

**CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN THE MARRIAGE PRACTICES AMONG THE  
BUKUSU OF BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA, c. 1900-1963.**

**WANYAMA WANYONYI REUBEN**

**REG NO: C50/CE/24753/2012**

**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF LAW, ARTS, AND  
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENT OF  
THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN HISTORY OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

**DECEMBER, 2025**

**DECLARATION**

I declare that this is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other institution of higher learning.

Signature..... Date.....

**Reuben W. Wanyama**

**C50/CE/24753/2012**

**Supervisors' Declaration**

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University appointed supervisors.

**Dr. Kakai, Pius Wanyonyi**

Signature..... Date.....

Department of History, Archaeology, and Political Studies

**Dr. Nabende, Julius Simiyu**

Signature..... Date.....

Department of History, Archaeology, and Political Studies

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my mother, wife, brothers and sisters for their unwavering love and support, and to God for giving me strength and wisdom throughout this journey.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the individuals from whose mentorship and support I benefitted, throughout the writing of this thesis.

I would also like to acknowledge and give my warmest thanks to my supervisors Dr. Kakai Pius Wanyonyi and Dr. Nabende Julius Simiyu who made this work possible. Their guidance and advice carried me through all stages of writing the thesis. I would also like to thank the defense committee members for their brilliant comments and suggestions. Additionally, I also thank members of the Department of History, Archaeology and Political Studies of Kenyatta University for offering me an opportunity to pursue my Masters of Arts degree.

Special thanks to my wife Catherine Achola Oluoch, my mother Fridah Wanyonyi and my family as a whole for their continuous support and understanding when undertaking my research and writing my thesis. Your prayers have sustained me so far.

Finally, I would like to thank God, for carrying me through all the difficulties. I have experienced your guidance day by day. You are the one who enabled me complete my thesis. I will keep on trusting you for my future.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

<b>Age-set</b>	A social category or corporate social group, consisting of people of similar age, who have common identity, maintain close ties over a prolonged period, and together pass through a series of age- related statuses
<b>Babukusu/Bukusu</b>	These terms will be used interchangeably in the course of the research work
<b>Bridewealth</b>	A payment of money, property or other valuables from the groom's family to the bride's family, often as part of the marriage process
<b>Bukhwe</b>	Bride wealth payment
<b>Culture</b>	The term is broadly understood to include:(1) ways of life, (2) traditions and beliefs, (3) representations of health and diseases, (4) perceptions of life and death, (5) sexual norms and practices, (6) power and gender relations, (7) family structures, (8) languages and means of communication and (9) arts and creativity and material culture.
<b>Customary law</b>	Unofficial law, the long-established customs (standards of community) of a particular place or locale that the general law regards as a legal practice
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Depicts the behaviors and feelings that emerge from membership in a particular group (Hizkias 1996). Ethnicity can be determined by a group's or an individual's perception of family ancestry, language, nationality, culture, race, religion, customs or a combination of these characteristics.

<b>Gender</b>	Refers to roles attributed to men and women through socialization and the relationship that exists between them. While one's sex is biologically determined, one's sexual identity is culturally constructed
<b>Marital practices</b>	The diverse ways societies' structure and define marriage, including ceremonies, legal aspects and social customs
<b>Marriage customs</b>	Refers to the specific practices, traditions, and rituals that a particular culture or community follows when a couple enters into a marital union.
<b>Marriage</b>	A legally and socially recognized union between two people, establishing rights and obligations between them and their families
<b>Organization of marriage practices</b>	Varies widely across cultures and can be broadly categorized by how partners are chosen, the number of spouses permitted and rituals involved
<b>Polygamy/Polygyny</b>	Also known as plural marriage, is the practice of marrying multiple spouses
<b>Poverty</b>	Inability to provide for basic needs like tuition fee, uniform, books, enough food to eat
<b>Short gun wedding/marriage</b>	A wedding that has to take place quickly because the woman is pregnant
<b>Westernization</b>	The process whereby societies come under or adopt western culture

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AD	Anno Domini
BCE	Before the Common Era
CE	Common Era or Christian Era
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CMS	Church Missionary Society
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of standards
M.Eds.	Masters of education sciences
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NCPD	National Council for Population Development
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	ii
DEDICATION .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	iv
OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS .....	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS .....	vii
LIST OF MAPS .....	xi
GLOSSARY .....	xii
ABSTRACT.....	xiii
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
1.1 Overview.....	1
1.2 Background of the Study .....	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.5 Research Questions .....	4
1.6 Research Premises .....	5
1.7 Justification and Significance of the Study.....	5
1.8 Scope and Limitation of the Study.....	6
1.9 Literature Review.....	6
1.9.1 Introduction .....	6
1.9.2 African Marriage in the Pre-colonial Period .....	6
1.9.3 Contact Between African Marriage Culture and Western Culture .....	14
1.9.4 Theoretical Framework .....	24
1.10 Research Methodology .....	25
1.10.1 Introduction .....	25
1.10.2 Research Design.....	25
1.10.3 Site of the study.....	25
1.10.4 Target Population .....	27
1.10.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure.....	27
1.10.6 Research Instruments .....	27
1.10.7 Data Collection Procedures .....	27
1.10.8 Data Analysis Techniques .....	28
1.10.9 Ethical Considerations .....	28

CHAPTER TWO .....	29
THE ORGANIZATION OF MARRIAGE AMONG THE BABUKUSU BY 1899 .....	29
2.1. Overview.....	29
2.2. Engagement in precolonial Babukusu Society .....	30
2.3. Babukusu Marriage Ceremony ( <i>Siselelo</i> ) .....	32
2.3.1 Significance of Rituals Performed During Marriage .....	35
2.3.2 Variations in Marriage Practices Among the Bukusu Clans.....	36
2.3.3 Role of Songs and Dances in Marriage Practices Among the Bukusu .....	36
2.4. Bride Wealth .....	37
2.4.1 Bridewealth as a Legal Contract .....	38
2.5 Polygamy .....	38
2.6 Levirate Marriage ( <i>Khukerama</i> ) .....	41
2.7 Summary .....	42
CHAPTER THREE .....	43
THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN WESTERN CIVILIZATION WITH BUKUSU MARRIAGE PRACTICES, 1900-1945.....	43
3.1 Introduction.....	43
3.2 Establishment of Colonial Rule Among the Bukusu and their Reactions .....	44
3.3 Colonial Policies on Marriage among the Bukusu .....	45
3.3.1 Cheap African labour and Urbanization.....	46
3.3.2 Monetary Economy .....	47
3.4 The Introduction of Western Christianity .....	48
3.5 Western Education and Marriage Practices .....	54
3.6. Summary.....	55
CHAPTER FOUR.....	56
IMPACT OF WESTERN CULTURE ON BUKUSU MARRIAGE PACTICES, 1946-1963 56	
4.0 Introduction.....	56
4.1 British Colonial Laws and Transformation of Bukusu Marriages.....	57
4.2 Influence of Western civilization to Bukusu Marriages .....	61
4.3 Summary .....	64
CHAPTER FIVE .....	66
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	66
5.0 Introduction.....	66
5.1 Summary.....	66

