demand for female labour. But despite the expansion in clerical work of late colonial African women, Table C.4 emphasises that some nine out of ten of the sampled women were confined to working in the top-10 most common occupations.

Figure 7: Women's share of employment in informal income-generating work



Note: The graphs are based on five-year averages by birth cohort at age 25.

3.3.3 Women's informal work patterns

The patterns of the sampled women's participation in formal labour shown in Figure 4 above followed largely similar trends across all of the six sampled cities. However, when African women's formal labour force participation rose after World War II, the surge in our four West African cities preceded that of East African Kampala and Nairobi by almost two decades. What prompted these regional differences, and how successful were the missionaries in instilling women's domestic virtue in each region?

Figure 7 offers insight into a core difference between the sampled East and West African women's labour market activities *beyond* formal work. The graph conveys the degree to which the sampled Anglican brides in our West African cities were participating in informal income-generating activities (e.g. traders, bakers, etc.) compared to the sampled brides in the East African locations. The regional difference is striking. Whereas one in three women on average in Freetown, Accra, and Ibadan (and to a lesser extent also Lagos) contributed to household income through informal trading activities, barely any females in Kampala and

Nairobi made the same contribution, with the bulk of women there reported to be engaged in domestic activities.[16] The relatively low frequency of wives active in informal market trading in Lagos suggests a greater implementation of missionary ideals of domestic virtue there. This resonates with Kristin Mann's in-depth study of mission educated couples in Nigeria who celebrated a Christian marriage in Lagos 1864-1915, observing that market trading outside the home was regarded as unsuitable for brides (Mann, 1983). The drop in the share of women in informal work in Ibadan around the 1940s (while building on a relatively low number of observations as shown in Ibadan's frequency graph in Figure A.3) is based on actual occupational recordings with no obvious reasons for the dip given in the literature.

Corresponding to the regional patterns observed in Figure 7, earlier studies have emphasised West African women's long-standing precolonial engagement in the trading of agricultural goods, fish, cooked food, and imported goods such as soap and textiles (see Section 2.1). These informal income-generating activities continued well into the colonial era. In fact, the informal incomes of West African women often exceeded those attainable from formal work (Allman and Tashjian, 2000; Johnson, 1986; Mann, 1983; Keniston McIntosh, 2009, p. 19; Little, 1974, pp. 33-34). For example, market trading among Southern Nigerian women allegedly paid better than the wages offered in mission schools and hospitals (Keniston McIntosh, 2009, p. 170; Little, 1974 pp. 44-45; Cooper, 2013, p. 349).

Figure 7 thus provides numerical expression to a largely narrative literature that emphasises how women's weak economic status and strong dependence on men in urban East Africa differed markedly from those observed in urbanised areas of West Africa where married women's earnings outside of their homes contributed to household income (Ekechi, 1995; Denzer, 1994; Mann, 1983; Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh, 2006, pp. 56–57). Indeed, if we aggregate formal and informal work participation, our sampled West African women were nearly fourfold more likely to labour outside the homestead for most of the colonial era

[16]Of course, domestic activities could potentially involve generating income through a family business headed by the husband. To the extend that this was the case, it would signal a paternal cultural practise of women lacking financial independence, as was common in British East Africa. Some 2-3% of the sampled brides in Kampala and Nairobi were recorded as traders, handicraft sellers, and business owners. We take this to mean that the many women in these cities tagged with a housewife descriptor was not simply a matter of different recording practises in the sampled cities of East and West British Africa.

than their British East African counterparts. Note that the sampled British West African women's declining participation in informal work during the late colonial era was largely offset by their increased contribution to formal work (Figure 4) mainly through administrative jobs (Figure 6).

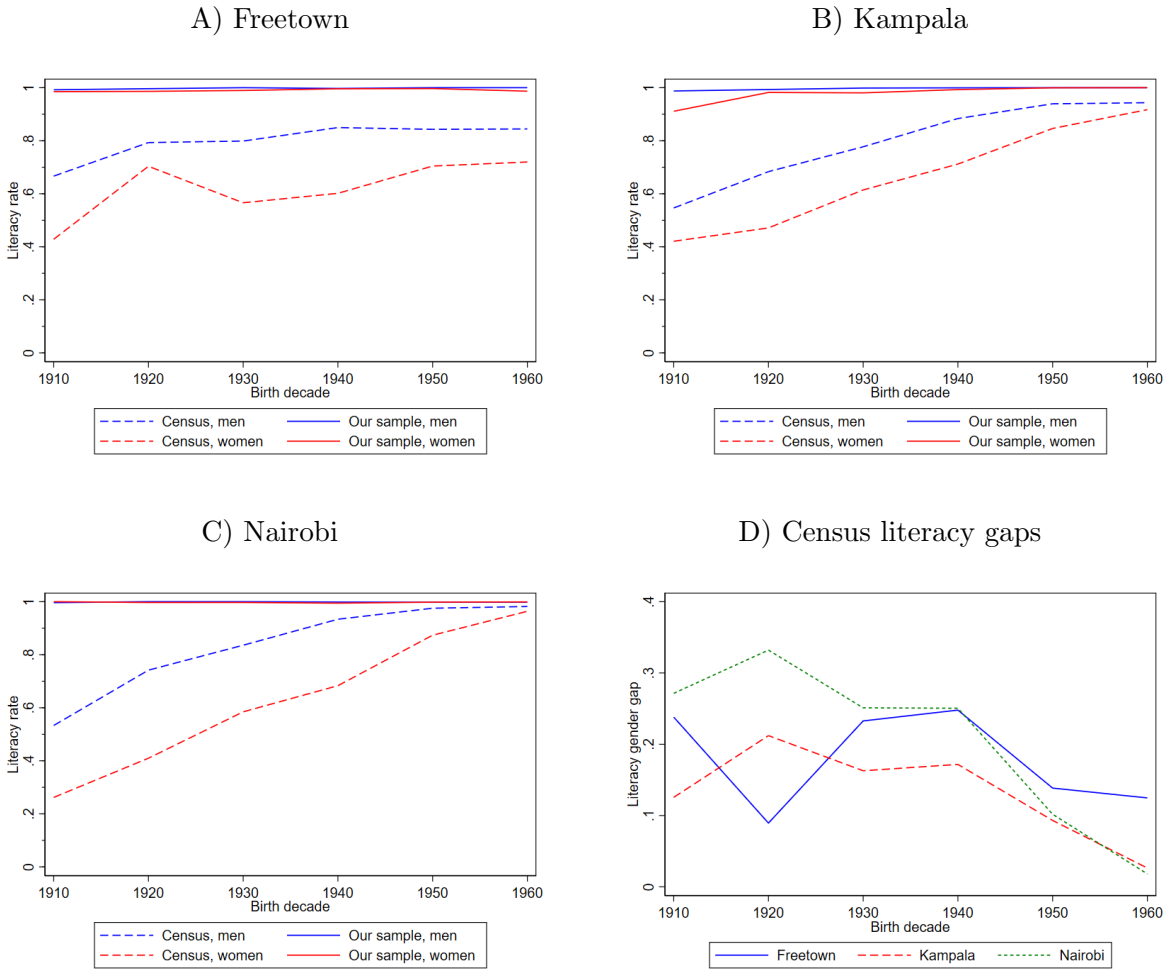
The imposed missionary model of women's domestic virtue collided diametrically with the West African women's precolonial entrepreneurial role and considerable level of economic independence. The large incidence of informal market traders among our sampled West African women clearly documents that the mission schools' Victorian ideals of female domesticity did not entirely succeed in dismantling deep-rooted West African women's informal labour activities. In fact, Nigerian newspapers commonly criticised the narrowly domestic training in mission schools, warning that married women would lose their financial independence as a result (Keniston McIntosh, 2009, p. 71; Mann, 1983).

Also, although our West African Anglican women interacted with colonial and Christian conceptions, they tended to preserve their precolonial economic agency. This impelled British government officials in Nigeria to complain that the wives of Anglican converts did not fully aspire to missionary domesticity expectations but continued to trade in the public sphere (Mann, 1983). In Uganda in East Africa in contrast, missionary emphasis on women's domestic roles conformed much more with precolonial roles of female domesticity, patriarchal interests, and opposition to the idea of married women's labour outside the home, reinforcing the marginalisation of women there (Kyomuhendo and Keniston McIntosh, 2006, p. 56).

4 Comparison with census data

Thanks to census data revealing the (self-reported) literacy status of the wider urban population (Population Center. IPUMS International: Version 7.4, 2023), we can compare the implied literacy rates of our Anglican spouses with those of people born in Freetown, Kampala, and Nairobi between 1900 and 1970 (see Table H.1). To this end, we followed De Haas and Frankema (2018) and Meier zu Selhausen (2019) by back-projecting the observed adult (aged 18-100) literacy status in the city in question to the person's year of birth.

Figure 8: Literacy rates and gender gaps by birth decades, 1900-1960



Note: The numbers concern birth cohorts and are reported in Table H.1. The literacy rates are based on adult (aged 18-100) literacy statuses in the year of the census for men and women born in greater Freetown, Kampala, or Nairobi. From the Uganda census of 1991, this included 3,879 men and 4,264 women for Kampala. From the Sierra Leone census of 2004, the numbers cover 2,514 men and 2,643 women for Freetown. From the Kenya census of 1989, the sample includes 2,979 men and 2,897 women for Nairobi. *Sources*: Statistics Sierra Leone (2004); Uganda Bureau of Statistics (1991); Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (1989) accessed from Population Center. IPUMS International: Version 7.4 (2023).

The literacy comparison in Figure 8 discloses two insights. First, our sampled Anglican grooms and brides were both well ahead in terms of access to basic schooling – as inferred from their signature literacy – compared to the average African men and women born in the sampled cities. This attests to Kristin Mann's assertion that couples married in the Anglican Church during the colonial era belonged to an educated African elite (Mann, 1983). Second,

the inverse u-shaped pattern of gender inequality in literacy observed in Panel C of Figure 2 is somewhat echoed among the wider urban population in the three sampled cities (see Panel D of Figure 8). This suggest that our sampled Anglicans were forerunners, not just in terms of literacy achievements but also with regards to its gender inequality.

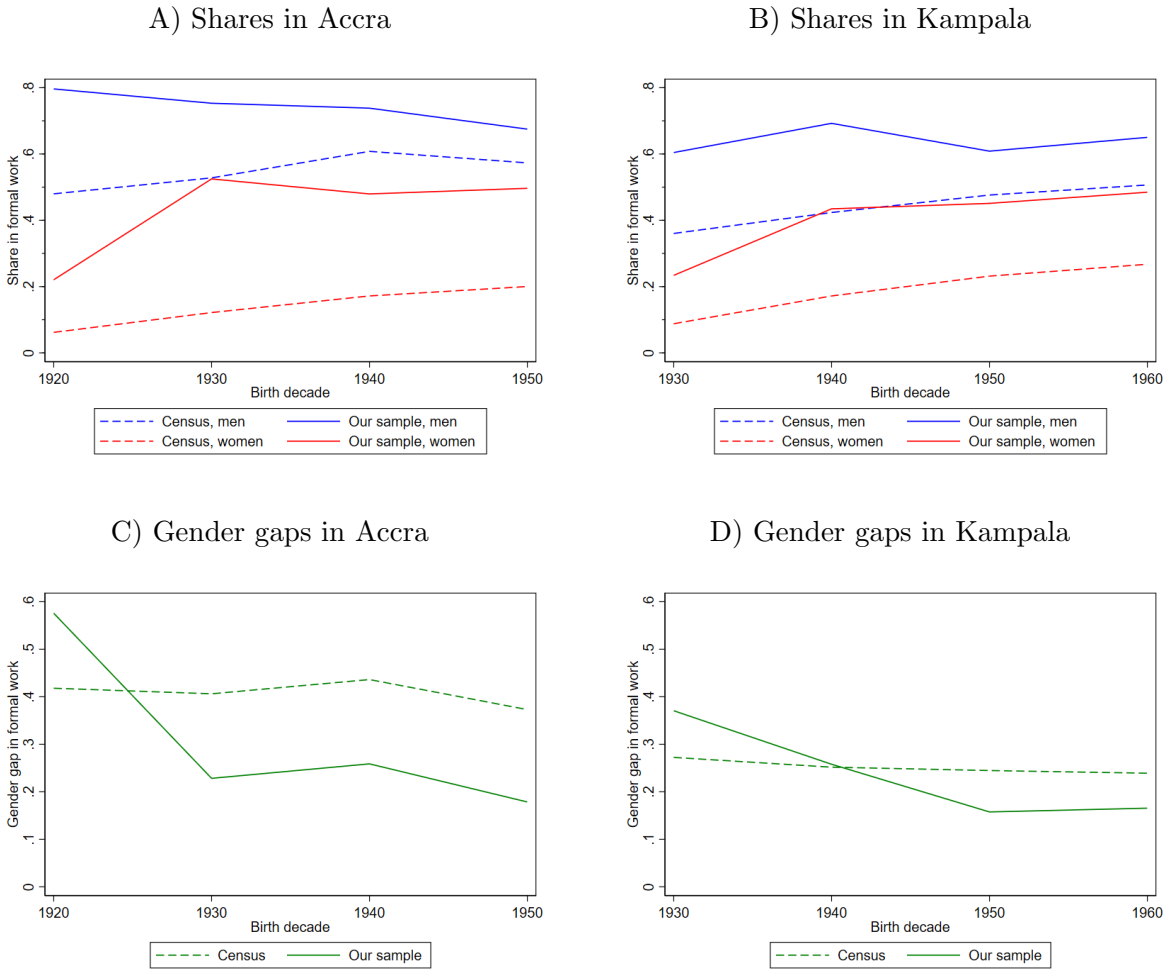
The census data further allows a comparison of our sampled Anglicans' formal work participation to that of the working-aged (25-60 years old) individuals born in Accra and Kampala between the 1930s and 1960s.[17] Here, too, the shares of the census population employed in formal work during the colonial period were back-projected on the assumption (commented on below) that a working-aged person who held a formal job at the time of the census was also employed in formal work at earlier life stages.

The comparison in Figure 9 (see also Table H) shows that our Anglican converts were well ahead of the general urban populations also when it came to formal employment, validating that our sampled couples' educational attainments translated well into access to the formal colonial economy, especially in the case of men. Remarkably, the shares employed in formal work among our sampled brides are almost on par with the comparable share observed among the wider urban male population (Panels A and B). If individuals would change their occupational status over the course of their life cycle, then we would expect the change to go from informal to formal work. This would imply that the earliest observations in the graphs below are overestimating the share of census people employed in formal work more than the later observations.

Interestingly, the gender gap in formal employment started at a higher level in the 1930s among our Anglican converts compared to the general urban patterns but ended at a lower level (Panels C and D). This observation could reflect that conversion to Anglicanism – because of Christian Victorian values of domesticity – initially set female converts back relative to male converts more than was the case in the wider urban population. On the other hand, once *Africanization* and *feminization* of the civil service emerged, the sampled female Anglican converts benefited more from these in terms of greater formal work participation and lower gender inequality herein vis-a-vis the average female African in the cities of comparison.

