Sex Roles (2017) 77:309–324
DOI 10.1007/s11199-016-0729-4

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Gender Ideology and Social Transformation: Using Mixed Methods to Explore Processes of Ideological Change and the Promotion of Women's Human Rights in Tanzania

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Published online: 11 January 2017

Abstract Despite growing international interest in policies and practices to enhance women's status and well-being in the Global South, ideological constraints to structural transformation and increasing opportunities available to women are widespread. There is thus considerable need to examine how ideological processes surrounding women's status and value can be challenged. In the current study we used mixed method analyses to examine a process of deideologization—the contestation and transformation of traditional ideology—among a group of Maasai women in northern Tanzania. First, thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative interviews conducted with 16 Maasai women. Themes involving traditional ideology, the value of popular education, and components of a deideologization process were identified and assessed. Second, quantitative structural equation modeling was used to test a process model connecting women's participation in popular education classes to increased political efficacy, decreased discomfort speaking at community meetings, and, in turn, deceased patriarchal beliefs about women. Overall, findings provided evidence for an iterative deideologization process catalyzed by popular education that led to improvements in women's lives. The importance of promoting processes of deideologization via locally driven efforts to improve the status and well-being of women are discussed.

Electronic supplementary material The online version of this article (doi:10.1007/s11199-016-0729-4) contains supplementary material, which is available to authorized users.

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Keywords Liberation psychology · Women's rights · Gender ideology · Popular education · Political participation · Mixed methods

> Grabe**:** If you knew I could only deliver one message about what it is like for Maasai women, what do you want me to tell the outside?
> Maasai Interviewee: This is what you should say, that women in this village are very much involved in leadership and they are struggling to fight for their rights and the rights of other women.

Over the past several decades there has been growing international interest in policies and practices to enhance the status and participation of women residing in the Global South (e.g., Beijing Platform for Action, Bunch and Fried 1996). Efforts to enhance women's political participation, in particular, have gained increasing urgency across the globe, in part, because women's political involvement was viewed as an indicator of women's human rights as outlined in the United Nations' Third Millennium Development Goal (Cornwall and Goetz 2005). Scholars suggest, however, that political contexts for women throughout the world predominately offer nominal support for their involvement and often do so without considering the gendered obstacles to participation that women confront (Grabe 2015; Mohanty 2007; White 1996). Moreover, although well-intentioned, many interventions employ a "rescue" narrative that inadvertently promotes and capitalizes on a traditional gender ideology that assumes local women are unable to confront injustice without outside help (Cornwall 2003). Limited opportunities for women's leadership and decision-making therefore often reflect and

perpetuate widespread gender inequities that are linked to traditional ideologies regarding women's capabilities (Forste and Fox 2012; Lachance-Grzela and Bouchard 2010; Treas and Tai 2016). Given that available opportunities for women's leadership are circumscribed by status, there is considerable need to examine how ideological processes surrounding women's value and status can be challenged, and, in turn, the role local women's political involvement plays in transforming ideological beliefs regarding women.

To conduct this examination, the current study explores a process of deideologization—the contestation and transformation of traditional ideology—among a group of Maasai women in northern Tanzania. The women involved are members of a women's organization, the Maasai Women's Development Organization (MWEDO), which is focused on promoting women's leadership and human rights through popular education classes. Using mixed methods analyses, we trace the ideological transformations women experienced through involvement in this education, as well as the related impact this has on women's status and lived experiences. We focus, in particular, on experiences related to education and public decision-making and how those experiences impact ideological perspectives.

Ideology and why it Matters

A necessary starting point for analyzing processes through which ideologies are challenged and transformed is an understanding of ideology itself. In its most basic sense, ideology refers to the relatively stable, consistent, and politically sophisticated belief systems that inform and organize individuals' worldviews (Allport 1962; Feldman and Johnston 2014). Often emphasizing a liberal to conservative continuum, this definition has served as the foundation from which much psychological research on ideology has been conceptualized (Jost et al. 2008).

Research on gender ideology, specifically, also maps on to a continuum whereby attitudes and beliefs regarding acceptable roles for women and men range from egalitarian to traditional (Korabik et al. 2008). Traditional gender ideologies in most societies are linked to social constructions that portray men as leaders or heads of households explaining, in part, why men are paid higher wages and hold the bulk of elected political offices (Paxton and Kunovich 2003). Women, in contrast, are relegated more frequently to the unpaid domestic sphere, often resulting in financial dependence on male partners and a higher susceptibility to intimate partner violence (Yllo and Straus 1990). Moreover, there is growing evidence linking institutionalized structural inequities to traditional gender ideology in a manner that directly relates to men's disproportionate power and control over women (Grabe 2010, 2012; Grabe et al. 2015). Furthermore, surveys and interviews conducted with diverse communities across five continents illustrate that gender ideology predicts a host of outcomes including marital satisfaction, acceptance of violence against women, and beliefs about women's effectiveness as political leaders (Dworkin et al. 2013; Forste and Fox 2012; Panayotova and Brayfield 1997; Treas and Tai 2016).

An alternative definition of ideology, with roots in Marxist social theory, further illustrates connections between ideology and social structure. From this tradition, ideology is a form of psychological propaganda and refers to a mechanism through which an existing social order is internalized as natural or optimal by individuals, and questions pertaining to who benefits most from the particular social arrangement are circumvented (Adorno 1967; Jost et al. 2008; Marx and Engels 1970). This definition underscores that human thought and behavior are not merely reflections of isolated individuals, but rather are produced through social norms and political narratives that are based on specific social and historical settings (Hammack and Pilecki 2012; Sampson 1981). Ideology therefore provides a lens into the cyclical process through which the values reflected in intuitions are filtered through the individual and subsequently reproduced through individuals' beliefs and actions (Nafstad et al. 2007).

Taking into account both definitions, ideology can simultaneously serve as a window into the perspectives and values that are necessary for maintaining a particular community's status quo and as an illustration of the actual belief system held by a particular person in that community. As such, for the remainder of the present paper we will utilize a contextualized definition of ideology that refers to beliefs and worldviews of individuals, but also takes into account the manner in which ideologies can function to maintain structural inequities that disadvantage women.