5.2 Conclusion .....	68
5.3 Recommendations.....	71
REFERENCES .....	72
Oral Sources .....	72
Archival Sources .....	72
Journal Articles .....	75
Theses, Dissertations, Seminar Papers, and Unpublished Materials .....	77
APPENDICES .....	78
Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Focus Group Discussions .....	78
Appendix II: Interview guides for married and unmarried people.....	79
Appendix III: Research Authorization Letter.....	81

## LIST OF MAPS

<b>Map 1: Map of Bungoma County</b> .....	26
---	----

## GLOSSARY

<i>Likhwi</i>	Bride wealth
<i>Khubeya</i>	Marriage by elopement
<i>khukhwesa</i>	Marriage by abduction
<i>Khuoya</i>	Dating
<i>Sioyayo</i>	A common song sang by men in the Bukusu community
<i>Siselelo</i>	Marriage by a wedding
<i>Khuchukha</i>	Bride-price negotiations

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the organization of marriage practices among the Bukusu of Bungoma County to investigate the encounter between Western civilization and the traditional Bukusu marriage practices of Bungoma County in the period between 1900-1945 and to evaluate the influence of British Colonial rule on the marriage practices of the Bukusu of Bungoma County in the period between 1945-1965. The patriarchy theory looks at how different cultures' influences adapt to, and change one another through contact, exchange and confrontation. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Purposive sampling was used to select respondents for the study. The research instrument used was an oral interview guide and data was qualitatively analysed through thematic analysis. The study found out that the Bukusu marriage practices underwent a transformative process during the colonial era. The marriage system of polygamy was the most affected because of the influence of European Christian missionary activities and teachings on one hand and the British colonial policies on taxation, labour and migration on the other hand. The study also found out that monogamous marriages gained traction towards the 1960s as Bukusu men and women embraced western civilization and capitalist consumerism culture. The study also found out that traditionally, polygamous marriages were sustained by surplus economic resources in the Bukusu society, however, British colonialism ushered in a process of economic underdevelopment in Kenya which undermined the values of Bukusu marriage practices.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.1 Overview**

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, the research questions, research premises, scope and limitation of the study

### **1.2 Background of the Study**

Marriage is an important institution both for the individual and the society at large. For the individual, it is a significant and memorable event in one's life cycle as well as the most important foundation in the family formation process. It is also a rite of passage that marks the beginning of an individual's separation from the parental unit. For the society as a whole, it unites several individuals from different families and represents the creation of a production and consumption unit as well as one for the exchange of goods and services (Quisumbing and Hallman, 2003).

In most societies marriage defines the onset of the socially acceptable time for childbearing. Age at marriage is of particular interest because it marks the transition to adulthood in many societies; the point at which certain options in education, employment and participation in society are foreclosed; and the beginning of regular exposure to the risks of pregnancy and childbearing.

Wilson (1993) notes that virtually everything in society, right from the family is defined by marriage as a publicly announced contract that makes legitimate the sexual union of a man and a woman. Most of the world's population lives in societies where marriages are overwhelmingly heterosexual and monogamous.

The "one man one woman" model for the Christian marriage was advocated by Saint Augustine in his influential letter, "The Good of marriage." In 534 C.E Roman emperor Justinian 1 endorsed monogamous marriages. The Justinian code was the bases of European

Law for 1000 years. Christianity has continued to insist on monogamy as essential for marriage. In Europe the churches were traditionally responsible for making marriages official by registering them. Hence it was a significant step towards a clear separation of church and state. (United Nations, 1990; Ezeh and Dodoo 2007).

Mbiti (1969) contends that for Africans, marriage is the focus of existence. All community members meet: the departed, the living and those yet to be born. Every community member has to participate in it, so marriage is a duty, a requirement from the corporate society and a rhythm of life in which everyone must participate. One who fails to take part is a curse to the community, a rebel, a law breaker, abnormal and “under-human”. One will have rejected the society and it will reject him in return. Marriage ensures procreation.

Pritchard (1951) opines that marriage leads to the growth of new social relationships which once formed are not easily or lightly severed, especially when the union is completed by the birth of a child. Marriage is a cultural practice that is at the centre of the Bukusu community and gave a man prestige and influence. Not only did a married man enjoy a wider circle of relationships but also gave him room to exert his presence in society more forcefully if he had many children. Sons, in traditional community, were given preference over daughters because they were believed to be sources of security in the community surrounded by many enemies (Musungu,2016).

Marriage and family as institutions have been affected by modern changes in the society. Their instability has increased considerably under modern strains, giving rise to higher rates of divorce and separation than in the traditional life (Mbiti, 2002). The Kabras concept of marriage differs from that of western world. *Okhuila* is the term used by the Kabras people to mean “to marry”. This is a social institution which unites a man to one or more women and further unites the families and clans of the married couple. The relationship was a communal

affair in which all members participated, therefore, making it highly valued in the Kabras social structure. Marriage is a central institution upon which all other institutions are dependent for life revolves around it.

According to Zomi (2014) marriage is an institution of complex social norms that sanctions the relationships of man and women and binds them in a system of mutual obligation and rights essential to the functioning of the family. It is one of the universal institutions, established by the human society to control and regulate the sex life of men and women. Marriage is “a rite of passage” whereby an unrelated man and woman begin their own families of procreation. Its purposes, functions and forms may differ from society to society, but is present everywhere as an institution.