[17] The Kenyan and Nigerian censuses do not provide data on labour force participation.

Figure 9: Shares in formal work and gender gaps, 1920-1960



Note: The numbers concern birth cohorts and are reported in Table H. To make the numbers comparable with Figure 3, the x-axis should be shifted 25 years forward. The census numbers concern individuals aged 25-60 at the time of the census and include 8,698 men and 10,687 women born between 1924 and 1959 in Accra (Ghana) and 2,529 men and 2,577 women born between 1931 and 1966 in Kampala (Uganda). Individuals retired or in school were dropped in both cases. The estimated shares and gaps were obtained on the assumption that the work status remained constant across adult life. *Sources*: Ghana Statistical Services (1984); Uganda Bureau of Statistics (1991) accessed from Population Center. IPUMS International: Version 7.4 (2023).

When and where a reasonable comparison with census data is possible, the tendency is that our sampled spouses were superior to the general urban African population – both in terms of literacy and in access to formal jobs. The sampled converts also appear as plausible precursors for the developments observed among the broader population in the sampled

cities. That is, our Anglican spouses were nearly all literate by 1900, while the general urban population achieved literacy only towards the end of the colonial period (Figure 8). Similarly, the shares of the sampled and censused males engaged in formal work were also converging, while the sampled and censused female shares (if not converging) were both trending in the same (upward) direction (Panels A and B of Figure 9). It is difficult from the available numbers to confidently say that the wider urban population also followed in the footsteps of the sampled Anglicans when it came to the evolution of gender inequality in formal work. While inequality dropped for the sampled Anglicans, it remained largely flat among the urban populations in the sampled cities (Panels C and D of Figure 9).

5 Conclusion

We have used a novel dataset of Anglican marriage registers from six major cities in British Africa to track movements in women's educational and occupational performances relative to men's across the colonial era. Our main findings are threefold.

First, colonial administrations and missionaries tended to enhance or even introduce patriarchal ideals into their colonies which our African agents responded to in variegated fashions. The colonial ideals promoted male dominance within formal labour markets, though more in British East than West Africa. The sampled early colonial women were limited in terms of access to formal work, with official jobs for females confined to employment in mission schools and hospitals until the mid-colonial era. These patterns highlight the dual role played by the missionaries in Africa. While they furnished local and colonial patriarchal interests through school curricula, they also opened the door for the sampled women's formal labour through employing them (albeit in limited numbers) in mission schools and hospitals. Comparison with census data also showed that the sampled Anglicans had more educational and formal work choice than the average urbanite in the sampled cities.

Second, the observed rise in gender inequality in formal labour force participation until the mid-colonial era was followed by an equally impressive decline herein starting in the 1940s. We observed that World War II marked a turning point for our sampled African women in accessing formal labour. We argue supported by earlier studies that this was instigated by

the *Africanization* and *feminization* of the civil service in anticipation of independence and the expansion of public education and health. We also contended that the sampled women had assumed a privileged position – both through their education and religious affiliation – when it came to accessing these unfolding opportunities. The post 1940s surge in women's labour force participation and declining gender inequality – both between birth cohorts and within marriage – were not unique to our Anglican African sample. The patterns were mirrored among British expatriate women marrying in the colonies. We reasoned on this basis that the developments observed among the sampled African females reflected broader emancipating movements in Western cultures after World War II. These tendencies quickly swept across the colonies, though it was less visible among the wider urban population then among the sampled converts.

Third, our novel data offered numerical expression to earlier narratives of the success of early colonial British East African missionaries in keeping Christian wives at home and away from commerce. Our numbers showed however that the missionary model of female domestic virtue collided with West African women's precolonial entrepreneurial roles and financial independence. The high and stable occurrence of female traders among our sampled West African women bears witness that the missionary values of Victorian domesticity did not decimate women's deep-rooted precolonial agency. Although our sampled women's work opportunities were constricted by colonial and missionary agents, the sampled West African women continued to preserved their pre-existing economic roles, plausibly affording them a faster transition into formal work after World War II than was the case among their East African counterparts and even more so compared to the average African women born in the sampled cities.

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Appendices

A Additional data and sources

Figure A.1: Page from the marriage registers of St. Peters Cathedral in Ibadan, 1907

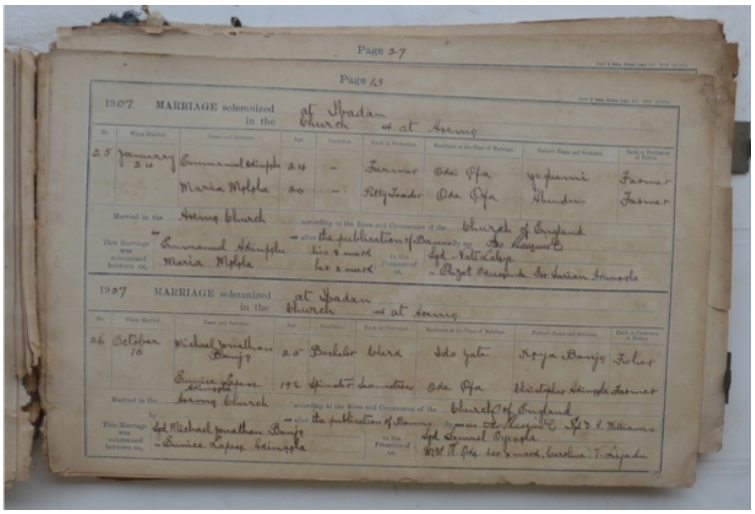


Figure A.2: The number of marriages by year of marriage in five-year intervals

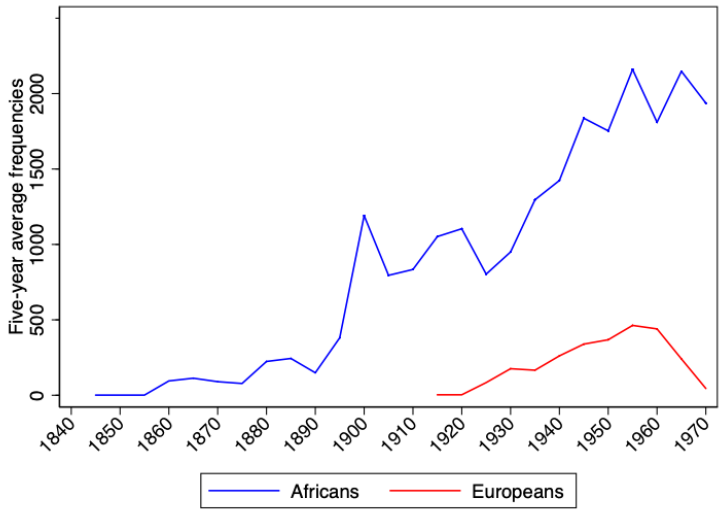


Figure A.3: The number of marriages by year of marriage in five-year intervals, by city

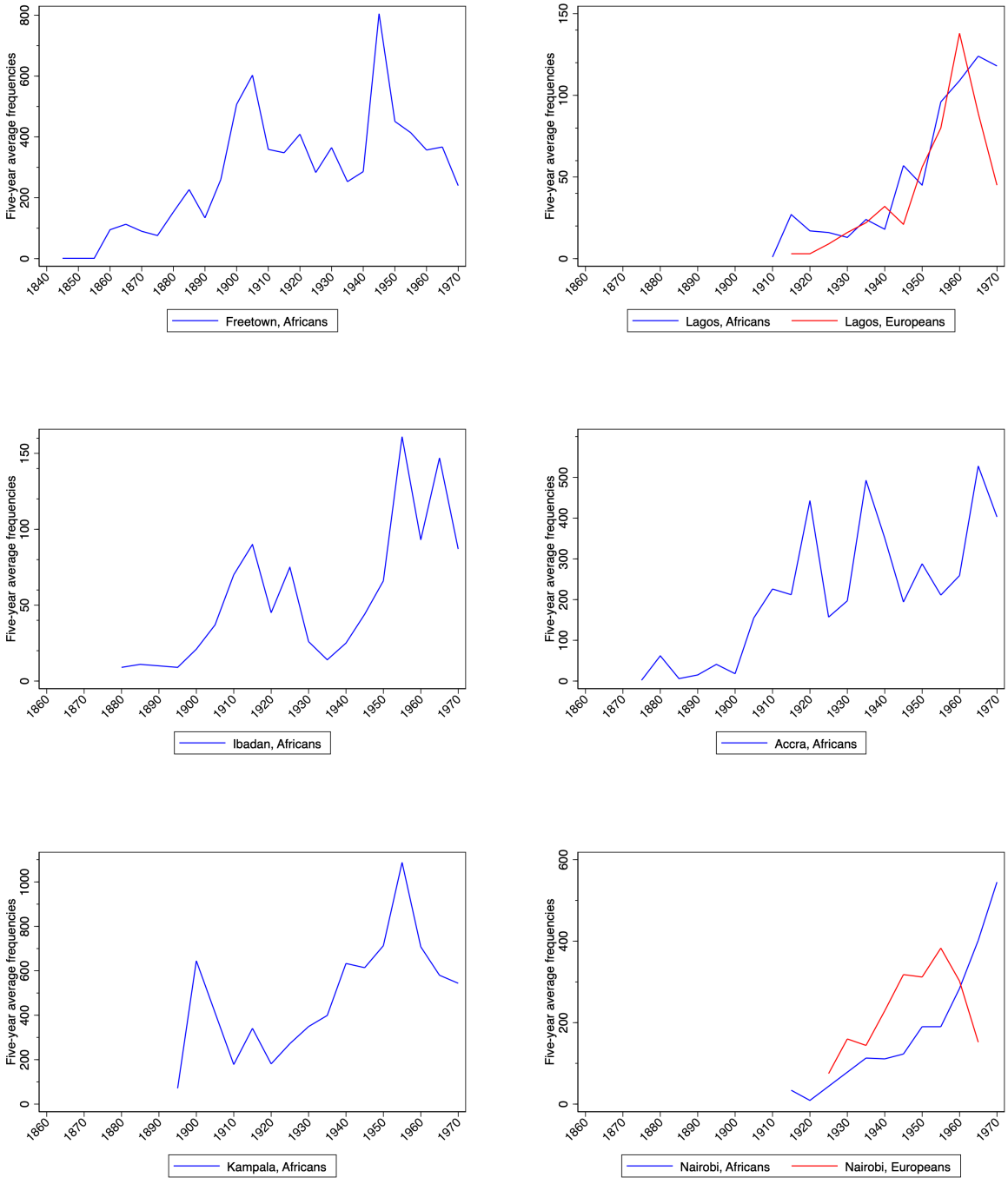


Table A.1: Sources, periods, and sample sizes

Colony	City	Mission parish	Denomination	Period	N
Uganda	Kampala	St. Paul's Cathedral, Namirembe	CMS	1891-1970	7,710
		Mackay Martyrs Church	CMS	1913-1970	220
Kenya	Nairobi	St. Stephen's Cathedral	CMS	1912-1970	897
		All Saints' Cathedral*	CMS	1921-1964	1,685
		St. Mark's Church, Parklands*	CMS	1924-1959	553
		All Saints' Cathedral	CMS	1965-1970	238
		St. Paul's Church, Kabete	CMS	1931-1970	1,118
Southern Nigeria	Ibadan	St. Peters Cathedral, Aremo	CMS	1877-1965	321
		St. David's Cathedral	CMS	1893-1970	403
		St. James' Cathedral	CMS	1911-1970	298
	Lagos	St. Jude's Cathedral	CMS	1942-1970	280
		All Saints' Church	CMS	1958-1970	237
		Holy Trinity Church	CMS	1910-1970	169
		Our Saviour's Church*	CMS	1900-1960	454
Sierra Leone	Freetown	Office of the Registrar General	CMS	1828-1970	8,963
Gold Coast	Accra	Administrative archives in Accra	Christian and civil	1873-1970	6,733

Note: CMS stands for the Church Missionary Society. Asterisks denote marriages of British congregations.

Table A.2: Summary statistics

	Age (M)	Age (F)	Literate (M)	Literate (F)	Formal (M)	Formal (F)
All:	29	23	93%	86%	63%	25%
Africans:						
Accra	30	24	47%	12%	62%	24%
Freetown	30	25	92%	88%	61%	18%
Ibadan	29	23	88%	79%	73%	41%
Kampala	26	20	91%	81%	54%	16%
Lagos	29	23	100%	100%	85%	50%
Nairobi	27	22	100%	96%	69%	27%
Europeans:						
Lagos	30	26	100%	100%	89%	61%
Nairobi	28	25	100%	100%	80%	57%

	Informal (M)	Informal (F)	Domestic (F)	Period	Observations
All:	37%	14%	61%	1842-1970	25,060
Africans:					
Accra	38%	19%	57%	1873-1970	4,261
Freetown	39%	31%	51%	1842-1969	7,197
Ibadan	27%	32%	27%	1877-1970	1,030
Kampala	46%	1%	84%	1895-1970	7,316
Lagos	15%	7%	43%	1910-1970	665
Nairobi	31%	8%	65%	1912-1970	2,002
Europeans:					
Lagos	11%	2%	37%	1913-1969	514
Nairobi	20%	-6%	49%	1921-1964	2,075

Note: Formal and informal refers to the shares employed in waged or unwaged (self-employed) work.