Liberation Psychology and Deideologization

Acute awareness of the ideological consequences of oppressive governments and colonialist policies encouraged psychologists working from the tradition of liberation psychology to seek an understanding of how ideologies that foster oppression can be transformed (Martín-Baró 1994; Montero 2007). Martín-Baró (1994) specifically called upon psychologists to focus on processes of deideologization in order to reduce the alienation of oppressed groups in matters related to knowledge and power (also see Jiménez-Domínguez 2009). Deideologization refers to a process whereby individuals develop an awareness of the structural factors that shape ideology and, subsequently, reconstruct their worldviews in a manner that rejects the dominant ideologies that justify social oppression (Montero 2007, 2009). Assessing how processes that deideologize traditional gender ideology develop and manifest may lead to an understanding of how opportunities for

women to participate in public decision-making and challenge violations of their rights emerge and are sustained.

Deideologization can be viewed as one component of a broader process called *conscientización* (Montero 2009). Education theorist Paulo Freire first introduced the concept of conscientización as a praxis in which individuals develop a critical consciousness surrounding their social and political realities and, through multiple iterations, evoke both analysis and action to seek more just realities (Burton and Kagan 2005; Freire 1972; Martín-Baró 1994). During his lifetime, Freire (1972) developed and encouraged the spread of popular education classes where members of marginalized communities could collectively and critically analyze everyday experiences, raise consciousness around injustice, and participate in political action to seek change (Gadotti 1994). In this manner, comprehensive transformation in ideology inherently is an iterative route, involving manifestations in both personal reflection and action. A deideologization process thus would entail reflection upon the structural roots of traditional ideology, as well as critical action that represents the desire for a more just experience.

Limited but growing research exists that demonstrates across diverse samples of women how conscientización has been associated with increasing awareness and intolerance of injustice and efforts to see these injustices rectified (Brodsky et al. 2012; Dutt and Grabe 2014; Grabe et al. 2014; Moane 2010). For example, Brodsky et al. (2012) found that Afghan women, mobilized within a revolutionary organization, utilized processes of critical reflection, intention, and action in community-based work aimed at women's rights. Additionally, Dutt and Grabe (2014) demonstrated how processes of conscientización supported and sustained life-long activism among three women in India, Nicaragua, and the United States. Given the growing interest in women's human rights broadly, exploring pointedly the role that deideologization plays in this process is critical to the promotion of gendered justice.

Researchers and community activists alike assert that change towards more equitable realities for women must involve transformations in both the public and private spheres. Empirical research in psychology has begun to highlight links between both domains and gender ideology. For example, a recent study illustrates that holding more traditional gender ideology is associated with lower levels of political participation among women affiliated with religious organizations (e.g., Cassese and Holman 2016, in the United States). Invoking the notion of sociopolitical development, Watts et al. (1999) illustrated that marginalized Black youth in the United States involved in a community organization gained ideological and practical skills to both critique existing racial inequalities and effectively use their voice in political bodies. Previous research also demonstrated links between holding more progressive gender ideology, having more control in marital relationships, and less receipt of domestic violence among women in rural Nicaragua who owned land (Grabe 2010). Taken together these findings suggest that educational opportunities that equip Maasai women with tools to participate in their communities may be linked to processes that promote the expression of more progressive ideology in domestic and political domains.

Gender Ideology and Feminism in Context

In order to understand a deideologization process among Maasai women, attention must be given to the foundations of gender ideology in context. Transnational feminists assert that colonial legacies and global economic exploitation influence the specific manifestations of gendered oppression in the Global South (Grabe and Else-Quest 2012; Lugones 2010; Mohanty 2007). Maasai, in particular, are a semi-nomadic indigenous group living predominantly in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. As with most societies worldwide, Maasai women are subordinate to men and are expected to listen to and obey their husbands (Hodgson 1999a). However, paralleling the history of numerous colonized regions, the current status of Maasai women is inextricably linked to histories of occupation (Grabe 2015; Lugones 2010). Over the past century, as colonists intervened in the political, economic, and social aspects of Maasai life, women as a group steadily lost political rights (Hodgson 1999a, b).

For example, during the early 1900s the British state system extended the authority of Maasai men over a newly emerging political domain. Specifically, development projects of the 1920s and 1930s, including imposed educational and religious interventions, established an important and enduring precedent that Maasai men, not women, were the target of intervention, disenfranchising women from their formerly overlapping rights (Hodgson 1999c). This process of disenfranchisement, as well as shifts in other structural inequities (such as property rights), had an enduring impact on gendered power relations in Maasai communities. Maasai men took advantage of the British neglect of women's rights to strengthen their own political authority, resulting in the devaluation of Maasai women (Hodgson 1999b). Currently established gender roles within Maasai communities reflect these hierarchies; for example, political leadership is typically viewed as a role for men, whereas women are viewed as subservient to men and predominately responsible for household and childrearing tasks (Hodgson 2011a).

Although predominant gender norms serve as obstacles to women's equitable participation, they are rejected or actively contested by many Maasai women (Grabe et al. 2014). In particular, in 2000, a group of local Maasai women formed MWEDO, a local NGO with goals to prioritize women's issues at the local level (Hodgson 2011b). Leaders within

MWEDO, in part influenced by the values and goals of Freire's (1972) popular education methods, developed educational classes for women aimed at shifting perceptions around the rights and roles of women in Maasai communities, thereby increasing women's capacities to participate in their communities. The classes offered by MWEDO also fit broader national goals within Tanzania to increase educational opportunities for female youth that had been eroded by international intervention, namely during British colonial rule and the educational counter-reform led by the World Bank during the 1980s (Mbilinyi 1998). Specifically, during the counter-reform national policies were put in place pushing for the privatization of schools, which exacerbated gender disparities in access to education and led to decreases in pedagogical techniques and content associated with consciousness raising (Mbilinyi 1998). Within this context, MWEDO developed with the intention to address the educational consequences that arose for women.

Tanzanian feminist scholars have introduced the paradigm of transformative feminism for understanding how oppression and change can occur in various manifestations of discrimination (Kitunga and Mbilinyi 2006). For example, a core tenet of transformative feminism is the belief that change must arise in both the public (e.g., women as community leaders or public decision-makers) and the private (e.g., negotiation of power and control with male partners) spheres of women's lives (Kitunga and Mbilinyi 2006). Because changes that enhance women's status in both domains are essential, ideological shifts regarding women's worth and capacities are inherently linked to these goals. Examining the experiences of women involved in a grassroots initiative aimed at challenging traditional ideology can provide needed insight into processes that are linked to transformative change for women, as well as the iterative nature in which social structures and gender ideology relate to one another.