According to Wanyama (2017) the Bukusu cherished polygyny not only because it conformed to its traditional values but more importantly, because it served a wide range of benefits. The enjoyment of the privileges of polygyny by Bukusu men was done strictly within societal limits. In other words, men enjoyed these benefits as per social sanction which absolved them from feminist condemnation that they are perpetrators of women subjugation. Men acquired prestige, status and standing in the society due to their comparatively large households that were symbolic of wealth. Besides it salvaged them the inglorious shame of assuming feminine chores in the absence of their wives. More so, the customary tradition of beer brewing and public entertainment was possible by their numerous wives not to mention reinforcement of their economic power by the availability of adequate labour force.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The study of marriage as an institution in the family and social set up among the Bukusu community has continued to attract scholars across the fields of History and Anthropology. Wagner (1947), Wolf (1971), Nasimiyu (1984), Wekesa (2000), and Wepukhulu (2023) are

among the scholars who have looked at different aspects of Bukusu marriage institution. This study therefore seeks to address the problem of lack of comprehensive historical analysis of how marriage practices have evolved under the influence of western culture, religion, education and socio-economic change, and which traditional practices have remained unchanged. Understanding this dynamic is therefore important in appreciating how the Bukusu maintain cultural identity while adapting to modern social realities. The socio-economic fabric of the Bukusu such as their modes of production changed due to the establishment of colonial rule and the introduction of hut tax in early 1900s and the marriage practices were no exception; they also got transformed. This study addresses knowledge gaps in terms of the role of British colonialism and capitalism in the change and continuity of marriage practices of the Bukusu society.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

This study has the following objectives:

- i. To examine the organization of marriage practices among the Bukusu of Bungoma County by 1900
- ii. To investigate the encounter between Western civilization and the traditional Bukusu marriage practices of Bungoma County in the period 1900-1945
- iii. To evaluate the influence of British Colonial rule on Bukusu marriage practices of Bungoma County in the period 1945-1963

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study has the following research questions:

- i. How did the Bukusu of Bungoma County organize their marriage practices by 1900?
- ii. How did European missionaries influence Bukusu marriage practices in the period 1900 to 1945?

- iii. How did British colonial policies, laws and economy transform Bukusu marriage practices in the period 1945 to 1963?

### **1.6 Research Premises**

This study was guided by the following research premises:

- i. The colonial legal structures significantly altered marriage practices among the Bukusu of Bungoma County by 1900
- ii. While traditional Bukusu marriage customs have undergone significant changes due to external influences, certain core aspects persist among the Bukusu of Bungoma County 1900-1945
- iii. Westernization including the influence of Christianity and formal education significantly impacted the marriage practices of the Bukusu of Bungoma county 1945-1963

### **1.7 Justification and Significance of the Study**

This study focuses on the organization structure of marriage practices among the Bukusu of Bungoma County in Kenya between 1900-1963. The study provides awareness for policy makers on integrating customary marriages into Kenya's legal system, ensuring cultural preservation while addressing gender rights. This is because among the Bukusu, marriage is one of the most important cultural practices and it influences the growth and development of the community's culture. Marriage among the Bukusu has also undergone various transformations since the coming of the British colonialists. The findings of this study provide a significant source of information to Anthropologists, educationists, and students on the Bukusu marriage practices and the changes that have taken place in these practices.

## **1.8 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

Some of the rituals such as polygamy and ancestral rites have been dropped or changed due to Christianity and Islam. Certain cultural practices can be perceived as something not in line with religion. The marriage practice of all Bukusu clans should not be generalized because not all of them share the same practice within a community. A large part of the knowledge relating to traditional practices are oral and thus memory lapses could result to inadequate data. Additionally, those elders who possess this knowledge might already have passed on.

## **1.9 Literature Review**

### **1.9.1 Introduction**

This literature review examines literature related to the research area. It focuses on cultural practices among marriages of various communities, transformations that have taken place in various marriage practices and the reasons behind the transformations that have taken place in the various marriage practices.

### **1.9.2 African Marriage in the Pre-colonial Period**

“Changes in marriage are a ready barometer of change in society” (Goodkind 1996). Comparative analyses reveal rising age at first marriage for both men and women. The family is not a static institution. In recent decades, marriage rates in Kenya have fallen, divorcé rates have risen and the defining characteristics of marriage have changed. Goodkind’s work is relevant to the researcher in that it talks about marriage not being static but changing over time therefore the researcher aims at looking at the changes that have occurred in marriage and how they have influenced the marriage practices among the Bukusu of Bungoma County.

Attempts to suppress bride wealth have been seen as efforts to regulate the age of marriage. For example, among the Iteso of Kenya, Nagashima (1989), reports that the girl’s family demands cash as compensation for the costs of educating her and for the loss of her income.

Even where the amount of bride wealth has declined, it would be difficult to separate the effects of legal sanction from bridegrooms' economic hardship; and if families fear legal retribution for demanding bride wealth, increasing expectation that suitors will pay a girl's school fees or initiation expenses may stem family's efforts to disguise outright bride wealth. Nagashima looks at how bride wealth is conducted among the Iteso while in this study the researcher looks at how bride wealth is conducted among the Bukusu in Bungoma North sub-County and the value attached to it.

The study helped the researcher to look at how the practice of bridewealth was carried out among the Bukusu and also showed how the value initially attached to bride wealth has been suppressed among the Bukusu of Bungoma North sub- County.

Bryant (1977) avers that, women who marry and move into their husband's compounds report tensions with in-laws, with whom they compete for their husband's support. Unmarried women who bear children by usually absent partners may remain as dependent members of poor households that are maintained by brothers and sisters (later by sons) or head their own small impoverished households. Needing to support their children, they may also begin to migrate periodically to the city to look for work, leaving their children with their mothers. Bryant's work is relevant to the current study in that it guided the researcher to look at how married women among the Bukusu relate with their in-laws and how the unmarried women who bear children with absent fathers among the Bukusu community behave.

Polygamy is very alive in Africa today and whether or not it is on the increase or decrease is a different argument. There are and will be thousands of couples who find and will find it a useful and moral form of marriage. Polygamy is usually hit hard by economic difficulties. For sure the economic grounds on which traditional polygamy was founded are changing rapidly. The move from nomadic life, then from agricultural to industrial setting, is definitely the single

most influential factor. Industrialization and urbanization in particular have introduced very fierce accommodation and administrative problems. For instance, the lowly paid urban worker with consequently poor accommodation can no longer afford a permanent second wife. The costs of bringing up children and educating them have to be given priority over marital conveniences. It looks as though the wind of change is in favor of the western form of polygamy and increases in hit and run extra marital relations (Maillu, 1988).

Maillu's work is important to the current study in that it shows that despite the various changes that have occurred in the marriage institution and the various marital problems that people face in marriage, the Africans still uphold their traditional culture of marriage by practicing polygamous mode of marriage. The researcher therefore looked at how these traditional cultures are being upheld by the Africans specifically the Bukusu community of Bungoma County despite the various changes that occur.