B List of formal occupations

Table B.1: Frequency of formal work occupations for males

Occupation	**Freq.**	**Percent**	**Cum.**
Clerk	3,207	19.92	19.92
Teacher	1,535	9.54	29.46
Writing clerk	1,040	6.46	35.92
Civil servant	818	5.08	41.00
Engineer	534	3.32	44.32
Driver	416	2.58	46.90
Policeman	378	2.35	49.25
Accountant	274	1.70	50.95
Seaman	243	1.51	52.46
Soldier	234	1.45	53.92
Printer	204	1.27	55.18
Medical assistant	164	1.02	56.20
Goldsmith	162	1.01	57.21
Servant	155	0.96	58.17
Cook	136	0.84	59.02
Salesman	136	0.84	59.86
Chief	124	0.77	60.63
Surveyor	117	0.73	61.36
Manager	114	0.71	62.07
Draughtsman	106	0.66	62.73
Telegraphist	105	0.65	63.38
Storekeeper	104	0.65	64.02
Army officer	96	0.60	64.62
Laboratory assistant	96	0.60	65.22
Labourer	91	0.57	65.78
British Militay Forces	90	0.56	66.34
Catechist	88	0.55	66.89
Doctor	83	0.52	67.40
Barrister-at-law	80	0.50	67.90
Technician	80	0.50	68.40
Police officer	79	0.49	68.89
Bank officer	76	0.47	69.36
Nurse	72	0.45	69.81
Motor mechanic	70	0.43	70.24
Dispenser	67	0.42	70.66
Bricklayer	64	0.40	71.06
HM Forces	63	0.39	71.45

Table B.1: Frequency of formal work occupations for males (cont'd)

Occupation	**Freq.**	**Percent**	**Cum.**
Pharmacist	61	0.38	71.83
Medical dispenser	60	0.37	72.20
Secretary	59	0.37	72.57
Journalist	57	0.35	72.92
Typist	51	0.32	73.24
School teacher	49	0.30	73.54
Stationmaster	49	0.30	73.85
Headman	48	0.30	74.14
Houseboy	46	0.29	74.43
Steward	46	0.29	74.72
Medical officer	45	0.28	75.00
Christian missionary	42	0.26	75.26
Civil engineer	41	0.25	75.51
Other	3,942	24.49	100.00
Total formal occupations	16,097	100.00	100.00

Table B.2: Frequency of formal work occupations for females

Occupation	**Freq.**	**Percent**	**Cum.**
Teacher	1,945	31.05	31.05
Nurse	707	11.29	42.34
Secretary	507	8.09	50.43
Clerk	393	6.27	56.70
Typist	317	5.06	61.77
Stenographer	259	4.13	65.90
Midwife	199	3.18	69.08
Civil servant	188	3.00	72.08
Nurse Assistant	183	2.92	75.00
Telephonist	98	1.56	76.56
Writing clerk	84	1.34	77.91
Schoolmistress	83	1.33	79.23
Housemaid	54	0.86	80.09
Sales clerk	45	0.72	80.81
Hairdresser	42	0.67	81.48
Bank clerk	34	0.54	82.02
Salesman	34	0.54	82.57
Telephone operator	34	0.54	83.11
HM Forces	32	0.51	83.62
Milkmaid	30	0.48	84.10
Domestic worker	27	0.43	84.53
Receptionist	26	0.42	84.95
Shop assistant	24	0.38	85.33
Accountant	23	0.37	85.70
Cook	22	0.35	86.05
Bookbinder	18	0.29	86.33
Shop keeper	18	0.29	86.62
Cashier	17	0.27	86.89
British Military Forces	16	0.26	87.15
Policewoman	16	0.26	87.40
Printer	16	0.26	87.66
Librarian	15	0.24	87.90
Machine operator	14	0.22	88.12
Housekeeper	13	0.21	88.33
Women's Auxiliary Air Force	13	0.21	88.54
House worker	12	0.19	88.73
Private secretary	12	0.19	88.92

Table B.2: Frequency of formal work occupations for females (cont'd)

Occupation	**Freq.**	**Percent**	**Cum.**
Christian missionary	11	0.18	89.10
Clerical assistant	11	0.18	89.27
Matron	11	0.18	89.45
Air hostess	10	0.16	89.61
Bookkeeper	10	0.16	89.77
Dispenser	10	0.16	89.93
Draughtsman	9	0.14	90.07
Servant	9	0.14	90.21
Doctor	8	0.13	90.34
Journalist	8	0.13	90.47
Laboratory assistant	8	0.13	90.60
Bank officer	7	0.11	90.71
Banker	7	0.11	90.82
Other	575	9.18	100.00
Total formal occupations	6,264	100.00	100.00

C List of occupations

Table C.1: Top-10 occupations (%) of African grooms, 1858-1929

Freetown		Accra		Ibadan	
Writing clerk	16.7	Clerk	30.1	Clerk	49.3
Carpenter	10.3	Farmer	19.7	Trader	8.5
Trader	8.0	Carpenter	10.7	Teacher	7.0
Stonemason	5.0	Teacher	5.8	Government officer	5.6
Tailor	4.8	Trader	3.5	Tailor	5.6
Sea/Boatman	4.4	Goldsmith	3.2	Dispenser	2.8
Clerk	4.0	Tailor	3.0	Goldsmith	2.8
Shoemaker	3.6	Catechist	2.5	Writing clerk	2.8
Policeman	3.4	Blacksmith	2.1	Blacksmith	1.4
Teacher	3.3	Merchant	1.9	Catechist	1.4
Total %	63.3	Total %	82.4	Total %	87.3
No. of obs.	3,952	No. of obs.	1,445	No. of obs.	71

Lagos		Kampala		Nairobi	
Farmer	29.0	Farmer	28.8	Contractor	4.7
Clerk	18.7	Clerk	11.4	Farmer	4.7
Carpenter	11.0	Tailor	8.4	Lieutenant	4.7
Trader	9.2	Teacher	6.8	Mechanic	4.7
Catechist	3.9	Chief	6.4	Office boy	4.7
Teacher	3.1	Trader	5.7	Plumber	4.7
Tailor	2.6	Servant	5.0	Saddler	4.7
Schoolmaster	1.8	Carpenter	3.9	Assistant accountant	2.3
Sawyer	1.3	Medical assistant	2.0	Assistant cowherder	2.3
Shoemaker	1.3	Driver	1.7	Assistant engineer	2.3
Total %	81.8	Total %	80.1	Total %	39.5
No. of obs.	388	No. of obs.	1,967	No. of obs.	43

Table C.2: Top-10 occupations (%) of African brides, 1858-1929

Freetown		Accra		Ibadan	
Seamstress	31.1	Housewife	45.3	Seamstress	67.6
Trader	29.9	Seamstress	9.9	Mistress	14.1
Housewife	27.3	Trader	9.7	Trader	5.6
Laundress	4.4	Farmer	9.2	Housewife	4.2
Teacher	1.7	Baker	7.5	Dressmaker	2.8
Marketer	1.7	Petty trader	5.8	Laundress	2.8
Schoolmistress	1.3	Teacher	1.9	Nurse	1.4
Nurse	0.9	Housemaid	1.5	Schoolmistress	1.4
Secretary	0.4	Kenkey dumpling maker	1.5		
Clerk	0.2	Pedder	1.5		
Total %	98.9	Total %	93.9	Total %	100.0
No. of obs.	3,952	No. of obs.	1,445	No. of obs.	71.0

Lagos		Kampala		Nairobi	
Trader	43.3	Housewife	39.6	Housewife	100.0
Seamstress	15.1	Matmaker	28.2		
Housewife	13.8	Tailor	13.2		
Laundress	10.3	Basketmaker	7.5		
Mistress	5.6	Farmer	6.0		
Schoolmistress	3.8	Seamstress	2.1		
Housemaid	2.1	Teacher	1.5		
Servant	1.3	Cook	0.7		
Salesman	1.0	Nurse	0.2		
Farmer	0.8	Clerk	0.2		
Total %	97.2	Total %	99.1	Total %	100.0
No. of obs.	388	No. of obs.	1,967	No. of obs.	43

Table C.3: Top-10 occupations (%) of African grooms, 1930-70

Freetown		Accra		Ibadan	
Writing clerk	11.7	Clerk	17.8	Clerk	27.8
Civil servant	8.6	Teacher	8.2	Teacher	5.4
Carpenter	6.8	Farmer	7.7	Trader	3.4
Clerk	6.8	Civil servant	7.1	Civil servant	3.2
Teacher	3.5	Merchant	5.1	Electrician	3.2
Fitter	3.1	Carpenter	5.0	Engineer	2.7
Engineer	2.7	Trader	4.1	Accountant	2.5
Tailor	2.7	Engineer	1.9	Printer	2.5
Seaman	2.5	Accountant	1.5	Technician	2.5
Policeman	2.3	Fisherman	1.4	Fitter	1.7
Total %	50.5	Total %	59.7	Total %	54.9
No. of obs.	3,235	No. of obs.	2,786	No. of obs.	594.0

Lagos		Kampala		Nairobi	
Teacher	38.1	Clerk	17.2	Clerk	17.8
Clerk	14.8	Teacher	9.8	Peasant	9.2
Civil servant	5.2	Farmer	8.8	Teacher	6.4
Catechist	2.2	Trader	8.2	Driver	3.0
Medical officer	2.2	Carpenter	5.4	Trader	2.7
Trader	2.2	Driver	4.3	Carpenter	2.7
Technician	2.0	Builder	4.0	Laboratory assistant	2.7
Secretary	1.4	Mechanic	3.5	Mechanic	2.3
Clergyman	1.3	Tailor	3.0	Labourer	1.8
Engineer	1.3	Medical assistant	2.2	Accountant	1.5
Total %	70.6	Total %	66.4	Total %	50.1
No. of obs.	639	No. of obs.	5,346	No. of obs.	1,952

Table C.4: Top-10 occupations (%) of African brides, 1930-70

Freetown		Accra		Ibadan	
Seamstress	34.1	Housewife	30.9	Housewife	23.40
Trader	21.5	Seamstress	13.6	Teacher	20.03
Teacher	10.5	teacher	11.1	Seamstress	10.44
Housewife	6.5	Housewife	7.5	Clerk	8.59
Nurse	3.3	Petty trader	5.7	Nurse	5.22
Clerk	2.9	Trader	4.6	Trader	3.37
Writing clerk	2.5	Nurse	3.1	Typist	3.20
Typist	1.9	Clerk	2.4	Tailor	2.69
Housewife	1.8	Baker	2.3	Housewife	2.36
Telephonist	1.4	Midwife	1.7	Dressmaker	2.19
Total %	86.3	Total %	82.8	Total %	81.5
No. of obs.	3,235	No. of obs.	2,786	No. of obs.	594

Lagos		Kampala		Nairobi	
Teacher	30.8	Tailor	29.5	Housewife	51.5
Trader	17.0	Weaver	21.5	Domestic duties	11.0
Seamstress	14.5	Matmaker	13.9	Teacher	10.6
Nurse	5.0	Teacher	10.3	Peasant	7.2
Housewife	4.5	Needleworker	4.3	Secretary	3.4
Sewer	4.4	Nurse	4.1	Nurse	3.2
Clerk	3.9	Basketmaker	2.8	Clerk	1.8
Civil servant	3.3	Housewife	4.2	Stenographer	1.4
Domestic worker	2.2	Farmer	2.0	Farmer	0.9
Schoolmistress	1.7	Midwife	1.9	Typist	0.8
Total %	87.4	Total %	94.5	Total %	91.8
No. of obs.	639	No. of obs.	5,346	No. of obs.	1,952

Table C.5: Top-10 occupations (%) of British expatriate grooms and brides

Nairobi (1921-1970) Grooms		Brides	
British Military Forces	19.8	.	40.1
Civil servant	7.7	Stenographer	9.6
Farmer	5.6	Secretary	8.5
Engineer	5.5	Typist	5.9
Police officer	4.3	Nurse assistant	5.5
Accountant	4.2	British Military Forces	3.6
Bank officer	2.3	Nurse	3.8
Settler	2.6	Teacher	3.1
Clerk	1.8	Civil servant	2.4
Mechanic	1.2	Clerk	2.6
Total %	54.8	Total %	85.1
No. of obs.	2,073	No. of obs.	2,073

Lagos (1913-1970) Grooms		Brides	
Engineer	11.9	.	36.3
Civil servant	9.7	Secretary	24.0
Manager	7.8	Nurse	9.0
Bank officer	5.3	Teacher	6.0
Accountant	3.9	Civil servant	2.9
Merchant	3.3	Typist	2.9
Administrative officer	2.9	Clerk	2.1
Soldier	1.8	Medical practitioner	0.8
Civil engineer	1.6	Receptionist	0.8
Policeman	1.6	Bank clerk	0.8
Total %	49.7	Total %	85.6
No. of obs.	513	No. of obs.	513

Table C.6: Top-10 occupations (%) of fathers of grooms, 1858-1929

Freetown	%	Accra	%	Ibadan	%
Farmer	21.2	Farmer	30.7	Farmer	64.7
.	18.7	Trader	11.4	Trader	11.9
Trader	14.0	.	9.8	.	3.9
Carpenter	5.6	Carpenter	7.1	Weaver	3.9
Merchant	4.4	Merchant	5.7	Hunter	2.3
Fisherman	4.4	Fisherman	5.7	Agriculture officer	1.0
Writing clerk	3.4	Clerk	4.6	Blacksmith	1.0
Tailor	2.7	Cooper	4.3	Smith	1.0
Clerk	2.1	Cook	2.8	Chief	0.8
Policewoman	1.3	Teacher	2.1	Fisherman	0.8
Total %	77.8	Total %	84.2	Total %	91.2
No. of obs.	3,952	No. of obs.	1,445	No. of obs.	388

					%
Lagos	%	Kampala	%	Nairobi	%
Trader	38.0	.	20.8	Merchant	11.6
Farmer	19.7	Chief	14.9	.	9.3
.	7.0	Barkclothmaker	14.3	Gentleman	7.0
Clerk	7.0	Servant	13.0	Civil engineer	4.7
Carpenter	4.2	Sub-chief	8.6	Civil servant	4.7
Chief	2.8	Farmer	7.3	Doctor	4.7
Mission agent	2.8	Trader	2.7	Farmer	4.7
Baker	1.4	Carpenter	2.1	Accountant	2.3
Catechist	1.4	Teacher	1.4	Bleacher	2.3
Cook	1.4	Tailor	1.3	Clerk in Holy Order	2.3
Total %	85.9	Total %	86.5	Total %	53.5
No. of obs.	71	No. of obs.	1,967	No. of obs.	43

Note: A dot means the occupation was missing, most likely due to the father being deceased at the time of the marriage.

Table C.7: Top-10 occupations (%) of fathers of grooms, 1930-70

Freetown	%	Accra	%	Ibadan	%
Trader	10.4	.	17.5	Farmer	50.7
Civil servant	8.8	Farmer	16.3	.	17.5
Carpenter	7.3	Merchant	9.8	Trader	9.9
Farmer	6.7	Carpenter	7.9	Clerk	3.4
Writing clerk	6.6	Clerk	7.1	Pensioner	2.0
.	5.7	Trader	6.8	Carpenter	1.9
Clerk	4.4	Pensioner	4.0	Chief	1.3
Stonemason	3.3	Teacher	2.2	Civil servant	1.3
Tailor	2.9	Fisherman	2.0	Goldsmith	1.1
Merchant	1.8	Civil servant	1.8	Teacher	0.9
Total %	57.9	Total %	57.7	Total %	90.0
No. of obs.	3,235	No. of obs.	2,786	No. of obs.	639

Lagos		Kampala		Nairobi	
.	34.7	Farmer	36.1	.	37.4
Farmer	26.3	.	23.0	Peasant	30.6
Trader	9.3	Chief	11.4	Farmer	9.9
Pensioner	6.1	Trader	4.6	Herdsman	2.1
Civil servant	2.5	Teacher	3.8	Trader	1.5
Teacher	2.2	Clerk	2.1	Cultivator	1.3
Chief	2.0	Carpenter	1.9	Labourer	1.0
Clerk	1.5	Clergyman	1.5	Teacher	1.0
Catechist	1.0	Gardener	1.3	Driver	1.0
Railway worker	1.0	Sub-chief	1.2	Carpenter	0.8
Total %	86.5	Total %	86.6	Total %	86.6
No. of obs.	594	No. of obs.	5,346	No. of obs.	1,952

Note: A dot means the occupation was missing, most likely due to the father being deceased at the time of the marriage.