The Present Study

In the present study we examine how and why participation in popular education classes offered by MWEDO may drive a process of deideologization that involves both reflection and action related to the status and treatment of women in their communities. We specifically explore the connection between women's participation in MWEDO classes and the perceptions and experiences women have related to women's political participation. Finally, we assess how these perspectives and experiences relate to particular ideological beliefs about appropriate roles, opportunities, and treatment of women.

Consistent with calls by transformative Tanzanian feminists, we employed a mixed methods approach to gain a more complete understanding of women's experiences as they related to involvement in popular education and processes of deideologization (Kitunga and Mbilinyi 2006). Additionally, despite disciplinary trends within psychology to identify causal relationships between events or stimuli that occur in an environment and their impact on individuals, our interest in documenting social change involved assessing processes that may be reciprocal or iterative rather than causal. More specifically, structures and opportunities that serve to challenge traditional ideologies about the capabilities of women may encourage women's involvement in actions and domains from which they have been barred historically. As a result, involvement in these activities may foster more egalitarian worldviews about the opportunities that should be available to women and the manner in which women should be perceived and treated both in their homes and communities. Because a process of deideologization likely involves multiple iterations of change, evidenced in personal reflection and action, we used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to discern the mechanisms and scope through which the process occurs.

First, qualitative analyses were used to gain subjective understanding of women's experiences in their homes and communities, in particular as they related to involvement in MWEDO's popular education classes. The specific questions guiding the qualitative analysis were: Did women's ideologies about gender transform by involvement in MWEDO's classes? And, if so, how did transformations in ideology manifest in women's reflections and actions? Overarching patterns in the ways women expressed that their own or other women's lives had been impacted by involvement in educational opportunities were identified and used to inform the development of a hypothesized model to be tested via quantitative analyses. Thus, building upon the insights gained from the qualitative analyses, we used the quantitative analyses to test how involvement in MWEDO's classes related to various expressions of gender ideology, via examples of critical actions and reflections related to political participation that reflected themes described in the interviews.

The specific questions guiding the quantitative portion were: Did involvement in popular education classes relate to women's sense of political efficacy and comfort speaking in political spaces? And, in turn, did involvement in political processes impact women's ideological beliefs about gender in public and private domains, specifically as they related to acceptance of husbands' use of physical violence to discipline wives, beliefs about appropriate rights and roles for women, and beliefs that women could be political leaders? The use of mixed methods was employed both for triangulation and complementarity, with the intent of developing a comprehensive understanding of how deideologizing processes develop and manifest (Hesse-Biber 2016). The overarching goal of the current investigation was to gain deep understanding of the iterative manner in which ideology and structure influence one another as they relate to creating a transformative context for women.

Method: Overview

In this section we detail information about the setting and procedures that are relevant to both the qualitative and quantitative methods and analyses. In the following sections we explain additional information that pertains specifically to the particular type of data analysis, followed by the respective results. All data were collected in June and July of 2013, in three different Maasai communities in northern Tanzania through collaboration with MWEDO. MWEDO specifically advocates for women's rights and well-being in areas including poverty in pastoral communities, illiteracy, gender norms, and property ownership. Up until recently, it was the norm within Maasai communities that only male children attend formal schooling. As a result, many women did not learn skills that were essential for navigating life outside Maasai communities or for participating outside the domestic sphere. In particular, many girls grew up learning only the language spoken by Maasai (Maa) without opportunity to learn Swahili, the national language of Tanzania taught to boys in schools. Within MWEDO's popular education classes, women learn how to communicate in Swahili in addition to learning information about their rights as women.

Data collected for the present study are part of an ongoing research partnership between the second author and the collaborating organization that involves assessing how Maasai women are impacted by emerging structural changes within their communities, although none of the data from this time wave has been published previously (see Dutt et al. 2015; Grabe 2015; Grabe et al. 2015). The research questions and study design were generated using a critical communicative methodology whereby an egalitarian dialogue between the researchers and members of MWEDO was viewed as central to conducting research that contributes to transforming social contexts and improving the lives of Maasai women (Goméz et al. 2010).

Method: Qualitative

Qualitative Procedure

Following guidelines for qualitative interviewing, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 16 of the 221 women who completed the quantitative survey (Francis et al. 2010). (Our semi-structured interview schedule is available as an online supplement.) Specific women were targeted with the intention of ensuring variability in the women's age, the village where they resided, and whether or not they participated in MWEDO's popular education classes (see Table 1). Women interviewed were from all three communities, ranged in age from their 20s to their 80s, with the majority (69%, n = 11) having participated in some classes. The interviews consisted of questions asking women about their daily experiences, their relationships with their husbands, their perspectives on rights and opportunities available to women in their households and communities, and their involvement in different opportunities offered by MWEDO. Women were also asked about the dominant perspectives on topics including women's political participation and appropriate rights and opportunities for women held in their community. If women did not offer their opinions on these topics, probing questions were asked to seek pointed insight into women's subjective perspective. Once saturation was achieved, the interviews ceased (Francis et al. 2010). The interviews took place in women's homes and were conducted in Maa with the aid of an interpreter who was trained in the ethics of research and the goals of the study, and they lasted 50 min on average.

Qualitative Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data (Braun and Clarke 2006). First, both authors independently read all of the interviews searching for overarching patterns and themes within the data. Extensive notes were taken throughout, and independent lists of codes were developed. Both authors then met to discuss the initial codes and determine a unified list of codes. Next, four interviews were randomly selected and were independently coded by both authors using the unified list in order to determine full refinement of the codes. Codes were discussed and refined until both authors agreed upon the meaning captured by each code. Upon developing the completed coding scheme, consensus coding was used to analyze all 16 interviews (Ahrens 2006). This involved both authors independently coding each of the interviews and then meeting to compare results. Any disagreements were discussed until consensus was met. The codes upon which we focus include traditional gender ideology, education as a catalyst for deideologization, and two components of a deideologization process: critical reflection and critical action. For a brief overview of each theme, its coding definition, a prototypical example, and its frequency across interviews, see Table 2.