According to Betsey and Wolfers (2007), these changes have come about as what is produced in the home has been dramatically altered both by the emergence of labor-saving technology in the home and by the development of service industries that allow much of what was once provided by specialized homemakers be purchased in the market. The availability of birth control and abortion has affected the potential consequences of sex both in and out of marriage, while changes in divorce laws have altered the terms of marital bargain. The forces also have important feedback effects, changing the pool of marriageable singles across the age distribution, thereby affecting marriage, remarriage and the extent of "churning" in the marriage marker. However more research needs to be carried out to give an understanding of the systematic and social changes that have occurred in marriage especially pertaining matters of abortion which tend to change year in and year out and also the issue of the birth control method due to emergence of new methods of birth control and their effects on the cultural

practices of marriage like issues of divorce especially among the Bukusu. The researcher therefore aimed at filling this gap.

In many African communities' marriage is treated merely as a union between a man and a woman who live together as husband and wife. The motive for marriage is that of producing a family and thus extending the human race. In many societies marriage is viewed as a contract which involves procreation. Failure to procreate results in the dissolution of the marriage, leaving the partners free to re-marry. In the Nandi community however, this is not the case. Marriage is sacred therefore is a life- long partnership which is indissoluble, even in death.

A Nandi widow can never re-marry. Marriage is not only of husband and wife but also the husband's spirits as sanctioned by the tribal god. Not only human beings but supernatural beings are involved, so marriage is the uniting of the spirits of a man with a woman. It is believed that the women do not receive spirits from their parents at birth as men do, therefore spirit genes involved during marriage are those of the husband alone. Sitienei talks about marriage relationship between the husband and wife among the Nandi and the issues of widowhood among the Nandi. Sitienei's work is relevant to the study in that it guided the researcher to look at marriage relationship between the husband and wife among the Bukusu community in Bungoma and the issues of widowhood in the community. The study also helped the researcher to look at how widows are treated among the Bukusu community.

A report by some human rights groups blames underreporting of defilement cases to the '.... cultural inhibitions against publicly discussing sex, particularly sexual violence: the stigma attached to rape victims, survivors' fear of retribution; police reluctance to intervene especially in cases where family members, friends or acquaintances were accused of committing the rape. This report is relevant to the researcher's work in that it helped the researcher to look at various

customs conducted in rape cases among family members and how that has changed with time among the Bukusu of Bungoma north sub- county.

Bride wealth is a sum, either in cash or kind used to exchange a bride for her labour and fertility. In communities where early marriage is practiced, marriage is regarded as a transaction often representing a significant economic activity for a family. A daughter may be the only commodity available to a family to be traded, and sometimes, girls can be used as currency to settle debts.

Raw (1993) explains that in India for example, dowry as a gift to a daughter married is like a bribe to the groom to take one's daughter off one's hand. Nowadays some of the African communities like the Bukusu are getting married to other races like the Indians where it is the duty of the bride's parents to pay bride wealth. This study will thus look at these mixed marriages among different races which have beliefs about the payment of dowry which Raw has not discussed, thus filling the gap.

Mbiti (1969) points out that all the dimensions of time meet here, and the whole drama of history is repeated, renewed and revitalized and therefore marriage is a duty, requirement for a co-operating society and a rhythm of life in which everyone must participate otherwise he who does not, is a curse to the community, a rebel, a lawbreaker, not only abnormal but underhuman. Failure to get married under normal circumstances means that the person concerned has rejected society and society rejects him in return. Mbiti's work is relevant to the researcher's work because it helps the researcher to look at how the Bukusu of Bungoma north sub-county traditionally viewed the state of one being unmarried and how the unmarried status is looked at by the community in contemporary time.

Caldwell & Caldwell (1989) aim to show that there is a distinct and internally coherent African system embracing sexuality and marriage which contrasts with what they refer to as the

Eurasian system. The African system, as they see it, has evolved around lineage organization, with its emphasis being on reproduction and descent. Despite the considerable variation they document in Africa, their case is that certain underlying themes relating to lineage run through the social systems we find. Thus, for example, the desire of men for descendants is dominant, so that polygyny is common, if not universal, and divorce likewise.

Caldwell & Caldwell (1989) see the conjugal bond as emotionally weak, both husband and wife retaining links with their natal lineages and strong few mutual interests. The division of labour by gender, with spouses having different economic responsibilities, ensures that the conjugal household is not an entity for economic purposes. Typically, they argue that the wife and children, form a unit whose interests are opposed to that of the husband/father. Caldwell's work helps the researcher to look at how a wife's and children's interest in a family differ from the father's and how that has affected the marriage relationship between the wife and the father among the Bukusu of Bungoma North sub-County.

Most sub-Saharan African societies do not regard most sexual relations as sinful or as central to morality and religion and at the most have fairly evaded prohibitions even on female premarital or extramarital sex. The sexual relationship (despite the emphasis on reproduction) is thus presented as one which is not subject to moral control. In line with this they say that in Africa, sex is a worldly activity like work or eating and drinking (Caldwell & Caldwell 1989) and is transacted in the same way. That is, it is seen as a service which women render to men in return for cash and support. It is because sex, whether inside or outside marriage, is seen in such terms that it is difficult to recognize prostitution in Africa in the same way as in the West. Sex in Africa always has a potentially 'commercial' aspect, so no share divide, can be drawn between the prostitute and the 'respectable woman'. Caldwell's work guides the researcher to look at how the Bukusu in Bungoma north specifically view sexual relationships and how it is related to their lineage organization and their beliefs based on marriage.

Cumming (1976) writing on polygamous marriage among the Kamba points out that in Ukambani, marriage is basically an economical question, for the number of wives a Mukamba has is a measure of his personal importance as well as his wealth and the more the marriages the more children one can produce. Cumming's work helps the researcher look at how the Bukusu of Bungoma North sub-County view the question of the number of wives economically and how that has been transformed currently.

Coast (2006) examines the Maasai marriage institution and the practices that accompany it. He states that any consideration of Maasai male social roles must place at the core, the age-set system. This is composed of a group of contemporaries, united by their communal circumcision which takes place roughly between the ages of 15 and 20 years. Circumcised young men are warriors and are unable to occupy the same houses as their fathers. Historically, men who were still morans would not marry as marriage was considered a prerogative of elders. In contemporary Kenya Maasai land, however, this chronological ability to marry appears to be reducing in importance.

Coast (2006) focuses on how male circumcision and the age-set system affects the Maasai marriage system and his study helps the researcher analyze how male circumcision and age system affects the marriage system among the Bukusu in Bungoma North, their relationship with other communities in Kenya when it comes to the issue of marriage and how this has changed overtime. Additionally, Coast's study is also relevant to the researcher in that it helps in the analysis of the economic security of the Bukusu and how it has affected or influenced the marriage practices of the community, how prostitution is viewed by the community and the effects of prostitution on marriage.