Table C.8: Top-10 occupations (%) of fathers of brides, 1858-1929

Freetown	%	Accra	%	Ibadan	%
.	18.32	Farmer	28.8	Farmer	60.8
Trader	17.16	Trader	12.5	Trader	11.6
Farmer	15.74	.	11.8	.	10.3
Carpenter	5.21	Clerk	7.8	Weaver	2.8
Writing clerk	4.43	Carpenter	7.7	Clerk	1.8
Merchant	4.4	Merchant	5.7	Hunter	1.6
Fisherman	3.67	Fisherman	4.4	Chief	1.3
Clerk	2.53	Cooper	3.1	Clergyman	1.3
Tailor	2.25	Cook	2.2	Warrior	1.0
Policeman	1.95	Minister of religion	1.7	Agricultural officer	0.8
Total %	75.7	Total %	85.7	Total %	93.3
No. of obs.	3,952	No. of obs.	1,445	No. of obs.	388

Lagos		Kampala		Nairobi	
Trader	29.6	.	25.2	.	11.6
Farmer	15.5	Chief	13.4	Gentleman	9.3
.	11.3	Barkclothmaker	10.7	Builder	4.7
Government officer	8.5	Servant	9.5	Clerk in church in holy order	4.7
Clerk	5.6	Sub-chief	8.2	Engineer	4.7
Catechist	4.2	Farmer	6.7	Farmer	4.7
Tailor	4.2	Tailor	4.4	Soldier	4.7
Carpenter	2.8	Teacher	1.9	Accountant	2.3
Clergyman	2.8	Trader	1.8	Civil servant	2.3
Goldsmith	2.8	Carpenter	1.8	Railway department clerk	2.3
Total %	87.3	Total %	83.8	Total %	51.2
No. of obs.	71	No. of obs.	1,967	No. of obs.	43

Note: A dot means the occupation was missing, most likely due to the father being deceased at the time of the marriage.

Table C.9: Top-10 occupations (%) of fathers of brides, 1930-70

Freetown	%	Accra	%	Ibadan	%
Civil servant	11.4	Farmer	12.7	Farmer	37.3
Trader	9.7	.	17.3	.	17.4
Carpenter	7.7	Clerk	10.4	Trader	13.5
Writing clerk	6.8	Carpenter	8.7	Clerk	5.8
.	5.6	Merchant	7.4	Civil servant	2.5
Clerk	4.7	Trader	5.4	Carpenter	2.2
Farmer	4.0	Pensioner	4.3	Catechist	1.7
Tailor	3.2	Fisherman	3.2	Teacher	1.7
Stonemason	2.4	Civil servant	2.9	Pensioner	1.4
Fisherman	1.8	Teacher	2.1	Constructor	0.9
Total %	57.2	Total %	61.7	Total %	84.4
No. of obs.	3,235	No. of obs.	2,786	No. of obs.	639

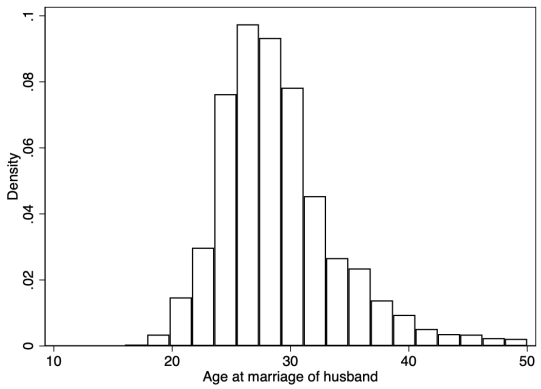
Lagos		Kampala		Nairobi	
.	23.9	Farmer	33.24	Peasant	32.2
Farmer	20.4	Chief	12.25	.	25.7
Trader	9.8	.	11.41	Farmer	10.3
Pensioner	5.9	Trader	6.47	Trader	2.8
Civil servant	5.1	Teacher	4.66	Teacher	2.4
Clerk	4.7	Clerk	4.32	Herdsman	2.0
Teacher	3.2	Carpenter	2.26	Businessman	1.3
Constructor	2.0	Tailor	2.06	Carpenter	1.2
Catechist	1.5	Driver	1.87	Clerk	1.2
Tailor	1.4	Clergyman	1.68	Cultivator	1.2
Total %	77.8	Total %	80.2	Total %	80.3
No. of obs.	594	No. of obs.	5,346	No. of obs.	1,952

Note: A dot means the occupation was missing, most likely due to the father being deceased at the time of the marriage.

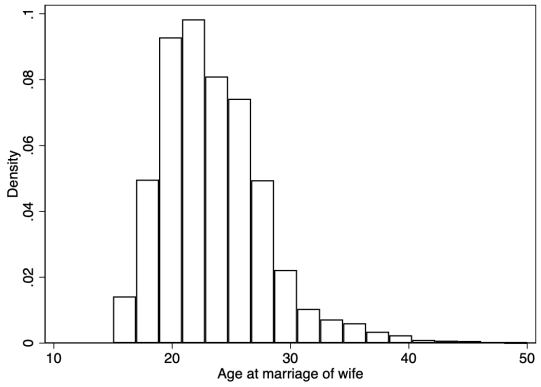
D Age at marriage

Figure D.1: Ages at marriage by gender

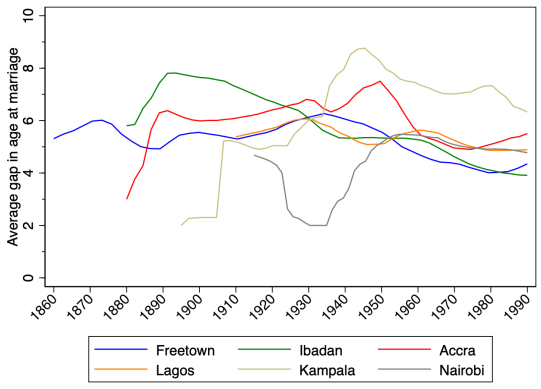
A) Men



B) Women



C) Gender age gap



E Signature literacy sensitivity

This section uses regression models to predict the sampled men and women's literacy status and the gender gap herein. The aim is to test the robustness of the conclusions in the main text by accounting for variations across time and space as well as controlling for differences in the sampled couples' social background. To this end, we run two logistic regression models (one for each gender) of the following form:

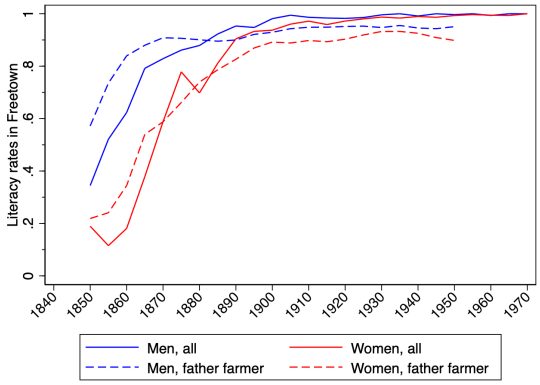
$$Signature\ literacy_{ijt} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Time_t \times Place_j + \epsilon_{ijt} \quad (1)$$

where *Signature literacy* is a dummy that assumes the value one if the individual was able to write his or her name on the marriage record and the value zero if the individual left a mark or a thumbprint; *Time* refers to five-years time brackets with 1925-30 being the reference period; *Place* refers to the city in question with Freetown being the reference location; and ϵ_{ijt} is an error term. The regression samples are restricted to spouses whose fathers were farmers. We use a logistic regression model with robust standard errors.

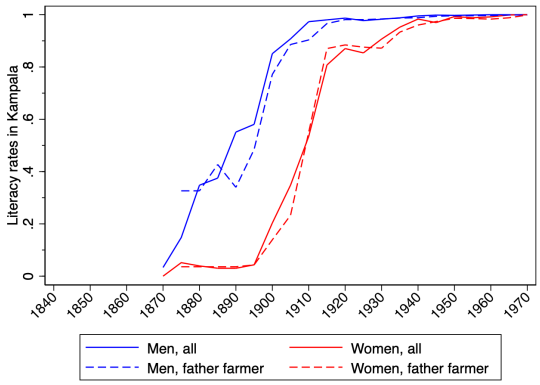
Figure E.1 shows the estimated α_1 coefficients for Freetown and Kampala (reported in Tables E.2 and E.1) by birth cohorts. The panels compare the raw (average) literacy rates of all the sampled men and women to those predicted for men and women whose fathers were farmers and (in case of Panel C) controlling for local differences. Figure G.2 compares the gender gap in literacy of all the sampled couples to those predicted by the model (reported in Table E.3) for women whose fathers were farmers (Panel A). The Figure also shows the gender gap in literacy between birth cohorts and couples (Panel B). The results are commented on in the main text on page 19.

Figure E.1: Literacy rates of spouses with a paternal farming background by birth cohorts

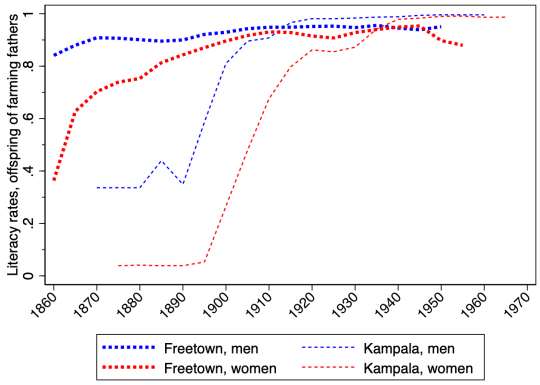
A) Freetown: all vs. farming background



B) Kampala: all vs. farming background



C) Freetown vs. Kampala: farming background



Notes: Literacy rates are inferred from the spousal signatures (or the lack hereof) on the marriage certificates serving as proxies for their school attendance. The graphs are either based on the (raw) five-year averages or on those predicted using a logistic regression model as described above.

Table E.1: Regression results using predicted literacy status of husbands

City	Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
Freetown	1855-1860	0.0452	0.0346	-4.04	0.0000	0.0101	0.2028
Freetown	1860-1865	0.0799	0.0611	-3.31	0.0010	0.0179	0.3574
Freetown	1865-1870	0.0572	0.0438	-3.74	0.0000	0.0128	0.2566
Freetown	1870-1875	0.1220	0.0972	-2.64	0.0080	0.0256	0.5809
Freetown	1875-1880	0.2090	0.1461	-2.24	0.0250	0.0531	0.8226
Freetown	1880-1885	0.9153	0.7174	-0.11	0.9100	0.1970	4.2530
Freetown	1885-1890	0.3051	0.2331	-1.55	0.1200	0.0682	1.3639
Freetown	1890-1895	0.7500	0.5893	-0.37	0.7140	0.1608	3.4985
Freetown	1895-1900	0.4467	0.2929	-1.23	0.2190	0.1236	1.6150
Freetown	1900-1905	0.3929	0.2490	-1.47	0.1410	0.1134	1.3608
Freetown	1905-1910	0.5028	0.3457	-1.00	0.3170	0.1307	1.9350
Freetown	1910-1915	0.4972	0.3419	-1.02	0.3100	0.1292	1.9136
Freetown	1915-1920	0.8390	0.6092	-0.24	0.8090	0.2022	3.4816
Freetown	1920-1925	0.8475	0.7109	-0.20	0.8440	0.1637	4.3874
Freetown	1925-1930	(omitted)					
Freetown	1930-1935	0.7627	0.7170	-0.29	0.7730	0.1208	4.8149
Freetown	1935-1940	1.3220	1.5581	0.24	0.8130	0.1312	13.3186
Freetown	1940-1945	0.8542	0.6406	-0.21	0.8340	0.1965	3.7143
Freetown	1945-1950	1.9322	2.2673	0.56	0.5750	0.1937	19.2696
Freetown	1950-1955	1.1186	1.3217	0.09	0.9240	0.1104	11.3352
Freetown	1955-1960	0.5847	0.5529	-0.57	0.5700	0.0917	3.7306
Freetown	1960-1965	1.1695	1.3808	0.13	0.8950	0.1156	11.8311
Freetown	1965-1970	0.8136	0.9671	-0.17	0.8620	0.0792	8.3609
Kampala	1890-1895	0.0601	0.0433	-3.91	0.0000	0.0147	0.2464
Kampala	1895-1900	0.0246	0.0150	-6.09	0.0000	0.0075	0.0811
Kampala	1900-1905	0.0424	0.0359	-3.73	0.0000	0.0081	0.2228
Kampala	1905-1910	0.2712	0.2343	-1.51	0.1310	0.0499	1.4744
Kampala	1910-1915	0.5593	0.6715	-0.48	0.6280	0.0532	5.8836
Kampala	1915-1920	0.4068	0.3465	-1.06	0.2910	0.0766	2.1595
Kampala	1920-1925	1.0000	(empty)				
Kampala	1930-1935	3.2542	3.8037	1.01	0.3130	0.3292	32.1649
Kampala	1935-1940	2.3390	1.8206	1.09	0.2750	0.5087	10.7542
Kampala	1940-1945	2.7288	2.2667	1.21	0.2270	0.5357	13.9005
Kampala	1945-1950	4.0508	3.3599	1.69	0.0920	0.7971	20.5855
Kampala	1950-1955	4.1949	3.0224	1.99	0.0470	1.0220	17.2186
Kampala	1955-1960	1.0000	(empty)				
Kampala	1960-1965	14.6441	17.0405	2.31	0.0210	1.4968	143.2713
Kampala	1965-1970	11.7966	13.7313	2.12	0.0340	1.2049	115.4945
Constant		19.6667	11.6410	5.03	0.0000	6.1644	62.7438
Robust std. err.							Yes
R2							0.4102
N							4263

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above.

Table E.2: Regression results using predicted literacy status of wives

City	Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
Freetown	1860-1865	0.0214	0.0200	-4.12	0.0000	0.0034	0.1332
Freetown	1865-1870	0.0118	0.0113	-4.61	0.0000	0.0018	0.0779
Freetown	1870-1875	0.0235	0.0221	-4.00	0.0000	0.0037	0.1479
Freetown	1875-1880	0.0252	0.0221	-4.20	0.0000	0.0045	0.1404
Freetown	1880-1885	0.0712	0.0563	-3.34	0.0010	0.0151	0.3356
Freetown	1885-1890	0.0775	0.0605	-3.28	0.0010	0.0168	0.3581
Freetown	1890-1895	0.1103	0.0937	-2.60	0.0090	0.0209	0.5827
Freetown	1895-1900	0.0993	0.0787	-2.91	0.0040	0.0210	0.4698
Freetown	1900-1905	0.1927	0.1461	-2.17	0.0300	0.0436	0.8513
Freetown	1905-1910	0.3032	0.2300	-1.57	0.1160	0.0685	1.3409
Freetown	1910-1915	0.6275	0.5294	-0.55	0.5810	0.1201	3.2792
Freetown	1915-1920	0.4559	0.3734	-0.96	0.3370	0.0916	2.2697
Freetown	1920-1925	0.5210	0.4323	-0.79	0.4320	0.1025	2.6496
Freetown	1925-1930	(omitted)					
Freetown	1930-1935	0.3529	0.3199	-1.15	0.2500	0.0597	2.0850
Freetown	1935-1940	0.2353	0.2159	-1.58	0.1150	0.0389	1.4215
Freetown	1940-1945	0.5294	0.5515	-0.61	0.5420	0.0687	4.0788
Freetown	1945-1950	1.1373	1.0670	0.14	0.8910	0.1808	7.1524
Freetown	1950-1955	1.0000	(empty)				
Freetown	1955-1960	1.1765	1.4787	0.13	0.8970	0.1002	13.8185
Freetown	1960-1965	0.2941	0.2836	-1.27	0.2040	0.0444	1.9464
Kampala	1895-1900	0.7353	0.7605	-0.30	0.7660	0.0969	5.5824
Kampala	1900-1905	0.0022	0.0018	-7.54	0.0000	0.0004	0.0108
Kampala	1905-1910	0.0084	0.0088	-4.55	0.0000	0.0011	0.0657
Kampala	1910-1915	0.0226	0.0203	-4.22	0.0000	0.0039	0.1315
Kampala	1915-1920	0.3922	0.3747	-0.98	0.3270	0.0603	2.5514
Kampala	1920-1925	0.4588	0.3987	-0.90	0.3700	0.0835	2.5199
Kampala	1930-1935	0.3904	0.3109	-1.18	0.2380	0.0820	1.8593
Kampala	1935-1940	0.3760	0.2863	-1.28	0.1990	0.0845	1.6723
Kampala	1940-1945	1.7882	1.5343	0.68	0.4980	0.3327	9.6108
Kampala	1945-1950	1.0407	0.8134	0.05	0.9590	0.2249	4.8150
Kampala	1950-1955	3.4622	2.8442	1.51	0.1310	0.6920	17.3226
Kampala	1955-1960	5.9216	5.5114	1.91	0.0560	0.9554	36.7014
Kampala	1960-1965	2.7882	2.3885	1.20	0.2310	0.5202	14.9449
Kampala	1965-1970	4.1176	3.8357	1.52	0.1290	0.6633	25.5598
Constant		17.0000	12.3693	3.89	0.0000	4.0842	70.7602
Robust std. err.							Yes
R2							0.5079
N							3998

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above.