Results: Qualitative

First, findings provided insight into the manner in which traditional gender ideology operates within the women's lives, in both family and community contexts. Analysis of the interviews also suggested that involvement in the popular education classes offered by MWEDO facilitated a deideologizing process for women. Specifically, descriptions regarding how women were impacted by involvement in MWEDO yielded insight into how education can facilitate transformative experiences for women who are involved and can catalyze critical

Table 1 Interviewed participants' characteristics

ID #	Village	Age	Participant in Mwedo's popular education classes?
7	Kimokowa	40s	Yes
404	Engarenaibor	40s	Yes
448	Engarenaibor	30s	No
451	Engarenaibor	50s	Yes
456	Engarenaibor	20s	No
502	Kimokowa	50s	Yes
526	Kimokowa	50s	Yes
540	Kimokowa	50s	Yes
556	Kimokowa	30s	No
601	Kimokowa	30s	Yes
700	Eorendeke	80s	Yes
706	Eorendeke	30s	Yes
720	Eorendeke	70s	No
721	Eorendeke	20s	No
771	Eorendeke	40s	Yes
784	Eorendeke	20s	Yes

Because Maasai recognize age based on age "sets" rather than exact years, the reported ages are approximate

reflection and action among women that challenge traditional ideology. Below we provide an overview of the themes, and we identify examples related to these processes.

Traditional Gender Ideology

Throughout the interviews women described how traditional attitudes and beliefs about gender both threatened the status and value of women and served as obstacles to their participation in decision-making. For example, the fact that men had more authoritative power was frequently articulated by many of the women interviewed, emphasizing the extent to which the belief that women have less status and value pervaded gender ideology within the community. Although many women explained that they would prefer to have greater opportunity to participate in decision-making within their families, gender norms linked to traditional gender ideology facilitated a context in which women could be disciplined by their husbands if they sought to challenge norms. For example, the following conversation with one interviewee exemplifies how traditional gender ideology operated within a family context:

> Grabe: Who makes decisions in the family? Is it the women or the men?
> ID 523: Men.
> Grabe: Do you ever wish you could make those decisions that men make?
> ID 523: Yes, I do wish.
> Grabe: What would happen if you tried to make those decisions?
> ID 523: If you go ahead and just make a decision like a man you'll be in trouble. You'll be beaten because you don't have that authority to make such decisions.

In the manner described by this woman, men are afforded hegemonic power over women and are positioned with the capacity to further define women's roles and value within the community. Despite understanding and observing this norm, many women interviewed did not agree with the existing social arrangement and wished for a different situation in which women's perspectives and desires could be actualized.

An excerpt from an interview with another woman demonstrates the manner in which perceptions around the lack of women's status and value extends into the public sphere and highlights the link between social structure and gender ideology:

> [Men] do not really value women, it's the truth even here and that's why I'm saying "women should own land," because men are unreliable because they do not value women. …They do not see women as people. The only time men see women as people is in the government. It's a requirement that women are in the village government... So that's why I'm saying [women] should own land because men are unreliable…Once you have land and you know how to protect that land, then a man will value you because there is no way he can take that away from you. (ID 706)

In a matter-of-fact manner, this woman makes clear that the devaluing of women is not limited to decision-making in the

Table 2 Summary of themes

Theme	Description	Example	Frequency
Traditional gender ideology	Instances where women describe traditionally held beliefs about the capabilities of women and men in Maasai communities.	"Massai people do not think that women can really do something, so that can be a reason [people don't vote for women] they might just discourage and make sure that you don't get that post." (ID 451)	21
Education	Instances where women articulate why education, especially gaining knowledge about rights, power, and inequality, is valuable.	"We've come to see that education is something that is very helpful...We need girls to go to school and accept it like we do for boys...[when girls go to school] girls can get married to anyone they want." (ID 540)	33
Deideologization:			
Critical reflection	Instances where women critique existing structures, express dissatisfaction with an existing structure, or articulate positive outcomes associated with change.	"Women owning cattle would help [improve women's lives] because now men are the ones who are in control of cattle and that's why they can sell them and go drink. If I have cattle I own as well, I can sell it or I can skip struggling and give my cattle. I wouldn't touch his cattle and he should not touch mine." (ID 720)	28
Critical action	Instances where women describe engaging in some sort of transformative action or effort to produce change (in her own life or in the community).	"There was a men in our [working group] who was not listening to women… they've been there for a long time…but the women talked we threw him out of the group." (ID 720)	20

household, but rather captures the way women are perceived by men within the community at large. She acutely articulates the link between social structures (e.g., land ownership and political participation) and the status and value of women in her community. She similarly recognizes that the status of women who hold public political positions affords them respect and value that is not granted to the majority of women in general. As a consequence, she proposes challenging the gendered norms surrounding male property ownership, noting that a structural shift that enables women to own land would increase the value and respect attributed to women. Overall, many women recognized that transforming exclusive structures in a manner that disrupted men's hegemony in upholding and reinforcing traditional gender ideology could increase the value and opportunity afforded to women in their communities.

Education as a Catalyst for Deideologization

The second theme captures the transformative change women associated with participating in education, predominantly the popular education classes offered through MWEDO. Consistent with the potential for structural change to elicit shifts in gender ideology, opening opportunities for women to participate in education was associated with expanding the possible roles and awareness of rights available to women. The motivations for women to participate in MWEDO classes were often linked to the dissatisfaction women had expressed with the manner that traditional ideology left them marginalized. For example, one woman shared why she desired participating in MWEDO's classes:

> ID 404: I want to learn many things. I want to learn business, I want to learn my rights as a woman… and I want to know how to go places and not ask for anybody's help.
> Grabe: What do you mean your rights as a woman? Can you explain that to me?
> ID 404: The right to be listened to, the right to make a decision with my husband, the right to get to decide where to take my children for medication. Those are the rights I am talking about.

Many women expressed that information learned in the classes would equip them with skills to participate in the public sphere and navigate life outside their families. For example, one woman who was currently participating in classes explained that gaining the ability to read and communicate in Swahili enhanced her capacity to independently navigate life outside Maasai communities: "I can take [my kids] to the hospitals myself…[Before] if I went to a big hospital in Arusha I wouldn't be able to read that this is the hospital itself" (ID 706). Furthermore, women were aware that involvement in education was associated with gaining knowledge about women's rights that could be useful for changing the way women, in general, were perceived and treated. Another woman reflected on changes she had observed in the community as a result of emerging opportunities for women and girls to go to school: "The great change I see is through education. Some girls have gone to school

and have managed to teach their own husband. The girls that go to school, they're independent of men … they know their rights so men are really careful now" (ID 601).

Interviewees overwhelmingly felt that creating opportunities for women to participate in education could transform the experiences of women in empowering ways. The knowledge gained through educational opportunities positions women as agentic, increasing their ability to participate in their communities and challenging traditional ideologies about women's capacities and value. In this way, education serves as a catalyst for deideologization, evoking an iterative cycle of working to create broader change for women.