Cousin marriages as a means of sustaining and even strengthening kinship ties are a routine in Pakistani Muslim culture as depicted by Shaw (2000) and Afshar (1994). The works of Shaw

and Afshar were relevant to the current study in guiding the researcher to look at why the Bukusu community do not practice cousin marriage and the customs and taboos related to that and how they have changed with time.

According to Makokha (2012) there were days when marriages were considered real and serious. They were sacred and were accorded utmost respect; cases of separation, infidelity or divorce were unheard of. Parents played a very key role in the selection of spouses for their children. Character was of more value than beauty when it came to choosing a spouse as people believed that all women are beautiful and the same. Makokha's work was relevant to the researcher's work in that it helped the researcher look at how traditionally the Bukusu addressed issues relating to divorce.

Meekers (1993) opined that normative marriage customs of the Shona speaking people are characterized by the negotiation and payment of bridewealth. In Shona society the payment of bride wealth which was called Rooru or Labola for the Shona and Ndebele People (of Zimbabwe) respectively was the basis of marriage and family obligations, despite the continued emphasis on Lobola payments in the ethnographic literature. This work is relevant to the researcher's work in that it helps the researcher to look at how bride wealth was perceived in the marriage practices among the Babukusu of Bungoma County.

According to Barasa (2015), pre-colonial Babukusu had three types of marriages namely: marriage by elopement (Khubeya), marriage through abduction (khukhwesa) and by way of a wedding or siselelo (plural, siselelo). He focused on Siselelo because it was the only form of marriage which was celebratory and which involved singing and dancing. Barasa therefore does not look at marriages by elopement (Khubeya) and marriage through abduction (khukhwesa) thus the researcher aims at filling this gap.

### **1.9.3 Contact Between African Marriage Culture and Western Culture**

Contemporary marital relationships are increasingly being seen and defined as something active, meaning that one has to constantly work on the relationship to keep it alive, but perhaps much more importantly to recognize that its success and sustainability ultimately depend on winning the trust of the other partner (Giddens, 2001). Respect for the rights of individuals involved in a marriage is increasingly becoming central to a stable marital life. The traditional expectations in the roles of marital couples can no longer be assumed, but are being challenged and tested. The traditional gender-based family roles clear-cut and culturally well-defined are being re-examined and re-evaluated. However, the intensity of the transformation also tends to vary with age, time, class and context. This is because men and women of different ages and background marry from different sets of considerations. This thesis explores several discussed domains of change, economics, religion, education and technology and how they affect the marriage institution when it comes to matters of love, intimacy and respect of a spouse towards his or her partner's rights.

The transformation in the mode of bride-wealth payments from cattle to cash for example has not only made marriage a private affair but has also minimized the involvement of many family members in marital arrangements and negotiations (Ngubane 1987). Ngubane's work is relevant to the researcher's work in that it helps the researcher identify the mode of bride-wealth payments among the Bukusu of Bungoma County and its influence on marriage.

According to Phillips (2011), the family is the most significant feature of African society, and the process of disintegration is nowhere more apparent than in this central institution. The orderly development of African life will depend in large measure upon the successful maintenance of the solidarity of the family unit in the course of the modification of its role under modern conditions. Within the general setting of the problem, it is important to note that colonial statutory law is sometimes ill-adjusted to African customary in relation to marriage

and kindred matters. There is also great divergence in the rules made by native authorities and in the practice of native courts in respect to matrimonial issues. Philip's work is relevant to the current study because it helps the researcher look at the effects of statutory laws and courts on marriage structure among the Bukusu of Bungoma County.

Rwebangira and Rita (1998) aver that there has been a shift in marriage patterns and many young couples are avoiding the formal and socially accepted type of marriage in favor of the lesser which contributes to the increase of divorce. Sexuality among the Nyakusa have changed over the years. The disappearance of husband inheritance is good because girls are no longer bound to marry their sister's or aunt's husbands. The fact that wife inheritance is dying out is encouraging because widows should have rights to marry whoever they want or not to marry at all. However, boys are no longer proposing to girls. Rather it is their money that proposes on their behalf. In response girls cook fish and give it to their lovers. Rwebangira and Rita discuss the shift in marriage patterns among the Nyakusa where wife inheritance is dying out and their study is relevant to the researcher's work in that it guides him to look at the shift in marriage patterns among the Bukusu community in Bungoma North sub- County especially when it comes to the issue of wife inheritance.

Beck and Beck-Gemsheim (1995) write extensively on changing family landscapes and the ways in which divorce is changing gendered relationships. They argue that love is becoming much more central to our lives, precisely at the time when it has become more unreliable and riskier. They focus on the push-pull experience of contemporary intimacy, where the decline of traditional certainties (as they would have it) produce individuals who yearn for meaning in close personal relationships, while at the same time those individuals seek freedom that comes with the demise of traditional societies and family arrangements. Beck and Beck-Gemsheim's work is relevant to the researcher's work in that it helps the researcher look at the rate of divorce

cases among the Bukusu of Bungoma North sub- County and its effects on marriage. This work also helped the researcher to look at male -female relationship among the Bukusu.

McLaughlin and his coauthors (1988) argue that since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there has been a gradual increase in premarital sexual experience with acceleration in the rate of increase during the 1960s and 1970s. McLaughlin and coauthors (1988) as well as others argue that the United States has witnessed fundamental changes in the normative stance towards premarital sexual behaviour. Behavioral evidence clearly supports this position. Given such a change, the time-consuming nature of many dating patterns, the fact that many dating couples often share meals, and given that a common euphemism for sexual intercourse among un-married couples is “sleeping together” it is not surprising that increasing numbers of single people are deciding to live together.

McLaughlin and co-authors talk about fundamental changes in the normative stance towards pre-marital sex in the United States, the researcher aimed at looking at the fundamental changes towards pre-marital sexual relationships in Kenya specifically among the Bukusu community in Bungoma North sub-county and how this has affected the marriage relationship among the Bukusu.

Durst (1997) points out that “couples who cohabit, particularly for long periods of time, are faced with uncertainty, vague principles of equity, and the exercise of a trial judge’s discretion should their relationship terminate”. Durst's work helps the researcher to identify when the issue of cohabitation started among the Bukusu and the changes in traditional African practices that brought about this.

Tali (1993) notes that colonization led to the transformation of many if not all African communities. The colonialists saw customary marriage laws as being ‘barbaric’ hence ‘primitive’ people had to be ‘civilized’. The so called ‘civilization’ led to the introduction of

‘new laws’ that contradicted those of the Africans. The introduction of the western education for instance has brought about tremendous changes of attitudes towards life and this has greatly affected the traditional institutions like marriage. The Kabras like many other African communities were well organized both politically and socially before colonization. Socially it was the elders who had a final say in all matters concerning the whole community. Tali’s work is useful to this study because it offers information on how colonization affected the organizational structure of the Bukusu marriage institution.