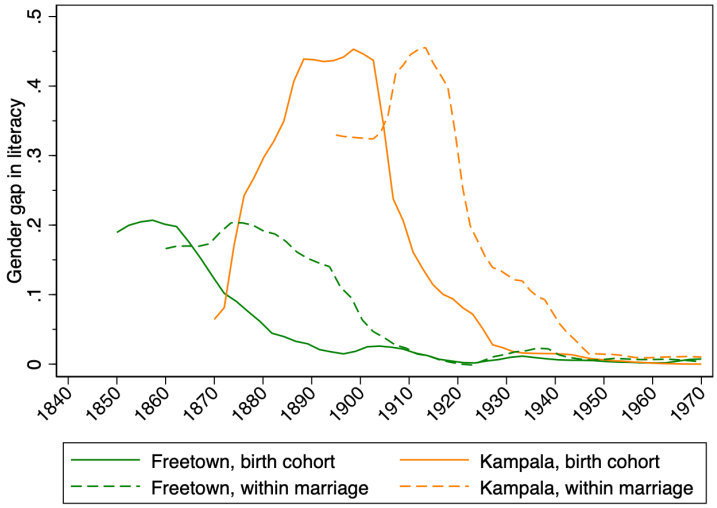
Table E.3: Regression results using predicted literacy status to predict the litearcy gap

City	Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
Freetown	1855-1860	5.5000	4.4812	2.09	0.0360	1.1139	27.1577
Freetown	1860-1865	11.0000	8.4209	3.13	0.0020	2.4534	49.3193
Freetown	1865-1870	6.1111	5.0206	2.20	0.0280	1.2213	30.5797
Freetown	1870-1875	9.0000	6.7700	2.92	0.0030	2.0604	39.3127
Freetown	1875-1880	1.8333	1.3698	0.81	0.4170	0.4239	7.9292
Freetown	1880-1885	5.0286	3.3914	2.39	0.0170	1.3408	18.8589
Freetown	1885-1890	2.3158	1.8906	1.03	0.3040	0.4675	11.4711
Freetown	1890-1895	3.7813	2.6359	1.91	0.0560	0.9644	14.8255
Freetown	1895-1900	2.7778	1.7870	1.59	0.1120	0.7872	9.8016
Freetown	1900-1905	0.8919	0.6009	-0.17	0.8650	0.2382	3.3401
Freetown	1905-1910	1.2222	0.8835	0.28	0.7810	0.2964	5.0403
Freetown	1910-1915	1.2222	0.8835	0.28	0.7810	0.2964	5.0403
Freetown	1915-1920	2.0862	1.4332	1.07	0.2840	0.5428	8.0188
Freetown	1920-1925	0.8462	0.8038	-0.18	0.8600	0.1315	5.4455
Freetown	1925-1930	(omitted)					
Freetown	1930-1935	3.6667	2.9115	1.64	0.1020	0.7734	17.3844
Freetown	1935-1940	1.9412	1.6879	0.76	0.4460	0.3531	10.6705
Freetown	1940-1945	0.1833	0.2154	-1.44	0.1490	0.0183	1.8342
Freetown	1945-1950	0.4231	0.5010	-0.73	0.4680	0.0415	4.3101
Freetown	1950-1955	0.5500	0.6540	-0.50	0.6150	0.0535	5.6568
Freetown	1955-1960	0.6471	0.7718	-0.36	0.7150	0.0625	6.7036
Freetown	1960-1965	0.9565	0.9112	-0.05	0.9630	0.1479	6.1877
Kampala	1890-1895	9.3077	6.7866	3.06	0.0020	2.2295	38.8581
Kampala	1895-1900	4.7548	2.9508	2.51	0.0120	1.4089	16.0467
Kampala	1900-1905	6.6000	5.2407	2.38	0.0170	1.3921	31.2920
Kampala	1905-1910	17.2857	13.3626	3.69	0.0000	3.7990	78.6502
Kampala	1910-1915	1.0476	1.0002	0.05	0.9610	0.1613	6.8059
Kampala	1915-1920	1.1000	0.8792	0.12	0.9050	0.2296	5.2691
Kampala	1920-1925	1.6575	1.1344	0.74	0.4600	0.4334	6.3390
Kampala	1930-1935	1.8082	1.1610	0.92	0.3560	0.5137	6.3650
Kampala	1935-1940	0.3618	0.2733	-1.35	0.1780	0.0823	1.5900
Kampala	1940-1945	0.6217	0.4148	-0.71	0.4760	0.1682	2.2986
Kampala	1945-1950	0.1329	0.1000	-2.68	0.0070	0.0304	0.5806
Kampala	1950-1955	0.1093	0.0915	-2.65	0.0080	0.0212	0.5635
Kampala	1955-1960	0.1849	0.1453	-2.15	0.0320	0.0396	0.8631
Kampala	1960-1965	0.1043	0.0972	-2.43	0.0150	0.0168	0.6478
Constant		19.6667	11.6410	5.03	0.0000	6.1644	62.7438
Robust std. err.							Yes
R2							0.1997
N							3178

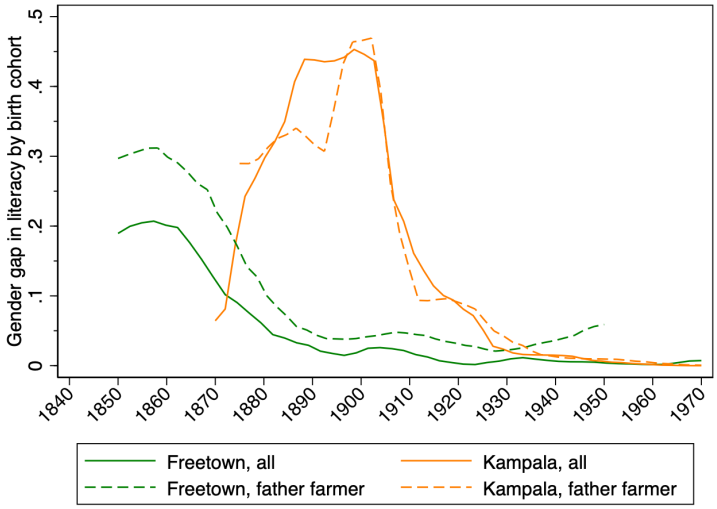
Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above. The literacy gap is reported in Panel C) of Figure E.2.

Figure E.2: Gender gaps in signature literacy

A) Between birth cohorts and couples



B) All versus women with a farming background

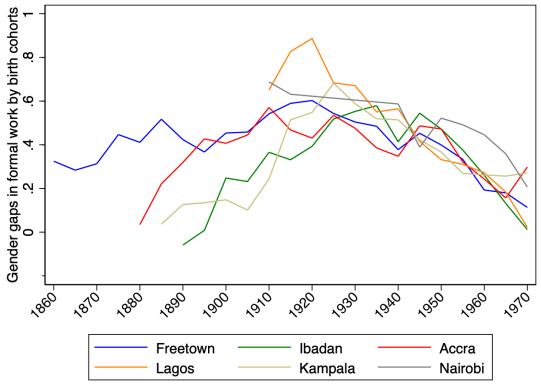


Notes: Literacy rates are inferred from spousal signatures (or the lack hereof) on the marriage certificates serving as proxies for their school attendance. The gaps were constructed by giving the value one for a signature and zero for a mark or thumbprint, then computing the signature literacy rate by gender in each city, and finally subtracting the female literacy rate from that of males. The graphs are either based on the (raw) five-year averages or on those predicted using a logistic regression model as described in the text. The graphs show the literacy rates by birth cohort unless otherwise mentioned.

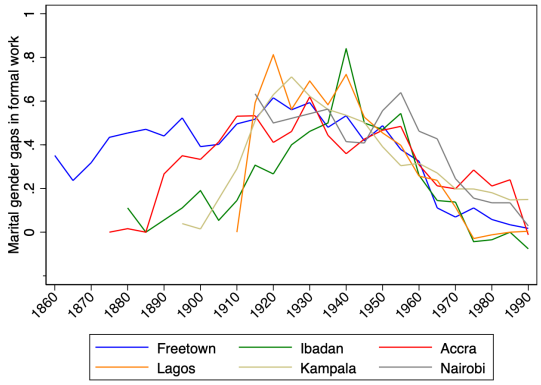
F Gender gap comparison

Figure F.1: Gender gap in formal work: birth cohort and marital

A) Between birth cohorts



B) Between couples



G Formal work sensitivity

This section uses regression models to predict the sampled men and women's participation in formal labour and the gender gap herein. The aim is to test the robustness of the conclusions in the main text by accounting for variations across time and space as well as controlling for differences in the sampled couples' social background, literacy status, and age at marriage.

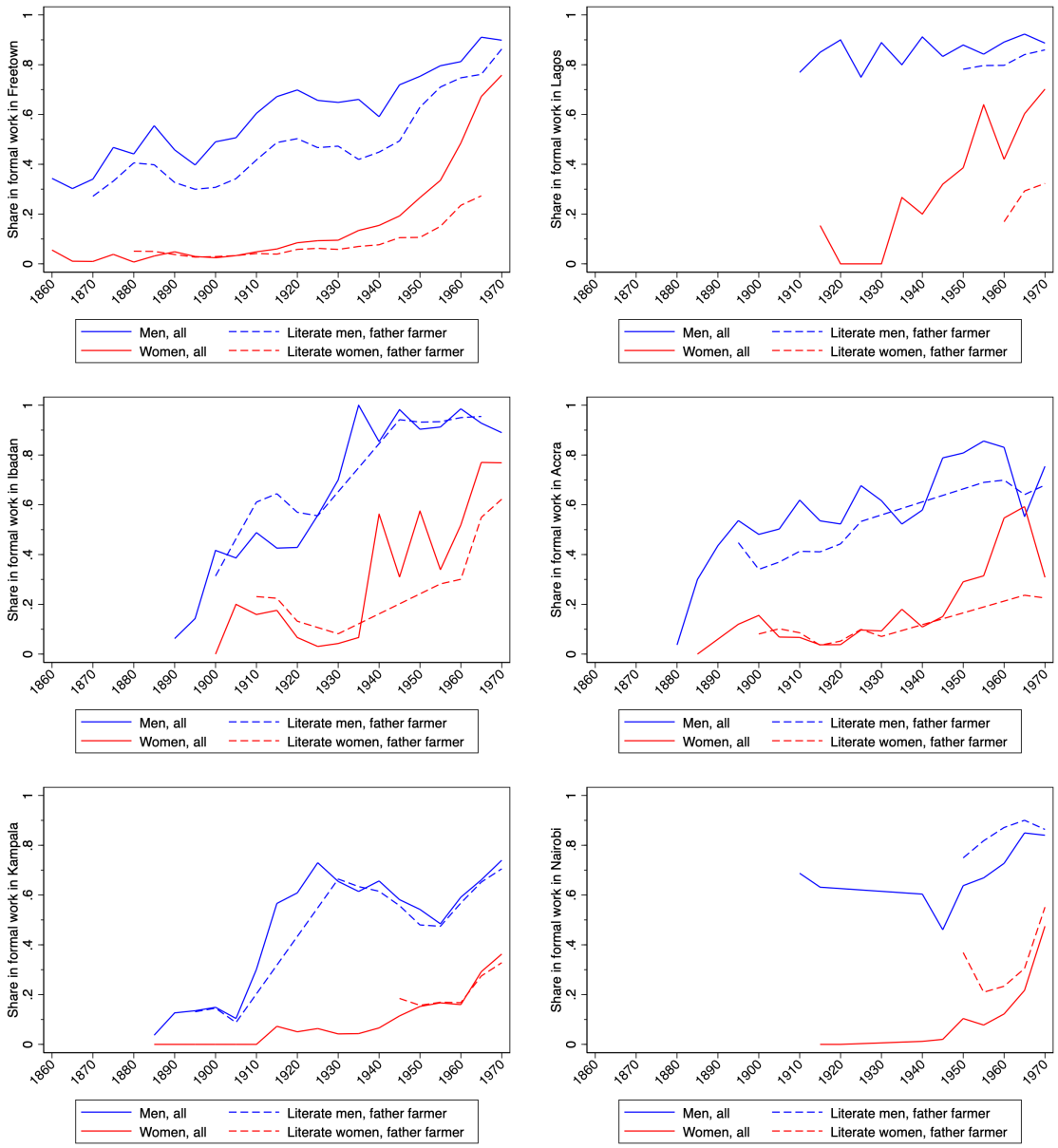
To this end, we run two logistic regression models (one for each gender) of the following form:

$$Formal\ work_{ijt} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 Time_t \times Place_j + \alpha_2 Age_i + \alpha_3 Age\ gap_i + \epsilon_{ijt} \tag{2}$$

where *Formal work* is a dummy assuming the value one if the individual is engaged in formal (waged) employment and zero otherwise; *Time* refers to five-years time brackets with 1925-30 being the reference period (when available); *Place* refers to the city in question with Freetown being the reference location; *Age* refers to a decadal age-at-marriage bracket with 20-30 years of age (the most common age at marriage, as shown in Figure D.1) as the reference category; *Age gap* refers to groups of age differences between the husband and wife with 0-10 years being the reference category; and ϵ_{ijt} is an error term. The regression samples are restricted to literate spouses of the social background specified in the reported graphs. A spouse's social background is based on the occupational descriptor of the father of the spouse in question. We use a logistic regression model with robust standard errors.