Deideologization: Critical Reflection and Action

As we described in the introduction, a process of deideologization will unfold both in critical reflections on the nature of inequality and in critical actions intended to evoke changes that would effectively improve women's lives. Within the interviews, women described strategies they employed to work for equitable change for women that illustrate manifestations of a deideologization process. For example, different points of a conversation with one woman demonstrate how action and reflection built upon each other to create broader and deeper change for women. In illustrating the process, this woman described strategic actions women employed to ensure women's voices were taken into account during community meetings:

> ID 700: It is not acceptable for men to call their own meeting at the government level without involving women. We [women] know that and they [men] know that so they call us [to attend]. Even at the village level, the women must be in the meetings. The women talk and if the men try to push something that is not beneficial to the women, they [women] refuse. They say "we do not want this" and if the men persist we just refuse to do everything else until they come to accept what the women want as well.
> Grabe: What things can you refuse to do?
> ID 700: This is what we do, we give our view that this is not good for women and if men do not take the views into consideration, it means we go our separate ways. We tell them to go and do things on their own which we know they can't because it's not acceptable by the law.

In this example, the woman is critically reflecting on her awareness of the disconnection between formal law and the manners in which traditional ideology continues to influence inequity in women's political participation. In the absence of knowledge regarding women's rights legally, women could not take critical action. Without critical action, women's political involvement would still be at the margins, even with laws that are meant to protect them. With knowledge of women's rights that are gained through the classes, and the consequent critical reflection upon the root sources of the disconnection between laws and practices, women are positioned to engage in critical actions to challenge inequity. This example illustrates how knowledge, reflection, and action are all part of the process of creating change that deideologizes traditional gender ideology.

An excerpt from later within the interview with the same woman further illustrates how critical reflection regarding women's political participation is used to understand means to further disrupt traditional gendered processes in an iterative manner. Specifically, through reflection she links women's abilities to participate in community meetings with their capacity to leverage more power in their own homes:

> Grabe: For the women who attend meetings, do they speak more freely with their husbands?
> ID 700: Yes.
> Grabe: Why is it like that? Why is that women who attend meetings can—
> ID 700: It's different, if you are able to talk to many men, talking to one man would be easier. Those that do not go to meetings and do not talk in front of those many people can actually be afraid of talking even to that one.
> Grabe: And for you with your husband, has being a leader changed your relationship with your husband?
> ID 700: Yeah he values me, he listens to what I have to say, he lets me go to meetings so he understands my position.

This quote suggests that political participation allows women to exercise their rights as capable decision-makers with perspectives that are worthy of consideration. Through gaining the efficacy that comes from addressing men publicly, some women became increasingly more comfortable asserting their voices with their husbands. In this way, the critical act of speaking at public meetings paved a path for continued critical reflection and action directed toward transforming communication dynamics between women and their husbands.

Several other women described critical actions taken to interrupt traditional gender ideology, including seeking opportunities to own land or other property, recruiting other women to participate in MWEDO, and voting for female political leaders. For example, when asked if she ever voted for women to be community leaders one woman shared, "Yes, I don't even sleep that night when there's one to be voted for" (ID 451]), with her excitement reflecting the importance of this decision. Many other women also critically reflected on

structural inequalities by explaining that girls who attended school would be able to break the traditional norms, where fathers choose the husbands of their daughters, because education would enhance their status and afford them the right to choose their own husbands. In nearly all the interviews, actions and reflections built upon each other and were used to challenge traditional gender ideology and produce new perspectives on the status, value, and capabilities of women.

Overall, qualitative findings revealed that through participating in educational opportunities, women gained valuable knowledge and skills, which facilitated a process of growing ideological contestation and transformation. Building upon these findings, in the next section we use quantitative analyses to compare the experiences of women who had participated in MWEDO's education classes to a group of women who had not participated in the classes. Our goals were to identify the scope of the links identified in the qualitative portion and to test a process that connects educational opportunities for women with women's political participation and ideological transformation.

Method: Quantitative

Participants

The 221 women in the current study were randomly selected from a list of 342 women who were participating members of the collaborating organization, MWEDO. All women approached to be interviewed consented to participate. Of the participants, 158 had participated in the adult education classes, and 63 had not. All but one of the women interviewed in the sample were married. The average age of the respondents in each group was mid-40s, with the majority of the women between 30 and 50. On average, women across the groups had five children. Few of the respondents in the full sample self-identified as literate (18%, $n = 40$), and approximately 80% ($n = 177$) of the full sample never attended formal schooling. There were no significant differences between participants in MWEDO classes and non-participants on relationship status, age, number of children, history of formal schooling, or literacy rates. Because landownership and ownership of cattle are factors that could relate to women's status and ideological perspectives, potential differences in land and cattle ownership were also considered. Roughly one third of the women owned land ($n = 82$), with participants of the popular education classes significantly more likely to be landowners (66, 41.8%, MWEDO class participants; 16, 25.4%, non-participants). There were no significant differences in the number of cattle owned between participants of the popular education classes ($M = 6.43$, $SD = 7.23$) and non-participants ($M = 8.14$, $SD = 14.06$), $t(218) = 1.16$, $p = .249$.

Design and Procedure

To conduct the quantitative portion of the current study, a local research team consisting of a male driver and ten female interviewers was hired and trained in accordance with the field procedures and guidelines on ethics and safety developed by the WHO for conducting violence research in "developing" countries (Ellsberg and Heise 2005). The survey was developed through collaboration with a local research team, members of the collaborating organization, and the second author. Surveys were written in English, translated to Swahili, and then orally translated to Maa by members of the interview team. The survey was then back translated to ensure accuracy in translation and piloted to check for cultural appropriateness. Because Maa is not a written language and literacy rates among women are quite low in the region, the survey was orally administered in Maa by the research team. Additionally, consistent with previous research conducted in remote areas where literacy rates are low, the complexity of a scaled response proved difficult for pilot respondents to understand (Ellsberg and Heise 2005; Grabe 2010). Consequently, items involving Likert responses were asked dichotomously, as indicated in the measures described in the following. Because of this format, we could not calculate internal consistency reliabilities for these measures.

To administer the survey, the interviewers arrived at women's homes and explained that they were conducting a study with researchers from the United States on women's life experiences in Maasailand. Once women agreed to participate (all did), the interviewers read the informed consent which explained that all responses would be kept confidential, that names would not be attached to responses on the surveys, and that only an aggregate of women's responses would be disseminated. Surveys were conducted in private spaces in the interviewees' homes and the interviewer administered the survey using the structured questionnaire. As part of the interview protocol, women were assured that they could skip any questions they did not wish to answer. Surveys lasted on average one hour. Participants were compensated with gifts of tea and sugar for their participation.