Caroline and Barney (1993) argue that vast changes in legal codes, educational opportunities and avenues for employment as well as the advent of new theologies have not simplified the marriage process in Africa. Indeed, they have added elements that make it even more complex. In many countries, new forms of marriage are appearing and we may be witnessing an even greater attenuation at the conjugal process.

Although kin participation in youth marriages seems to be ebbing, conjugal payments and polygyny seem to be taking subtle new forms. All these trends render even more difficult the analyst’s task of its effect on reproduction. Caroline and Barney talk about new forms of marriage in many nations but the researcher concentrated more on new forms of marriage in Kenya so as to bring out a deeper picture about the specific new changes that have occurred in marriage apart from those brought about by education, technology and the economy especially among the Bukusu of Bungoma North sub- county in order to be able to tell how this has affected or has led to cultural transformations among the Bukusu.

Boserup (1990) maintains that until recently, low population densities, male out-migration and subsistence agricultural methods were conducive to large family sizes in most of Africa. Changes in these elements, constriction of the land base, combined with intensified requirements of permanent farming, eventually encourage people to have smaller families

through reducing polygynous marriages or the number of births per wife so that they pass on a viable farm to the next generation. The implication, of course, is that age at first marriage increases as well. Boserup talks about how constriction of the land base has affected marriage in Africa as a whole. The researcher narrowed this study to how the constriction of the land base has affected marriage among the Bukusu community in Bungoma North sub-county and the effects it has on the population growth patterns among the Bukusu.

School attendance removes girls from the domestic environment and offers literacy and exposure to new ideas and value systems that may compete with the traditional customs, values and beliefs that promote early marriage (Westoff 1992, Caldwell et al. 1983). Westoff (1992), uses DHS data from sub-Saharan Africa to demonstrate that higher education delays marriage and postpones childbearing among women in the region. Westoff discusses how education affects and delays the girl-child from getting married but doesn't look at the other side of the boy child and how education affects his marriage decisions, a gap that the current study fills.

Education maybe playing some role in the rising age at marriage. Indeed, Botswana is one of the few countries where females outnumber males in secondary school (World Bank 1988). Gulbrandsen (1986) looks at how educated women in Botswana view marriage and how their husbands mistreat them. He argues that educated women maybe choosing to remain single rather than being beaten by a "foolish husband". However, women may simply be educating themselves out of the marriage market. But female education is rising in several Southern African countries and marriage rates have declined more sharply in Botswana with respect to property rights.

Gulbrandsen only looks at how women are beaten by the foolish illiterate men but does not talk about how women who are educated and economically empowered mistreat their husbands. To fill that gap, this current study explores how the educated Kenyan women view marriage

especially in Bukusu land. Through Gulbrandsen's lens, the researcher has brought out his view on how education has led to various marital transformations among the Bukusu community of Bungoma north sub-County,

Gulbrandsen (1986) and Murray (1980;1981) among many others argue that the combination of the abandonment of polygyny and circular labor migration to South Africa has profoundly transformed the entire regional system of marriage and family relations. Because of the long absences of men, many relationships never culminate in a marriage, or do so very late and thus lead to a large number of births that we would count as non-marital. In their prime working years, young men typically migrate to work most of the year.

During their brief visits home, they strike up temporary relationships with women who are left behind to maintain their farms. Gulbrandsen and Murray look at how polygyny and circular labor migration in South Africa has transformed the regional system of marriage and family relations and their study is relevant to the researcher's work because it helps in examining how polygyny and circular labor migration has affected the system of marriage and family relations of the Bukusu of Bungoma North sub-county. Additionally, it helps the current study in examining the influence of migration on the Bukusu traditional culture especially marriage.

The economic issue that looms large for age at marriage in Africa, apart from population density and the land base, is the material resources that allow a young man to marry in a socially acceptable way. Young wage earners who obtain access to resources independently of family elders gain significant advantage in choosing their own partners (Robertson 1984) and also gain more resources to form temporary relationships with women who are not their wives. Robertson examines how economic issues affect marriages among the young in Africa and his study is relevant to the current one in that it helps the researcher examine how access to material resources affects the marriage institution among the Bukusu in Bungoma County.

Rwezura (1994) observes that poverty is the critical factor contributing to early marriage. Where poverty is acute, a young girl may be regarded as an economic burden and her marriage to a much older man, a practice common in some Middle East and South African societies, is a family survival strategy, and may even be seen as being in her interest. In traditional societies in sub-Saharan Africa, the bride family may receive cattle from the groom or the groom's family as the bride wealth for their daughter. This is because in Africa the monetary value of bride wealth is linked to marriage. While Rwezura's study focuses mostly on the Middle East and South Africa's economic burden on the issue of marriage, this study explores how poverty as an economic burden has affected the marriage institution among the Bukusu community in Bungoma County. The researcher, has also looked at the effects of early marriages among the Bukusu and how that has changed with the influence of issues such as education, religion and technology.

The patriarchal system complicates matters when it comes to dealing with the consequences of sexual violence as the victims have nowhere to turn to because the systems have no place for them. The situation gets more complex when the sexual abuse is directed towards children and especially girls who have no voice and though the parents normally pursue their rights, the mothers are usually at the forefront for them face systematic discrimination and silencing by the systems in place (Njeri 2011). Njeri talks about sexual abuse directed towards children and especially girls but nowadays sexual abuse is also directed to both adults and boys thus the researcher has filled this gap. Njeri's work provides relevance to the researcher in that it helps look at various cases of sexual abuse among the Bukusu of Bungoma County and how they are handled or solved.

Muslim traders from the coast brought Islam to the Akamba of Kitui. The Akamba converts lived with Muslim migrants harmoniously and gradually internalized Islamic practices such as fasting, reading the Quran, prayer and Maulid. They also put into practice some aspects of

Islamic personal status law. They also began contracting their marriage in accordance to the Sharia law. Despite this; they were reluctant to accept other aspects of the Islamic family law, because they were in disagreement with the Akamba traditional customs and values. Aspects like the law of inheritance met a lot of resistance from this community.

It is the traditional belief and practice of the Akamba that women have no share in the deceased estate contrary to the Islamic position. In case of divorce majority of the Akamba Muslim adhere to their traditional understanding and interpretation. If a wife commits adultery she may be officially divorced. This study is relevant to the researcher's work in that it guides the researcher to look at how the Muslim converts among the Bukusu community in Bungoma County have either changed their view of traditional values and customs or still uphold them. This study also helps the researcher to look at issues of inheritance of property among the Bukusu community and how this practice has changed with time.