Figure G.1 shows the estimated α_1 coefficients (reported in Tables G.1 to G.12) by birth cohorts for each of the sampled cities. The panels compare the raw (average) shares employed in formal work of all the sampled men and women to the shares predicted for literate men and women whose fathers were farmers. Further, Figure G.2 compares women's formal work participation and the gender gaps herein based on the predicted coefficients (reported in Tables G.13 to G.18) across the sampled cities while accounting for location specific conditions. Here, the sample is restricted to literate couples whose fathers were farmers (Panels A and B) or worked either in informal work (Panels C and D) or formal work (Panels E and F). Lastly, Figure F.1 compares the gender gap in formal work between birth cohorts to that between couples for all the sampled couples. The results are commented on in the main text on page 22.

Figure G.1: Robustness: women's formal employment shares and gender gaps



Notes: Formal (i.e. waged) work is categorised as explained on page 13*ff*. The graphs are based on five-year averages. The numbers reported are predicted using a logistic regression model as explained above. The reference time and place is always Freetown between 1925 and 1930. For Accra, where literacy information is missing, the sample is restricted to couples whose fathers were farmers regardless of the spousal literacy status.

Table G.1: Predicted formal work status of wives in Freetown

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1875-1880	2.2012	3.1968	0.54	0.5870	0.1278	37.9182
1880-1885	1.5367	2.2284	0.30	0.7670	0.0896	26.3586
1885-1890	1.0000	(empty)				
1890-1895	1.2844	1.8521	0.17	0.8620	0.0761	21.6840
1895-1900	0.7787	0.9709	-0.20	0.8410	0.0676	8.9672
1900-1905	1.3609	1.5203	0.28	0.7830	0.1524	12.1540
1905-1910	0.5033	0.7211	-0.48	0.6320	0.0304	8.3438
1910-1915	1.7664	2.0841	0.48	0.6300	0.1749	17.8397
1915-1920	2.8561	3.2055	0.94	0.3500	0.3165	25.7700
1920-1925	1.5360	2.2225	0.30	0.7670	0.0901	26.1850
1925-1930	(omitted)					
1930-1935	1.2844	1.8521	0.17	0.8620	0.0761	21.6840
1935-1940	0.7787	0.9709	-0.20	0.8410	0.0676	8.9672
1940-1945	1.3609	1.5203	0.28	0.7830	0.1524	12.1540
1945-1950	0.5033	0.7211	-0.48	0.6320	0.0304	8.3438
1950-1955	1.7664	2.0841	0.48	0.6300	0.1749	17.8397
1955-1960	2.8561	3.2055	0.94	0.3500	0.3165	25.7700
1960-1965	1.5360	2.2225	0.30	0.7670	0.0901	26.1850
Age category						
15-20	1.5294	0.6779	0.96	0.3380	0.6415	3.6461
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	1.3412	0.5645	0.70	0.4860	0.5878	3.0603
Spousal age gap						
< 0	1.7098	0.8580	1.07	0.2850	0.6394	4.5720
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	1.1009	0.5032	0.21	0.8330	0.4495	2.6966
> 20	1.5043	1.8370	0.33	0.7380	0.1374	16.4736
Constant	0.0256	0.0265	-3.54	0.0000	0.0034	0.1943
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.1515
N						707

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to literate women whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.2: Predicted formal work status of husbands in Freetown

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1870-1875	0.2078	0.1764	-1.85	0.0640	0.0394	1.0968
1875-1880	0.5057	0.2297	-1.50	0.1330	0.2076	1.2316
1880-1885	0.6236	0.2382	-1.24	0.2160	0.2949	1.3185
1885-1890	0.6081	0.2906	-1.04	0.2980	0.2383	1.5514
1890-1895	0.5481	0.2136	-1.54	0.1230	0.2554	1.1763
1895-1900	0.3194	0.1075	-3.39	0.0010	0.1651	0.6176
1900-1905	0.3134	0.1005	-3.62	0.0000	0.1672	0.5874
1905-1910	0.2636	0.0968	-3.63	0.0000	0.1283	0.5414
1910-1915	0.9571	0.3318	-0.13	0.8990	0.4852	1.8881
1915-1920	1.0289	0.3469	0.08	0.9330	0.5314	1.9923
1920-1925	0.4268	0.1725	-2.11	0.0350	0.1933	0.9424
1925-1930	(omitted)					
1930-1935	0.8042	0.3696	-0.47	0.6350	0.3267	1.9797
1935-1940	0.8982	0.4308	-0.22	0.8230	0.3508	2.2995
1940-1945	0.4291	0.1547	-2.35	0.0190	0.2117	0.8698
1945-1950	1.4282	0.6205	0.82	0.4120	0.6095	3.3466
1950-1955	1.5433	0.8061	0.83	0.4060	0.5544	4.2961
1955-1960	1.8094	0.9602	1.12	0.2640	0.6395	5.1200
1960-1965	1.5918	0.8457	0.87	0.3820	0.5619	4.5093
1965-1970	5.9862	4.8289	2.22	0.0270	1.2317	29.0933
Age category						
15-20	1.3136	1.3531	0.26	0.7910	0.1744	9.8920
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	0.5796	0.0880	-3.59	0.0000	0.4304	0.7804
40-50	0.2721	0.0805	-4.40	0.0000	0.1524	0.4860
Spousal age gap						
< 0	1.1788	0.2747	0.71	0.4800	0.7466	1.8613
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	1.3967	0.2775	1.68	0.0930	0.9462	2.0616
> 20	3.3238	2.2558	1.77	0.0770	0.8789	12.5701
Constant	1.4831	0.4146	1.41	0.1590	0.8574	2.5652
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.0928
N						116

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to literate men whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.3: Predicted formal work status of wives in Lagos

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1930-1935	(omitted)					
1935-1940	0.8982	0.4308	-0.22	0.8230	0.3508	2.2995
1940-1945	0.4291	0.1547	-2.35	0.0190	0.2117	0.8698
1945-1950	0.0410	0.0379	-3.46	0.0010	0.0067	0.2510
1950-1955	0.1169	0.0799	-3.14	0.0020	0.0306	0.4463
1955-1960	0.1763	0.1208	-2.53	0.0110	0.0460	0.6756
1960-1965	0.4475	0.3538	-1.02	0.3090	0.0950	2.1070
Age category						
15-20	0.3653	0.3145	-1.17	0.2420	0.0676	1.9741
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	0.4607	0.3962	-0.90	0.3680	0.0854	2.4860
Spousal age gap						
< 0	1.6109	1.6365	0.47	0.6390	0.2200	11.7977
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	0.1878	0.1248	-2.52	0.0120	0.0510	0.6910
Constant	1.4831	0.4146	1.41	0.1590	0.8574	2.5652
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.2433
N						163

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to literate women whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.4: Predicted formal work status of husbands in Lagos

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1930-1935	(omitted)					
1940-1945	3.6530	4.1158	1.15	0.2500	0.4014	33.2423
1950-1955	0.9433	0.5258	-0.10	0.9170	0.3164	2.8125
1955-1960	1.9235	1.1648	1.08	0.2800	0.5870	6.3031
1960-1965	1.5990	1.1081	0.68	0.4980	0.4111	6.2194
1965-1970	1.5990	1.1081	0.68	0.4980	0.4111	6.2194
Age category						
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	1.3008	0.5750	0.59	0.5520	0.5469	3.0935
40-50	0.6073	0.6255	-0.48	0.6280	0.0807	4.5725
Spousal age gap						
< 0	3.2115	3.4314	1.09	0.2750	0.3956	26.0735
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	0.2606	0.1306	-2.68	0.0070	0.0976	0.6959
Constant	1.4831	0.4146	1.41	0.1590	0.8574	2.5652
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.0680
N						324

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to literate men whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.5: Predicted formal work status of wives in Ibadan

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1900-1905	5.5111	6.8396	1.38	0.1690	0.4840	62.7531
1905-1910	3.3832	4.1361	1.00	0.3190	0.3081	37.1499
1910-1915	1.8045	2.1571	0.49	0.6210	0.1733	18.7872
1915-1920	1.0000	(empty)				
1920-1925	0.6995	1.0443	-0.24	0.8110	0.0375	13.0492
1925-1930	(omitted)					
1945-1950	5.8400	6.5315	1.58	0.1150	0.6523	52.2882
1950-1955	2.0490	2.2516	0.65	0.5140	0.2378	17.6563
1955-1960	7.9236	8.8358	1.86	0.0630	0.8907	70.4880
1960-1965	18.8863	21.0935	2.63	0.0090	2.1158	168.5866
1965-1970	14.4203	17.9748	2.14	0.0320	1.2530	165.9560
Age category						
15-20	0.8074	0.3670	-0.47	0.6380	0.3313	1.9680
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	0.8573	0.7908	-0.17	0.8670	0.1406	5.2275
Spousal age gap						
< 0	1.0071	0.9896	0.01	0.9940	0.1468	6.9094
0-10	(omitted)					
Constant	0.1230	0.1302	-1.98	0.0480	0.0154	0.9801
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.2321
N						348

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to literate women whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.6: Predicted formal work status of husbands in Ibadan

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1900-1905	0.0762	0.0876	-2.24	0.0250	0.0080	0.7258
1905-1910	1.0290	0.6143	0.05	0.9620	0.3193	3.3156
1910-1915	1.9124	1.1280	1.10	0.2720	0.6019	6.0765
1915-1920	0.9916	0.5918	-0.01	0.9890	0.3078	3.1942
1920-1925	1.0016	0.5799	0.00	0.9980	0.3220	3.1156
1925-1930	(omitted)					
1940-1945	4.7516	5.5728	1.33	0.1840	0.4770	47.3312
1945-1950	36.9927	40.9964	3.26	0.0010	4.2149	324.6697
1950-1955	7.5501	4.3375	3.52	0.0000	2.4487	23.2791
1955-1960	30.2107	28.4378	3.62	0.0000	4.7743	191.1657
1960-1965	14.8570	11.3484	3.53	0.0000	3.3246	66.3921
1965-1970	1.0000	(empty)				
Age category						
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	0.7477	0.2506	-0.87	0.3860	0.3877	1.4420
40-50	0.8824	0.8591	-0.13	0.8980	0.1309	5.9477
Spousal age gap						
< 0	1.9927	1.5960	0.86	0.3890	0.4147	9.5762
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	1.3816	0.7590	0.59	0.5560	0.4707	4.0550
20-30	0.1089	0.1777	-1.36	0.1740	0.0044	2.6686
Constant	1.2627	0.5771	0.51	0.6100	0.5156	3.0926
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.2059
N						610

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to literate men whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.7: Predicted formal work status of wives in Accra

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1890-1895	0.3029	0.4649	-0.78	0.4360	0.0150	6.1337
1895-1900	0.5946	0.7231	-0.43	0.6690	0.0548	6.4480
1900-1905	0.2520	0.3100	-1.12	0.2620	0.0226	2.8084
1905-1910	0.0471	0.0709	-2.03	0.0420	0.0025	0.9011
1910-1915	0.5681	0.6623	-0.49	0.6280	0.0578	5.5811
1915-1920	0.3799	0.5078	-0.72	0.4690	0.0277	5.2170
1920-1925	1.0016	0.5799	0.00	0.9980	0.3220	3.1156
1925-1930	(omitted)					
1930-1935	1.0000	(empty)				
1935-1940	0.3715	0.5731	-0.64	0.5210	0.0181	7.6426
1940-1945	1.0000	(empty)				
1945-1950	1.0000	(empty)				
1950-1955	4.4926	8.2815	0.82	0.4150	0.1212	166.5616
1955-1960	1.1927	1.5572	0.13	0.8930	0.0923	15.4118
1960-1965	1.1781	1.4538	0.13	0.8940	0.1049	13.2309
1965-1970	0.7588	1.0550	-0.20	0.8430	0.0497	11.5762
Age category						
15-20	0.3381	0.1706	-2.15	0.0320	0.1257	0.9091
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	0.3800	0.2190	-1.68	0.0930	0.1228	1.1759
Spousal age gap						
< 0	2.6846	1.5543	1.71	0.0880	0.8631	8.3501
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	0.7880	0.4124	-0.46	0.6490	0.2825	2.1977
Constant	0.2825	0.3173	-1.13	0.2600	0.0312	2.5534
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.1573
N						464

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to women whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.8: Predicted formal work status of husbands in Accra

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1890-1895	0.1429	0.1673	-1.66	0.0970	0.0144	1.4176
1900-1905	0.0686	0.0772	-2.38	0.0170	0.0076	0.6226
1905-1910	0.1178	0.1307	-1.93	0.0540	0.0134	1.0366
1910-1915	0.0990	0.1098	-2.09	0.0370	0.0113	0.8703
1915-1920	0.0967	0.1068	-2.12	0.0340	0.0111	0.8425
1920-1925	0.2585	0.2960	-1.18	0.2370	0.0274	2.4388
1925-1930	(omitted)					
1930-1935	0.3237	0.4196	-0.87	0.3840	0.0255	4.1066
1935-1940	0.0315	0.0421	-2.58	0.0100	0.0023	0.4334
1940-1945	0.3599	0.4640	-0.79	0.4280	0.0288	4.5034
1945-1950	1.0000	(empty)				
1950-1955	1.0000	(empty)				
1955-1960	0.5295	0.6747	-0.50	0.6180	0.0436	6.4331
1960-1965	0.4261	0.5023	-0.72	0.4690	0.0423	4.2951
1965-1970	0.1568	0.1845	-1.57	0.1150	0.0156	1.5731
Age category						
15-20	2.4577	2.0161	1.10	0.2730	0.4923	12.2680
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	1.0192	0.2585	0.08	0.9400	0.6200	1.6756
40-50	0.9299	0.4355	-0.16	0.8770	0.3714	2.3283
Spousal age gap						
¡ 0	0.6245	0.2835	-1.04	0.3000	0.2566	1.5202
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	1.0126	0.3168	0.04	0.9680	0.5485	1.8697
20-30	0.2302	0.2784	-1.21	0.2250	0.0215	2.4638
Constant	6.4821	7.0374	1.72	0.0850	0.7720	54.4294
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.0761
N						535

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to men whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.9: Predicted formal work status of wives in Kampala

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1920-1925	0.5087	0.6166	-0.56	0.5770	0.0473	5.4737
1925-1930	(omitted)					
1935-1940	0.5686	0.2647	-1.21	0.2250	0.2283	1.4162
1940-1945	0.4784	0.1534	-2.30	0.0210	0.2552	0.8967
1945-1950	0.7130	0.1731	-1.39	0.1630	0.4430	1.1474
1950-1955	0.6030	0.1330	-2.29	0.0220	0.3913	0.9292
1955-1960	0.9473	0.1838	-0.28	0.7800	0.6476	1.3857
1960-1965	1.9742	0.3834	3.50	0.0000	1.3492	2.8886
1965-1970	2.5042	0.4871	4.72	0.0000	1.7103	3.6665
Age category						
15-20	0.1082	0.0120	-20.06	0.0000	0.0871	0.1344
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	0.7848	0.1041	-1.83	0.0680	0.6052	1.0178
40-50	0.5100	0.1952	-1.76	0.0790	0.2409	1.0800
Spousal age gap						
< 0	1.6952	0.3041	2.94	0.0030	1.1927	2.4094
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	0.6393	0.0747	-3.83	0.0000	0.5084	0.8038
20-30	0.1784	0.0957	-3.21	0.0010	0.0623	0.5105
Constant	1.3078	0.1132	3.10	0.0020	1.1037	1.5496
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.2012
N						3510