Measures

Demographic and Background Information

Sociodemographic data included participants' age, educational background, literacy, whether or not they were married, number of children, whether or not they owned land, and the number of cattle they owned. Women also were asked whether or not they had ever participated in the adult education classes offered by MWEDO. Women who had participated in the classes were coded 1 and women who had not were coded 0.

Political Efficacy

Four items from Zimmerman and Zahniser's (1991) Sociopolitical Control Scale were selected, based on cultural relevance, to measure women's perceptions about their abilities to effectively influence political decisions in their communities These items were: "Do you consider yourself to be well qualified to participate in politics?," "Do you believe that you have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing your community?," "Do you believe you could do as good a job in public office as most other people?," and "Do you believe that you are better informed about politics and government than most people?". Participants replied with yes (coded 1) or no (0) responses. Responses were summed to yield an overall measure of political efficacy wherein higher scores indicated stronger efficacy.

Discomfort Speaking at Meetings

Participants were asked if any of the following concerns made them uncomfortable publicly speaking at political meetings: "the presence of men," "not knowing anything," "fear of being beaten by her husband afterward," "that it is not a woman's place to speak at meetings," "not understanding the topic well," and "not being comfortable with the language." A sum of affirmative answers was taken as an index of greater discomfort.

Acceptance of Partner Discipline

To assess agreement with traditional gender norms that include the use of physical violence for disciplining wives, women were asked if any of the following were situations in which in which it would be appropriate for a man to hit his wife: "if she does not complete her household work to his satisfaction," "if she made an error regarding livestock," "if she disobeys or disrespects him," "if she refuses to have sex with him," "if she asks him whether he has other lovers," "if he suspects she has a lover," and "if he finds out that she has a lover." A sum of affirmative answers was taken as an index of greater acceptance of partner discipline.

Traditional Gender Ideology

Ten items chosen from the Gender Beliefs Scale and the Gender Norm Attitudes Scale of the Compendium of Gender Scales were selected based on cultural relevance to assess adherence to traditional gender ideology (Nanda 2011). The compendium consists of several identified scales that measure adherence to gender ideologies and norms in various international contexts. Higher scores reflect more subordinate views of women (i.e., greater adherence to patriarchal beliefs about gender). Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with items such as "A man should have the final word about decisions in the home," and "It is important that sons have more education than daughters."

Belief Women Can Be Leaders

Participants were asked if women were (yes/no) capable of holding each of the following leadership positions: an appointed leader within community governance, an elected leader within community governance, a traditional leader (i.e., a person responsible for ensuring and maintaining cultural norms), and a leader of a women's group. A sum of affirmative answers was taken to represent a stronger belief that women can be leaders.

Results: Quantitative

Preliminary Analyses

Tests of normality of all variables did not indicate need for transformation. We used sample size recommendations from Bentler and Chou (1987) to inform our considerations of the sample. Bentler and Chou recommend a 5:1 and 10:1 ratio of participants to parameters for path analysis. Our sample of 221 participants to assess 12 hypothesized parameters thus modestly exceeded this ratio (18:1). Due to sample size and insufficient power, in structural equation analyses we were unable to test a fully moderated mediated model. Because differences in whether one owned land were significant between the two groups of women, landowner status was controlled for in subsequent analyses.

Comparing Education Participants to Non-Participants

A multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was run to compare group differences between education participants and non-participants among the proposed process and outcome variables: political efficacy, discomfort speaking at meetings, acceptance of partner discipline, traditional gender ideology, and belief that women can be leaders. Landownership was included as a covariate. The omnibus test was significant, $F(2, 199) = 3.20$, $p < .001$. Results of univariate tests can be found in Table 3. As can be seen from the table, significant differences between the two groups were found for levels of political efficacy, $F(2, 185) = 9.03$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = .48$, discomfort speaking, $F(2, 185) = 3.50$, $p = .05$, Cohen's $d = -.29$, and traditional gender ideology, $F(2, 185) = 4.22$, $p = .04$, Cohen's $d = -.27$, with all mean differences in the expected directions such that participants scored more favorably than non-participants. However, no significant differences were found for acceptance of partner discipline,

Table 3 Descriptive statistics and correlations among all study variables for participants and non-participants in popular education classes

Variables	Participants in popular education classes (n = 158) M (SD)	Non-participants (n = 63) M (SD)	Correlations				
			1	2	3	4	5
1. Political efficacy	.65 (.30)$_a$	.50 (.32)$_b$	-	.01	.13	-.01	.05
2. Discomfort speaking	.38 (.65)$_a$	.59 (.75)$_b$	-13	-	.07	.18	-.28*
3. Acceptance of partner discipline	4.99 (1.29)$_a$	5.07 (1.18)$_a$	.15	.14	-	.23	.14
4. Traditional gender ideology	.42 (.19)$_a$	.47 (.17)$_b$	.20*	.19*	.35**	-	-.26
5. Belief women can be leaders	2.30 (.77)$_a$	2.22 (.90)$_a$	.16*	-.02	.09	-.03	-

Land is included as a covariate. Means with different subscripts are significantly different ($p \leq .05$). Correlations below the diagonal are for participants in the popular education classes and correlations above the diagonal are for non-participants

*$p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

$F(2, 185) = .28$, $p = .63$, Cohen's $d = -.06$, or belief that women can be leaders, $F(2, 185) = .54$, $p = .46$, Cohen's $d = .10$.

Education Classes and Ideological Transformation

For our final set of analyses, we sought to test the hypothesis that participation in the workshops would be linked indirectly to the proposed outcome variables representing ideological transformation, namely acceptance of partner discipline, traditional gender ideology, and belief that women can be leaders, via political efficacy and discomfort speaking at political meetings. Although the direction of the relationships cannot be discerned from the proposed pathways, the order of the variables was hypothesized, in part, based upon the findings from the qualitative analyses. Specifically, we viewed political efficacy as a possible example of critical reflection and speaking at community meetings as representing critical action. We therefore predicted that these experiences would occur as a result of being involved in a popular education classes for adults. Subsequently, building upon the notion that ideological change is iterative, we predicted that engagement in critical reflection and action would be linked to ideological transformations among women, as reflected in less acceptance of partner discipline, less adherence to traditional patriarchal gender ideology, and greater belief that women could be leaders.