Like all other communities in Kenya, the Luo have been exposed to new ideas and have changed in many aspects. The new change manifests outwardly in many ways, like education, clothing and moral behavior; traditional education, for instance has given way to the formal one. The kind of elaborate education system which in calculated very clear conscious within the youths concerning their sexuality and moral behaviour, so that they become responsible citizens in future, is no more (Owino,2000). Owino's work is relevant to the researcher's work in that it helps in analyzing how formal education has influenced the Bukusu traditional marriages.

The money economy, traditionally unknown, has made life almost impossible without it. Individualism and materialism have replaced egalitarianism or collective social living, a onetime treasure of the Luo people. Traditional religious beliefs and practices are no longer strictly followed in all instances of life and cannot accommodate themselves in the new situation.

However certain customs, like the Levirate, have persisted despite interferences of the western culture and lifestyle (Vitalis 2014). Vitali's work is relevant to the researcher's work in that it helps the researcher to look at how practices of levirate were carried out traditionally and how they have change with the advent of individualism and materialism in modern times

Brengston et al. (2003) note that understanding the extent to which individuals carry with them their own personal biographical histories, as well as the social and cultural history of their lives, is important. The lives of the young generation take forward in an engaged way, the experiences and values of their parents, modified by their own experiences. This way of understanding families moves us a long way away from the highly stylized models of modern individuality to be found in the writings of Bauman or Beck. The individual of the individualization thesis seems to exist without parents, without kinship ties, and with concerns only for their own psychic being. Brengston does not look at the effects of past histories of experiences of individuals in their marriage life especially among the Bukusu, a gap the researcher addressed in this study.

Ellwood and Crane (1990) have noted the racial divide in family structure that is driven almost entirely by lower and slower entry into marriage by blacks, rather than higher or more rapid divorce. By age 45, nearly one in four blacks born between 1950 and 1955 had never married, while the equivalent statistic for whites was one in ten, yet among those marrying divorce rates for blacks and whites were similar and blacks in fact, spent more time in their marriage. Re-entry into marriage among blacks was both rare and typically slower than that of whites. Ellwood and crane's study guides the researcher to look at the extent to which the Bukusu in Bungoma North view other races and their relationship with other races pertaining marriage. It also helps the researcher to identify the age at which divorce cases occur among the Bukusu of Bungoma County and the rate of their re-entry into marriage.

Kapiyo, (2004) avers that the invasion and partitioning of Africa, which occurred at the Berlin conference of 1885, jumpstarted the era of societal transformations in the continent. As a result of the subsequent developments such as urbanization, migrations, western education and influence of Christianity, many aspects of the lifestyles and cultures of the African people changed a great deal. Mbiti (2002) concedes that “... the physical expansion of Europe into Africa, exposed African peoples to the change taking place everywhere.” Slowly but steadily, these transformations have taken effect.

Baraza (2015) contends that songs and dances performed among Babukusu from the 1980s have been devoid of any meaningful and useful symbolic or explicit messages. A lot of innovations have continued in as far as Bukusu music and dances are concerned. Music and dance among Babukusu, have from the pre-colonial period, continued to be highly gendered. The playing of the harp, guitar, fiddle, flute and the singing of revered traditional dances such as the *sioyayo* is dominated by men.

Women in Bukusu culture do not play any role in the “stepping into the arena’ ’ funeral rite. They traditionally were relegated to using hoes as musical instruments during weddings. However, they were allowed to participate in almost all the musical activities of the Babukusu but mainly as dancers and singers. But from the 1970s female students have been playing a harp during music competitions involving learning institutions but not general entertainments. Baraza looks at innovations that have taken place in music and dance in almost all the rites of passage among the Bukusu. The researcher aims at looking at innovations that have taken place specifically in marriage practices among the Bukusu of Bungoma County based on its organization and structure.

Wanyama (2017) specifically talks about polygyny in marriage among the Babukusu of Sirisia constituency in Bungoma county. He also talks about how issues like masculinity,

entrenchment of western values through Christianity, western education and cash economy has affected polygyny in marriage. However, Wanyama narrows his study to polygyny in marriage among the Babukusu of Sirisia constituency as one aspect in marriage but does not talk about other aspects of marriage among the Babukusu like Courtship, *Khuoya* and issues like payment of bride-price and poverty and how they have changed over time and in this current study, the researcher therefore aims to fill this gap.

#### **1.9.4 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by the theories of patriarchy and social learning. The patriarchy theory, proposed by Lindsey German, was used in the study. Feminists define patriarchy as an unjust social system that enforces gender roles and is oppressive to women. Patriarchy is rooted in the assertion that male domination/sexism is something which exists not just as a product of capitalism but as something quite separate from the capitalist mode of production and which will endure beyond capitalism and contribute to domination and exploitation of women.

The social learning theory proposed by Bandura A. (1977) acknowledges that people learn through observing others' behaviors, attitudes and outcome of those behaviors. "Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action," (Bandura). Social learning theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral and environmental influence. Bandura believed in "reciprocal determinism" "that is the world and a person's behavior cause each other, while behaviorism essentially states that one's environment causes one's behavior. The Bukusu learned through observing the European western civilization which led to them copying some of the European culture and incorporating into the marriage practices.

However, the critics of the social learning theory argue the theory sees the learner as a sponge, absorbing information through modeling. His or her actual contribution to how such models are absorbed, processed and worked through time is not present to any great extent in the theory (Turner 2005).

The relevance of the social learning theory was appropriate for my study for it was useful in analyzing how generations have observed and preserved traditional practices of marriage among the Bukusu society.

## **1.10 Research Methodology**

### **1.10.1 Introduction**

This section provides a description of the procedure that was used in carrying out the study. It describes the research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, data collection instruments and procedures, reliability and validity of instruments that were used, data analysis techniques as well as the other data processing and presentation methods that were utilized by the study.