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to literate women whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.10: Predicted formal work status of husbands in Kampala

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1890-1895	0.1402	0.1651	-1.67	0.0950	0.0139	1.4110
1905-1910	0.0631	0.0356	-4.90	0.0000	0.0209	0.1905
1910-1915	1.7135	1.5692	0.59	0.5560	0.2847	10.3130
1915-1920	0.2149	0.2768	-1.19	0.2330	0.0172	2.6843
1920-1925	0.6914	0.5996	-0.43	0.6700	0.1264	3.7832
1925-1930	(omitted)					
1930-1935	1.8169	1.4058	0.77	0.4400	0.3988	8.2779
1935-1940	1.0558	0.4963	0.12	0.9080	0.4203	2.6526
1940-1945	0.7312	0.3170	-0.72	0.4700	0.3126	1.7102
1945-1950	0.3987	0.1675	-2.19	0.0290	0.1750	0.9082
1950-1955	0.3158	0.1314	-2.77	0.0060	0.1398	0.7137
1955-1960	0.4919	0.2029	-1.72	0.0850	0.2191	1.1042
1960-1965	1.0773	0.4526	0.18	0.8590	0.4729	2.4542
1965-1970	1.3784	0.5905	0.75	0.4540	0.5952	3.1918
Age category						
15-20	0.5035	0.0956	-3.61	0.0000	0.3470	0.7306
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	1.2888	0.1196	2.73	0.0060	1.0745	1.5459
40-50	1.2408	0.2379	1.13	0.2600	0.8522	1.8066
Spousal age gap						
< 0	0.5035	0.0956	-3.61	0.0000	0.3470	0.7306
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	1.0126	0.3168	0.04	0.9680	0.5485	1.8697
20-30	0.2302	0.2784	-1.21	0.2250	0.0215	2.4638
Constant	2.3269	0.9304	2.11	0.0350	1.0628	5.0948
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.0533
N						3957

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to literate men whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.11: Predicted formal work status of wives in Nairobi

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1930-1935	(omitted)					
1940-1945	0.8290	0.6144	-0.25	0.8000	0.1940	3.5429
1945-1950	0.1936	0.1170	-2.72	0.0070	0.0592	0.6331
1950-1955	0.0327	0.0343	-3.26	0.0010	0.0042	0.2558
1955-1960	0.1695	0.0705	-4.27	0.0000	0.0750	0.3829
1960-1965	0.3605	0.1167	-3.15	0.0020	0.1912	0.6797
1965-1970	4.4304	2.7848	2.37	0.0180	1.2924	15.1874
Age category						
15-20	0.2736	0.0811	-4.37	0.0000	0.1530	0.4892
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	0.5575	0.0988	-3.30	0.0010	0.3940	0.7890
40-50	0.1049	0.0420	-5.63	0.0000	0.0478	0.2301
Spousal age gap						
< 0	2.1321	0.5543	2.91	0.0040	1.2810	3.5488
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	0.4183	0.1129	-3.23	0.0010	0.2465	0.7100
Constant	2.6473	0.3160	8.16	0.0000	2.0951	3.3451
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.1440
N						1187

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to literate women whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.12: Predicted formal work status of husbands in Nairobi

Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
1930-1935	(omitted)					
1940-1945	0.2770	0.2076	-1.71	0.0870	0.0638	1.2037
1945-1950	0.4099	0.2082	-1.76	0.0790	0.1515	1.1095
1950-1955	0.6983	0.3667	-0.68	0.4940	0.2495	1.9545
1955-1960	1.6136	0.7557	1.02	0.3070	0.6444	4.0406
1960-1965	2.5862	1.3997	1.76	0.0790	0.8953	7.4704
1965-1970	9.1907	9.3649	2.18	0.0290	1.2474	67.7152
Age category						
15-20	0.2540	0.2605	-1.34	0.1820	0.0340	1.8962
20-30	(omitted)					
30-40	0.6276	0.1107	-2.64	0.0080	0.4441	0.8869
40-50	0.3331	0.0846	-4.33	0.0000	0.2024	0.5481
Spousal age gap						
< 0	1.0566	0.3065	0.19	0.8490	0.5984	1.8658
0-10	(omitted)					
10-20	0.9053	0.2724	-0.33	0.7410	0.5020	1.6326
Constant	6.0158	1.0135	10.65	0.0000	4.3240	8.3695
Robust std. err.						Yes
R2						0.0464
N						1441

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.1. The sample is restricted to men whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.13: Predicted formal work status of women

City	Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
Freetown	1875-1880	0.3814	0.17	-2.1400	0.0320	0.1578	0.9217
Freetown	1880-1885	0.5024	0.18	-1.9000	0.0570	0.2470	1.02189
Freetown	1885-1890	0.5079	0.24	-1.4600	0.1440	0.2048	1.2592
Freetown	1890-1895	0.5609	0.21	-1.5200	0.1280	0.2666	1.1799
Freetown	1895-1900	0.3034	0.10	-3.5600	0.0000	0.1572	0.5853
Freetown	1900-1905	0.3061	0.10	-3.7200	0.0000	0.1642	0.5706
Freetown	1905-1910	0.2442	0.09	-3.8600	0.0000	0.1194	0.4994
Freetown	1910-1915	0.8646	0.30	-0.4200	0.6720	0.4407	1.6962
Freetown	1915-1920	0.9690	0.33	-0.0900	0.9250	0.5012	1.8731
Freetown	1920-1925	0.3866	0.16	-2.3600	0.0180	0.1758	0.8503
Freetown	1925-1930	(omitted)					
Freetown	1930-1935	0.7684	0.35	-0.5700	0.5660	0.3124	1.8895
Freetown	1935-1940	0.8790	0.42	-0.2700	0.7870	0.3443	2.2439
Freetown	1940-1945	0.4194	0.15	-2.4400	0.0150	0.2085	0.8435
Freetown	1945-1950	1.4597	0.63	0.8700	0.3830	0.6240	3.4147
Freetown	1950-1955	1.4235	0.74	0.6800	0.4980	0.5127	3.9524
Freetown	1955-1960	1.6930	0.89	1.0000	0.3180	0.6018	4.7632
Freetown	1960-1965	2.2883	1.29	1.4700	0.1430	0.7563	6.9236
Freetown	1965-1970	5.9391	4.85	2.1800	0.0290	1.1996	29.4048
Lagos	1950-1955	4.9837	3.99	2.0100	0.0450	1.0377	23.9343
Lagos	1955-1960	1.9711	0.90	1.4900	0.1370	0.8061	4.8197
Lagos	1960-1965	3.3704	1.77	2.3200	0.0200	1.2072	9.4102
Lagos	1965-1970	2.5060	1.77	1.3000	0.1930	0.6281	9.9981
Ibadan	1900-1905	0.2091	0.15	-2.2000	0.0280	0.0518	0.8448
Ibadan	1905-1910	0.8753	0.40	-0.2900	0.7730	0.3545	2.1611
Ibadan	1910-1915	1.1548	0.50	0.3300	0.7390	0.4949	2.6948
Ibadan	1915-1920	0.9685	0.46	-0.0700	0.9460	0.3817	2.4571
Ibadan	1920-1925	0.9710	0.40	-0.0700	0.9440	0.4287	2.1990
Ibadan	1925-1930	0.5510	0.34	-0.9800	0.3270	0.1672	1.8156
Ibadan	1930-1935	1.0000	(empty)				
Ibadan	1935-1940	1.0000	(empty)				
Ibadan	1940-1945	3.2533	2.67	1.4400	0.1510	0.6505	16.2716
Ibadan	1945-1950	31.2948	32.75	3.2900	0.0010	4.0240	243.3807
Ibadan	1950-1955	6.3851	2.83	4.1800	0.0000	2.6769	15.2300
Ibadan	1955-1960	22.0603	17.00	4.0100	0.0000	4.8701	99.9271
Ibadan	1960-1965	12.7711	8.33	3.9000	0.0000	3.5549	45.8804
Ibadan	1965-1970	1.0000	(empty)				

Table G.14: Predicted formal work status of women (cont'd)

City	Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
Kampala	1915-1920	2.2773	1.93	0.9700	0.3310	0.4330	11.9783
Kampala	1920-1925	2.0829	1.14	1.3400	0.1800	0.7132	6.0827
Kampala	1925-1930	1.4011	0.59	0.7900	0.4270	0.6100	3.2181
Kampala	1930-1935	1.1468	0.43	0.3600	0.7160	0.5480	2.4001
Kampala	1935-1940	1.1246	0.35	0.3800	0.7060	0.6109	2.0702
Kampala	1940-1945	0.9748	0.31	-0.0800	0.9360	0.5259	1.8071
Kampala	1945-1950	0.6065	0.18	-1.6600	0.0970	0.3361	1.0943
Kampala	1950-1955	0.4692	0.13	-2.6400	0.0080	0.2673	0.8235
Kampala	1955-1960	0.7357	0.22	-1.0500	0.2960	0.4138	1.3080
Kampala	1960-1965	1.5155	0.45	1.3900	0.1650	0.8425	2.7261
Kampala	1965-1970	2.1712	0.67	2.5000	0.0120	1.1819	3.9885
Nairobi	1930-1935	1.3153	0.49	0.7300	0.4640	0.6319	2.7376
Nairobi	1940-1945	0.6507	0.26	-1.0800	0.2790	0.2986	1.4177
Nairobi	1945-1950	1.2029	0.42	0.5300	0.5980	0.6048	2.3924
Nairobi	1950-1955	1.5658	0.55	1.2900	0.1980	0.7907	3.1007
Nairobi	1955-1960	1.3224	0.45	0.8300	0.4070	0.6829	2.5606
Nairobi	1960-1965	9.5344	5.12	4.2000	0.0000	3.3299	27.2994
Nairobi	1965-1970	34.5711	36.15	3.3900	0.0010	4.4522	268.4422
Age category							
15-20		0.5061	0.0993	-3.47	0.0010	0.3445	0.7436
20-30		(omitted)					
30-40		0.7267	0.0720	-3.22	0.0010	0.5984	0.8826
40-50		0.2852	0.0738	-4.85	0.0000	0.1717	0.4737
Constant		1.5369	0.4197	1.57	0.1160	0.9000	2.6246
Robust std. err.							Yes
R2							0.2070
N							3477

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.2. The sample is restricted to literate women whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.15: Predicted formal work status of men

City	Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
Freetown	1875-1880	0.3814	0.17	-2.1400	0.0320	0.1578	0.9218
Freetown	1880-1885	0.5024	0.18	-1.9000	0.0570	0.2470	1.0219
Freetown	1885-1890	0.5079	0.24	-1.4600	0.1440	0.2048	1.2593
Freetown	1890-1895	0.5609	0.21	-1.5200	0.1280	0.2666	1.1800
Freetown	1895-1900	0.3034	0.10	-3.5600	0.0000	0.1572	0.5854
Freetown	1900-1905	0.3061	0.10	-3.7200	0.0000	0.1642	0.5707
Freetown	1905-1910	0.2442	0.09	-3.8600	0.0000	0.1194	0.4994
Freetown	1910-1915	0.8646	0.30	-0.4200	0.6720	0.4407	1.6962
Freetown	1915-1920	0.9690	0.33	-0.0900	0.9250	0.5012	1.8731
Freetown	1920-1925	0.3866	0.16	-2.3600	0.0180	0.1758	0.8503
Freetown	1925-1930	(omitted)					
Freetown	1930-1935	0.7684	0.35	-0.5700	0.5660	0.3124	1.8895
Freetown	1935-1940	0.8790	0.42	-0.2700	0.7870	0.3443	2.2440
Freetown	1940-1945	0.4194	0.15	-2.4400	0.0150	0.2085	0.8435
Freetown	1945-1950	1.4597	0.63	0.8700	0.3830	0.6240	3.4147
Freetown	1950-1955	1.4235	0.74	0.6800	0.4980	0.5127	3.9525
Freetown	1955-1960	1.6930	0.89	1.0000	0.3180	0.6018	4.7632
Freetown	1960-1965	2.2883	1.29	1.4700	0.1430	0.7563	6.9236
Freetown	1965-1970	5.9391	4.85	2.1800	0.0290	1.1996	29.4049
Lagos	1950-1955	4.9837	3.99	2.0100	0.0450	1.0377	23.9344
Lagos	1955-1960	1.9711	0.90	1.4900	0.1370	0.8061	4.8198
Lagos	1960-1965	3.3704	1.77	2.3200	0.0200	1.2072	9.4103
Lagos	1965-1970	2.5060	1.77	1.3000	0.1930	0.6281	9.9981
Ibadan	1900-1905	0.2091	0.15	-2.2000	0.0280	0.0518	0.8448
Ibadan	1905-1910	0.8753	0.40	-0.2900	0.7730	0.3545	2.1611
Ibadan	1910-1915	1.1548	0.50	0.3300	0.7390	0.4949	2.6948
Ibadan	1915-1920	0.9685	0.46	-0.0700	0.9460	0.3817	2.4572
Ibadan	1920-1925	0.9710	0.40	-0.0700	0.9440	0.4287	2.1991
Ibadan	1925-1930	0.5510	0.34	-0.9800	0.3270	0.1672	1.8157
Ibadan	1930-1935	1.0000	(empty)				
Ibadan	1935-1940	1.0000	(empty)				
Ibadan	1940-1945	3.2533	2.67	1.4400	0.1510	0.6505	16.2716
Ibadan	1945-1950	31.2948	32.75	3.2900	0.0010	4.0240	243.3807
Ibadan	1950-1955	6.3851	2.83	4.1800	0.0000	2.6769	15.2301
Ibadan	1955-1960	22.0603	17.00	4.0100	0.0000	4.8701	99.9272
Ibadan	1960-1965	12.7711	8.33	3.9000	0.0000	3.5549	45.8804
Ibadan	1965-1970	1.0000	(empty)				

Table G.16: Predicted formal work status of men (cont'd)

City	Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
Kampala	1915-1920	2.2773	1.93	0.9700	0.3310	0.4330	11.9783
Kampala	1920-1925	2.0829	1.14	1.3400	0.1800	0.7132	6.0828
Kampala	1925-1930	1.4011	0.59	0.7900	0.4270	0.6100	3.2181
Kampala	1930-1935	1.1468	0.43	0.3600	0.7160	0.5480	2.4001
Kampala	1935-1940	1.1246	0.35	0.3800	0.7060	0.6109	2.0703
Kampala	1940-1945	0.9748	0.31	-0.0800	0.9360	0.5259	1.8071
Kampala	1945-1950	0.6065	0.18	-1.6600	0.0970	0.3361	1.0943
Kampala	1950-1955	0.4692	0.13	-2.6400	0.0080	0.2673	0.8235
Kampala	1955-1960	0.7357	0.22	-1.0500	0.2960	0.4138	1.3081
Kampala	1960-1965	1.5155	0.45	1.3900	0.1650	0.8425	2.7261
Kampala	1965-1970	2.1712	0.67	2.5000	0.0120	1.1819	3.9885
Nairobi	1930-1935	1.3153	0.49	0.7300	0.4640	0.6319	2.7376
Nairobi	1940-1945	0.6507	0.26	-1.0800	0.2790	0.2986	1.4177
Nairobi	1945-1950	1.2029	0.42	0.5300	0.5980	0.6048	2.3924
Nairobi	1950-1955	1.5658	0.55	1.2900	0.1980	0.7907	3.1007
Nairobi	1955-1960	1.3224	0.45	0.8300	0.4070	0.6829	2.5607
Nairobi	1960-1965	9.5344	5.12	4.2000	0.0000	3.3299	27.2994
Nairobi	1965-1970	34.5711	36.15	3.3900	0.0010	4.4522	268.4422
Age category							
15-20		0.5061	0.0993	-3.47	0.0010	0.3445	0.7436
20-30		(omitted)					
30-40		0.7267	0.0720	-3.22	0.0010	0.5984	0.8826
40-50		0.2852	0.0738	-4.85	0.0000	0.1717	0.4737
Constant		1.5369	0.4197	1.57	0.1160	0.9000	2.6246
Robust std. err.							Yes
R2							0.1224
N							4286

Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.2. The sample is restricted to literate men whose fathers were farmers.