The hypothesized model was estimated using AMOS 4.0 structural equation modeling software (Arbuckle and Wothke 1999). Multiple fit indices were used as guides to evaluate goodness-of-model fit: Chi square goodness-of-fit statistics, the normed fit index (NFI; Bentler and Bonett 1980), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA). A satisfactory fit is indicated by a non-significant Chi-square or a Chi-square lower than double the degrees of freedom, CFI value greater than .95 (Hu and Bentler 1999), and an RMSEA value lower than .08 (Steiger 1990).

Although the hypothesized model provided a good fit to the data, that is, $\chi^2(8) = 5.10$, $p = .75$ (CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00), a number of non-significant pathways were identified. In particular, political efficacy was not correlated with acceptance of partner discipline or with traditional gender ideology. Discomfort speaking at meetings was not correlated with a belief that women could be leaders. Additionally, a belief that women could be leaders was not correlated with traditional gender ideology or acceptance of partner discipline. The lack of identified relationships between political efficacy and both acceptance of partner discipline and traditional gender ideology is likely due to the fact that political efficacy captures beliefs about women's capabilities that occur in the public sphere, whereas both partner discipline and traditional gender ideology largely reflect perceptions related to the private sphere. Additionally, discomfort speaking and belief women could be leaders likely did not relate to one another because discomfort speaking assesses the subjective experience of an individual woman, whereas beliefs about the potential for women to be leaders assesses beliefs about the capabilities of women broadly.

Taking into account these findings, a new model was constructed that accounted for these non-significant pathways (see Fig. 1). As predicted, participating in the popular education classes was related to higher levels of political efficacy and less discomfort speaking at meetings. Higher levels of political efficacy related to a greater belief that women could be leaders. Additionally, lower levels of discomfort speaking related to both less acceptance of partner discipline and traditional gender ideology. Results of the path model demonstrated that this model provided good fit to the data, $\chi^2(13) = 13.89$, $p = .38$ (CFI = .98, RMSEA = .02).

To test explicitly whether participating in the popular education classes was indirectly related to ideological transformation, tests of indirect effects were analyzed using bootstrapping procedures with 5000 resamples as recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008). Results from these tests provided significant support for the indirect effect of

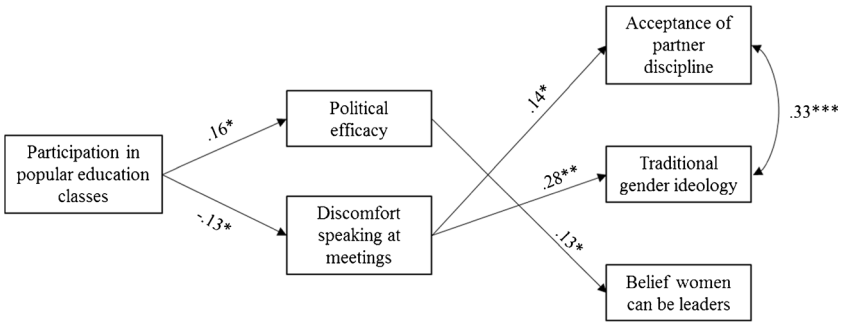

Fig. 1 Model demonstrating significant pathways associated with participating in educational classes (n = 221). Values are standardized beta weights. *p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001

popular education classes on belief women can be leaders via political efficacy (B = .04, 95% CI [.003, .112]). Because the absence of zero in the confidence intervals reflects that there is a significant indirect effect present, this finding suggests that women's involvement in the popular education classes was associated with greater belief in women's abilities to be leaders, in part, because of women's own levels of political efficacy. Findings also demonstrated significant indirect relationships linking participation in the popular education classes with acceptance of partner discipline (B = −.05, 95% CI [−.149, −.001]) traditional gender ideology via discomfort speaking (B = −.01, 95% CI [−.029, −.001]). Overall the quantitative findings provide further evidence of the existence of a deideologizing process that is catalyzed through popular education for women and that relates to transformation in beliefs about the appropriate treatment, roles, and capabilities of women.

Discussion

In a globalized world where increasing attention is given to women's human rights and political participation, identifying and understanding local processes that disrupt traditional gender ideology and challenge violations of women's rights is essential. As illustrated in the current study, Maasai women in Tanzania who affiliated with a women's organization identified a number of factors related to traditional attitudes and beliefs surrounding gender that both threatened their status and served as obstacles to their full participation in society. It is therefore imperative to understand how local practices can facilitate the contestation and transformation of traditional gender ideology. The findings from the current study suggested that popular education offered through a local grassroots organization was related to an iterative process of critical reflection and action in which women reconstructed their worldviews toward the rejection of ideology that justified their oppression and in favor of beliefs and attitudes that affirmed women's rights and capabilities. Thus, overall our study provided valuable insight into processes that can support social justice for women.

The combined use of qualitative and quantitative methods added strength to these findings. The qualitative data allowed us to examine specific ways in which education was a catalyst for deideologization. In particular, interviews with women allowed us to examine women's understanding of traditional gender ideology *prior* to participation in popular education. Although not rejecting gender roles entirely, none of the women interviewed actively defended traditional ideology, and the majority of women were clear that the hegemonic power afforded to men over women limited women's value within the community and threatened their capacity for decision-making. The critical reflection and action that women connected to their participation in popular education underscored that the knowledge gained through educational opportunities was associated with expanding the rights and roles of women, specifically in ways that afforded women greater capacity to participate in private and public decision-making.

The quantitative data lent support to these findings by demonstrating that popular education indirectly transformed several attitudes and beliefs about gender, namely lowering acceptance of partner discipline, reducing traditional gender ideology, and enhancing the belief that women can be leaders, precisely because it had an effect on women's perceptions and experience of participating in political decisions in their communities. Interestingly, in the quantitative model political efficacy did not correlate with acceptance of partner discipline or traditional gender ideology, and discomfort speaking at meetings did not correlate with a belief that women could be leaders. In noting that acceptance of partner discipline or traditional gender ideology capture ideological beliefs predominantly associated with the private sphere, whereas belief that women could be leaders assesses ideological beliefs about the role of women in the public sphere, these findings shed interesting light on routes to transformation in both spheres. More specifically, having less discomfort speaking at meetings was associated with more progressive ideological beliefs about women's rights and roles in the private sphere, and higher levels of political efficacy was associated with more progressive beliefs about the capabilities of women in the public domain. United with the qualitative results, these findings underscore the role and necessity of iterative processes in promoting more comprehensive transformation. Overall, the

complimentary set of results provides a lens for understanding how and why deideologization is an important element both in understanding and facilitating change.