Table G.17: Predicted gender gap in formal work

City	Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
Freetown	1875-1880	0.4457	0.29	-1.2500	0.2110	0.1256	1.5821
Freetown	1880-1885	0.6554	0.36	-0.7600	0.4450	0.2218	1.9368
Freetown	1885-1890	0.7154	0.49	-0.4900	0.6240	0.1874	2.7313
Freetown	1890-1895	1.9003	1.03	1.1800	0.2380	0.6541	5.5208
Freetown	1895-1900	0.3230	0.14	-2.6300	0.0090	0.1389	0.7508
Freetown	1900-1905	0.2996	0.12	-2.9500	0.0030	0.1345	0.6672
Freetown	1905-1910	0.4914	0.22	-1.6100	0.1070	0.2071	1.1659
Freetown	1910-1915	0.8470	0.37	-0.3800	0.7030	0.3608	1.9883
Freetown	1915-1920	0.7085	0.31	-0.7900	0.4280	0.3024	1.6601
Freetown	1920-1925	1.1092	0.60	0.1900	0.8470	0.3868	3.1807
Freetown	1925-1930	(omitted)					
Freetown	1930-1935	1.1671	0.71	0.2500	0.8010	0.3517	3.8730
Freetown	1935-1940	1.7299	1.03	0.9200	0.3590	0.5360	5.5828
Freetown	1940-1945	0.5336	0.24	-1.4000	0.1610	0.2216	1.2846
Freetown	1945-1950	1.0612	0.56	0.1100	0.9110	0.3743	3.0086
Freetown	1950-1955	0.8576	0.49	-0.2700	0.7880	0.2806	2.6209
Freetown	1955-1960	2.2417	1.46	1.2400	0.2150	0.6250	8.0400
Freetown	1960-1965	1.6318	0.91	0.8800	0.3800	0.5471	4.8666
Freetown	1965-1970	0.4920	0.46	-0.7600	0.4490	0.0783	3.0922
Lagos	1950-1955	2.6798	1.83	1.4500	0.1480	0.7046	10.1923
Lagos	1955-1960	0.9514	0.48	-0.1000	0.9220	0.3524	2.5684
Lagos	1960-1965	1.0092	0.52	0.0200	0.9860	0.3673	2.7727
Lagos	1965-1970	0.1483	0.17	-1.6900	0.0900	0.0163	1.3479
Ibadan	1900-1905	1.0000	(empty)				
Ibadan	1905-1910	1.6958	1.06	0.8500	0.3980	0.4982	5.7727
Ibadan	1910-1915	0.9084	0.47	-0.1800	0.8540	0.3274	2.5199
Ibadan	1915-1920	0.8006	0.56	-0.3200	0.7510	0.2029	3.1598
Ibadan	1920-1925	0.8865	0.53	-0.2000	0.8410	0.2735	2.8732
Ibadan	1925-1930	1.8667	1.52	0.7700	0.4430	0.3787	9.2009
Ibadan	1930-1935	1.0000	(empty)				
Ibadan	1935-1940	1.0000	(empty)				
Ibadan	1940-1945	0.9988	0.89	0.0000	0.9990	0.1740	5.7321
Ibadan	1945-1950	1.1665	0.57	0.3200	0.7510	0.4502	3.0221
Ibadan	1950-1955	2.8794	1.27	2.4100	0.0160	1.2170	6.8128
Ibadan	1955-1960	1.0503	0.52	0.1000	0.9200	0.4008	2.7524
Ibadan	1960-1965	0.2948	0.15	-2.3600	0.0180	0.1070	0.8126
Ibadan	1965-1970	0.8050	0.56	-0.3100	0.7570	0.2040	3.1766

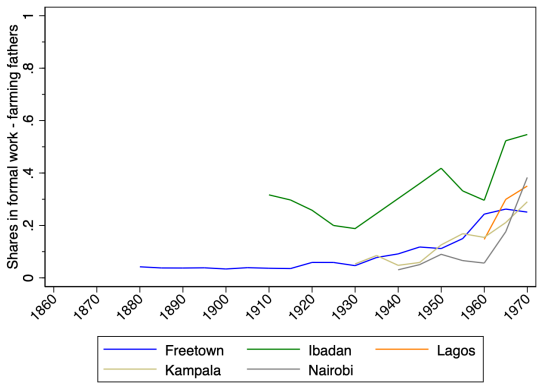
Table G.18: Predicted gender gap in formal work (cont'd)

City	Period	Odds ratio	Std. err.	t	P>t	95% confidence	intervals
Kampala	1920-1925	2.7567	2.45	1.1400	0.2540	0.4830	15.7333
Kampala	1925-1930	1.6424	0.95	0.8600	0.3890	0.5313	5.0768
Kampala	1930-1935	1.3894	0.83	0.5500	0.5830	0.4293	4.4963
Kampala	1935-1940	1.9803	0.88	1.5300	0.1250	0.8263	4.7459
Kampala	1940-1945	1.1190	0.44	0.2900	0.7740	0.5192	2.4116
Kampala	1945-1950	0.6785	0.26	-1.0200	0.3060	0.3228	1.4263
Kampala	1950-1955	0.5728	0.22	-1.4800	0.1390	0.2738	1.1984
Kampala	1955-1960	0.6202	0.23	-1.2800	0.2000	0.2989	1.2868
Kampala	1960-1965	0.9309	0.35	-0.1900	0.8490	0.4453	1.9460
Kampala	1965-1970	0.7779	0.29	-0.6600	0.5070	0.3705	1.6333
Nairobi	1930-1935	1.0000	(empty)				
Nairobi	1940-1945	0.7346	0.56	-0.4100	0.6840	0.1664	3.2423
Nairobi	1945-1950	1.5703	0.90	0.7900	0.4310	0.5107	4.8284
Nairobi	1950-1955	3.2362	2.01	1.8900	0.0590	0.9584	10.9270
Nairobi	1955-1960	1.2058	0.56	0.4000	0.6870	0.4855	2.9951
Nairobi	1960-1965	1.0269	0.47	0.0600	0.9540	0.4203	2.5088
Nairobi	1965-1970	0.2034	0.12	-2.6400	0.0080	0.0625	0.6622
Age category husband							
15-20		0.3579	0.0990	-3.71	0.0000	0.2081	0.6157
20-30		(omitted)					
30-40		0.6000	0.0758	-4.04	0.0000	0.4684	0.7686
40-50		0.8504	0.2353	-0.59	0.5580	0.4945	1.4626
Spousal age gap							
< 0		0.9940	0.2247	-0.03	0.9790	0.6382	1.5481
0-10		(omitted)					
10-20		1.2561	0.1632	1.75	0.0790	0.9737	1.6204
20-30		1.5834	0.5880	1.24	0.2160	0.7647	3.2785
Constant		1.0891	0.3833	0.24	0.8080	0.5463	2.1710
Robust std. err.							Yes
R2							0.0588
N							2660

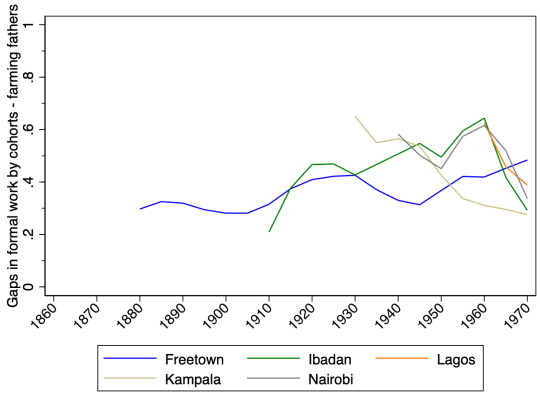
Note: The table reports the results of a logistic regression model described above and illustrated in Figure G.2. The sample is restricted to literate men and women whose fathers were farmers.

Figure G.2: Literate women's formal work shares and gender gaps by social background

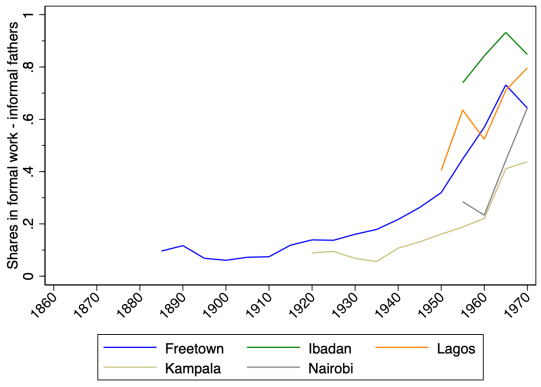
A) Formal work: farming father



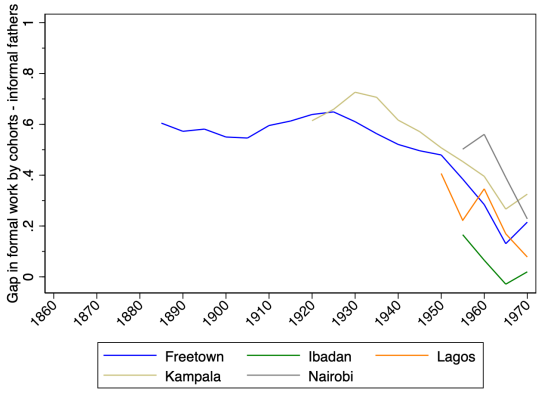
B) Gender gap: farming father



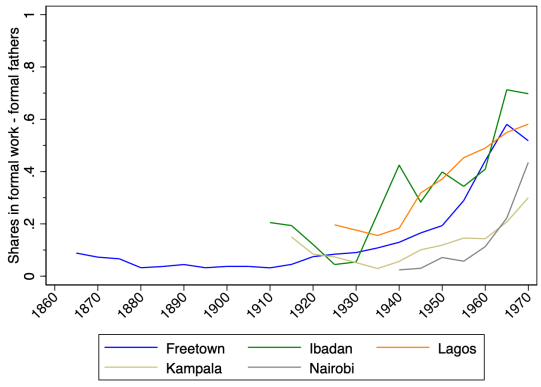
C) Formal work: father in informal work



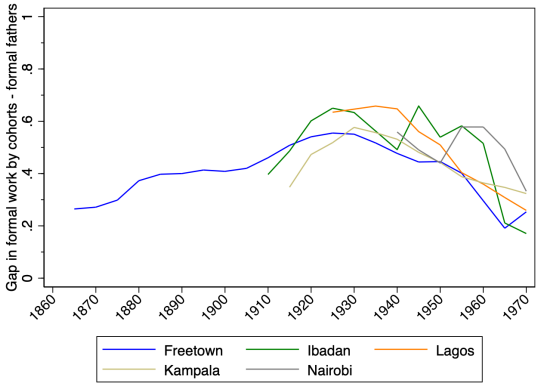
D) Gender gap: father in informal work



E) Formal work: father in formal work



F) Gender gap: father in formal work



Notes: Formal (waged) labour force participation is categorised as explained in on page 13*ff*. The graphs are based on five-year averages.

H Census comparison

Table H.1: Literacy rates, 1900-1970, by birth cohort: sample versus census data

Freetown

Birth Decade	Sample Males	Census Males	Sample Females	Census Females
1910-19	99%	67%	99%	43%
1920-29	100%	79%	99%	70%
1930-39	100%	80%	99%	57%
1940-49	100%	85%	100%	60%
1950-59	100%	84%	100%	70%
1960-69	100%	84%	99%	72%

Kampala

Birth Decade	Sample Males	Census Males	Sample Females	Census Females
1910-19	99%	55%	91%	42%
1920-29	99%	68%	98%	47%
1930-39	100%	78%	98%	61%
1940-49	100%	88%	99%	71%
1950-59	100%	94%	100%	85%
1960-69	100%	94%	100%	92%

Nairobi

Birth Decade	Sample Males	Census Males	Sample Females	Census Females
1910-19	100%	100%	100%	26%
1920-29	100%	100%	100%	41%
1930-39	100%	100%	100%	58%
1940-49	100%	100%	99%	68%
1950-59	100%	100%	100%	87%
1960-69	100%	100%	100%	96%

Notes: The literacy rates for Anglicans are inferred from their signatures. For the census populations, literacy is self-reported and conditional on being born in the city in question. Nairobi includes Nairobi West, East, North, and Westlands. Freetown includes urban Western District Central, East and West. The sample sizes for birth cohorts born between 1900 and 1970 are as follows: Freetown: N = 10,214. Kampala N = 19,955. Nairobi N = 12,444. *Sources*: Statistics Sierra Leone (2004); Uganda Bureau of Statistics (1991); Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (1989) accessed from Population Center. IPUMS International: Version 7.4 (2023).

Table H.2: Formal work participation, 1900-1970, by birth cohort: sample versus census data

Kampala

Birth Decade	Sample Males	Census Males	Sample Females	Census Females
1930-39	60%	36%	23%	7%
1940-49	69%	40%	43%	13%
1950-59	61%	46%	45%	21%
1960-69	65%	50%	48%	24%

Accra

Birth Decade	Sample Males	Census Males	Sample Females	Census Females
1920-29	80%	48%	22%	6%
1930-39	75%	53%	52%	12%
1940-49	74%	61%	48%	17%
1950-59	68%	57%	50%	20%

Note: The shares in formal work concern individuals aged 25-60 at the time of the census and include 8,698 men and 10,687 women born between 1924 and 1959 in Accra (Ghana) and 2,529 men and 2,577 women born between 1931 and 1966 in Kampala (Uganda). Individuals retired or in school were dropped in both cases. The estimated shares and gaps were obtained on the assumption that the work status at the time of the census was the same when the individual was 25 years of age. *Sources*: Ghana Statistical Services (1984); Uganda Bureau of Statistics (1991) accessed from Population Center. IPUMS International: Version 7.4 (2023).