Additionally, the use of mixed methods analyses allowed us to examine the iterative nature of processes of social change, an area of critical importance to feminist psychologists yet one that can be obscured through the use of one method alone. A goal of psychologists, and social scientists more broadly, is often to determine causal relationships between events or other stimuli that occur in an environment and their effect on specific individuals or populations. This is a challenge for anyone working outside an experimental paradigm because of the frequent difficulty in isolating and manipulating the events and variables of interest. Additional challenges emerge for psychologists seeking to document social change because the processes are likely reciprocal and iterative rather than purely causal. For example, the literature on women's rights and empowerment often makes change appear more simplistic than it is because the methodology and designs often give the illusion of the processes being cleaner than they are by focusing only on outcomes. By utilizing a mixed method approach, we were able to examine how ideological messages are discussed in a popular education space, how the critical reflection that was developed and/or nurtured in that space impacted action, and how the link between these steps in turn deideologized several aspects of gender ideology. Although in most examples education appeared to be the catalyst, our findings suggested that the relationship between critical reflection and action was indeed iterative, whereby, for example, the belief that women could be leaders (which was an outcome in the quantitative model) may in fact serve as a driver for some women to attend political meetings where they would traditionally not have been comfortable (evidenced in the qualitative findings).

Practice Implications

Given the inflated focus on international organizations, such as the World Bank, that are intending to address areas of global concern including women's empowerment, the legitimacy of African or majority-world women's projects are often ignored or called into question in favor of large Western donor projects. Nevertheless, African feminists and advocates for women's rights call for projects that are rooted in the intersections of colonial and neoliberal structures that seek to challenge how forms of patriarchy are embedded in global economic systems (of which the World Bank, for example, plays a role; Wanyaki 2007). Projects of this nature would involve women challenging sexist discrimination in their own communities on their own terms, in part by asserting the right to be an active participant of change in those communities by reclaiming interpretations of cultural norms.

One manner in which this can happen is via popular education. Many popular education efforts derive from the foundational work of Paulo Freire (1972) where social change educators challenge social, economic, and political injustices that exist locally. Unlike other forms of social change education or critical pedagogy, that are often practiced in the West, popular education arose from the lived experience of working with groups denied access to resources and power. Relatedly, in popular education, it is likely that the vision for social change is shared by facilitators and participants who understand processes of oppression, exclusion, or marginalization. In the current study, popular education classes were administered autonomously (non-governmentally) by a Maasai women's organization to advance a gender and human rights agenda from *within* Tanzania. Although the Maasai women involved in the current study locate multiple social positions (e.g., staff of an NGO, interviewers living in an urban context, participants living on a reservation), they all shared an understanding of women's human rights at the intersections of colonial, neoliberal, and patriarchal practices.

Given these considerations, when working with oppressed, excluded, or marginalized groups, it is important that the social change vision is shared by participants and facilitators—rather than having outside facilitators who are performing an intervention for an external group. Furthermore, a significant factor to consider with popular education interventions is whether the social change vision of the pedagogy furthers the interests of the participants specifically, or whether it furthers the interests of the interventionists by supporting a separate vision and set of goals. In other words, although complex intersubjectivity of any of the participants may be inevitable, the motives arising among Maasai women in Tanzania are likely to be inherently different from Western development interests. In many international projects, development practitioners and interventionists are coming from the West and are part of a dominant group that, by the nature of power, benefits from unjust social relations. Our recommendations for practitioners and interventionists is that popular education interventions should be (a) local, (b) rooted in real interests and struggles of ordinary people, (c) overtly political and critical of the status quo, and (d) committed to progressive social and political change in the interests of a fairer and more egalitarian society (Choules 2007). Moreover, resources that support these changes should be administered to local, rather than international, organizations.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the large ground swell of women working from a bottom-up process to rectify injustices in their communities, in ways similar to those documented in this manuscript, there is a lack of empirical evidence backing local women's efforts toward change. There is an abundance of indicators of

empowerment, as established by the World Bank or United Nations (Else-Quest and Grabe 2012), however, these indices provide little by way of evidence regarding transformation of oppressive *systems* and the liberation of those oppressed. The findings from the current study bring the transformative potential of Tanzanian feminist analyses together with strategies of grassroots advocates and provide strong support for future research taking an activist/scholar approach rooted in African Feminism by linking struggles and challenges locally, rather than by taking a Western approach rooted in development (Mbilinyi 2007).

Nonetheless, a limitation of the current research is that it does not capture the ideological beliefs and actions of those situated with the power to enforce restrictions on women's abilities to exercise agency and realization of rights. Future research should thus seek to explore the gendered beliefs and potential deideologization processes that occur within men as a result of community driven efforts towards change. Additionally, although not the particular focus of our paper, the qualitative findings hinted at how these processes may have their greatest impact generationally, with daughters of mothers who engage in critical reflection and action having more choices available to them. Future research examining generational change should continue to investigate processes iteratively. Furthermore, a limitation in designing the quantitative portion of this study was the insufficient availability of scales in psychology that relate to the experiences of Maasai women. Future research should aim to develop measures that will more accurately capture constructs among diverse groups. It also should be noted that a larger sample of non-participating women would have enabled us to test a fully moderated mediated model, and longitudinal data would have increased our ability to test causality.

Conclusions

Given the persistence of gendered oppression and perpetuation of violation of women's rights, there is considerable need to examine how ideological processes surrounding women's status and value can be challenged. The findings from the current study suggest that if any serious attempt is to be made at enhancing women's status worldwide, practices that facilitate the contestation and transformation of traditional gender ideology are necessary. Moreover, the findings demonstrate the importance that interventions are driven by marginalized voices in local communities that can, and ought to, determine their own agendas for liberation. Women all over the world are engaging and asserting rights to be citizens, rather than subjects of colonial and neoliberal designs. In seeking to rectify injustices related to gender, feminist psychologists must prioritize the voices of those who experience the consequences of inequity with approaches that center on methods that represent marginalized women's own vision and resistance.

Acknowledgments The work in this manuscript reflects a partnership between academia and grassroots community engagement. One of the founders of MWEDO, Ndinini Kimesera, was a key collaborator in the administration of this project. This research was supported by a National Science Foundation grant (SES: 0921537) to Shelly Grabe.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflicts of Interests There are no conflicts of interests associated with the researchers or funders of this research.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all participants included in this study

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