### **1.10.2 Research Design**

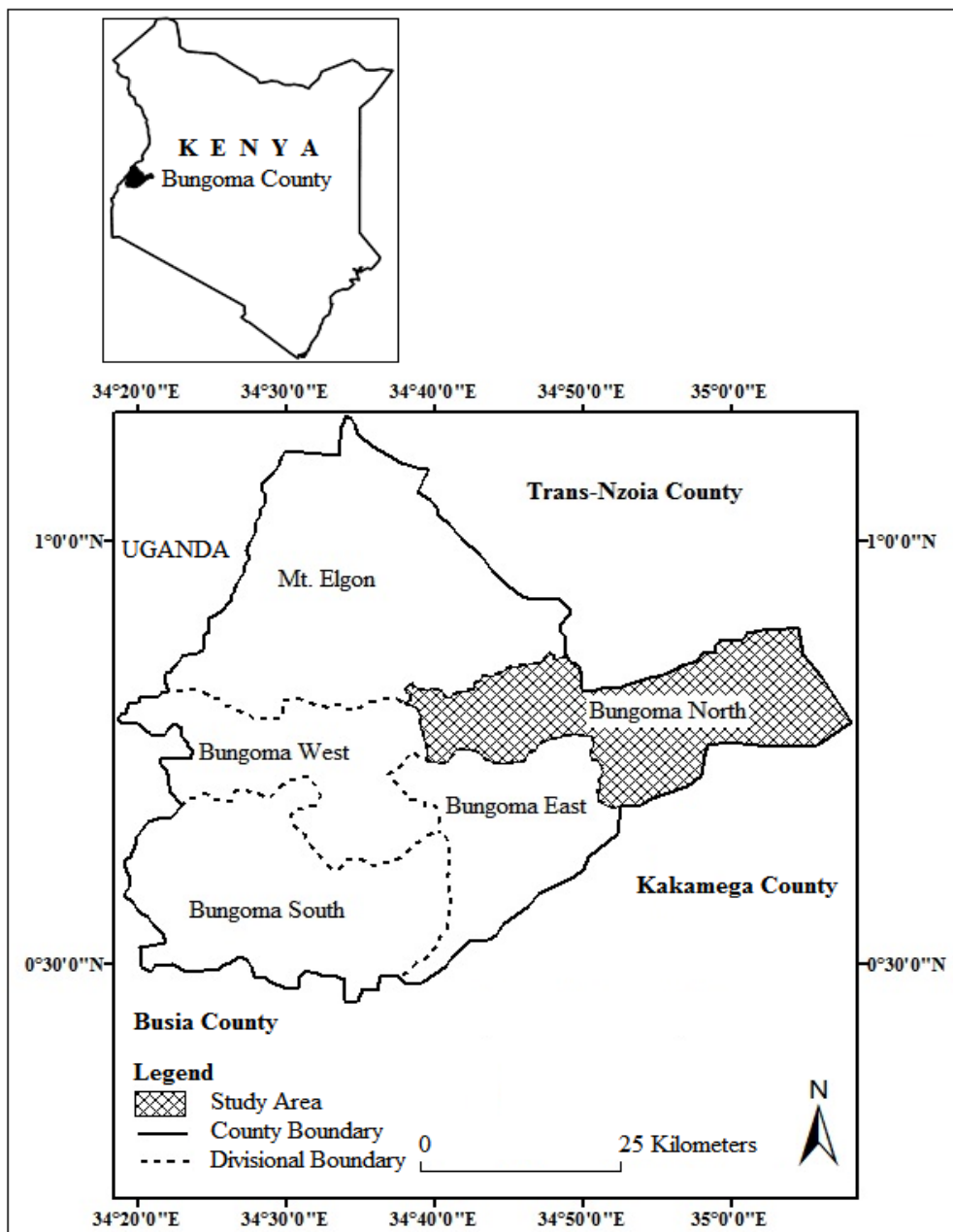
This study was conducted using descriptive survey design. According to Orodho (2005), descriptive survey can be used to describe some aspects of population like opinions, attitudes and beliefs. Best and Kahn (2005) note that surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, identifying how the standards against the existing conditions can be compared or determining the relationships that exist between specific events.

### **1.10.3 Site of the study**

The geographical area of the study was Bungoma County in the Western part of Kenya. It borders the counties of Trans Nzoia, Kakamega and Uasin Gishu. The Bukusu are the majority

in terms of population in the county, followed by the Sabaot. The other communities in the county are minorities and include the Luo, Kikuyu, Teso, Nandi and other Luhya sub clans; Wanga, Marama, Bakhayo, Tiriki, Maragoli, Gisa, Kabras, Banyore, Tachoni, Idakho, Isukha, Marachi, among others. The respondents were drawn from all the sub counties of the County which are; Mt. Elgon, Bungoma east, Bungoma West, Bungoma Central and Bungoma South.

**Map 1: Map of Bungoma County**



Source: County cartographer

#### **1.10.4 Target Population**

A population is the totality of humans, events, or things with observable characteristics. The target population comprised of elderly people, both men and women, aged eighty years and above. This is because they were old enough to remember marriage practices, which they observed or participated in. By virtue of their age, they could have clear memory of the changing marriage practices among the Babukusu.

#### **1.10.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

According to Borg and Gall (1989), a sample size of any study should be based on what a researcher considers being statistical and practicable. Since this is qualitative research, sample size was not finite because it depended on the availability of elderly people aged over eighty years who had knowledge and memory of marriage practices among the Babukusu. The researcher used purposive sampling and snowballing to identify respondents for the study. The researcher interviewed as many of the respondents who had knowledge of the marriage practices till the data given became repetitive.

#### **1.10.6 Research Instruments**

The research instrument used for the study was an oral interview guide, which was structured around the components of the research objectives. The guide consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed responses from the participants.

#### **1.10.7 Data Collection Procedures**

The administration of data collection instruments was done by the researcher. The researcher visited the sampled participants in order to administer the oral interview guide sheets which consisted of open-ended questions to the respondents. At this stage of administering the questionnaires, the respondents were assured of confidentiality of their responses as indicated in the questionnaires.

### **1.10.8 Data Analysis Techniques**

The data was sorted and arranged in accordance with the research objectives. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively. The study used thematic analysis to identify, interpret and compare emerging trends related to traditional and contemporary marriage customs. The oral interviews' responses were transcribed, categorized and organized according to the themes that were derived from research objectives such as bridewealth, polygamy, courtship and the influence of Western culture. Content analysis was also applied to interpret the meanings and implications of participants' narratives within their socio-cultural and historical contexts.

### **1.10.9 Ethical Considerations**

An introductory letter was obtained from the graduate school to help obtain a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). A copy of the permit and an introductory letter was presented to the Bungoma County officials. Protection of the participant rights and the need for confidentiality and anonymity took center stage in the research process. Consent from the respondents was sought before commencing the interviews.

The respondents were informed of the right to withdraw from the study any time they so wish. The study ensured a high degree of privacy in the data collection and storage by allowing accessibility only to the research team. The completed oral interview guides were kept under the custody of the overall researcher as soon as they were collected and they were not released to any unauthorized person. During data collection, for identification purposes, respondents' names were recorded only with their consent; otherwise, codes and pseudonyms were used.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE ORGANIZATION OF MARRIAGE AMONG THE BABUKUSU BY 1899

#### 2.1. Overview

This chapter discusses the organization of marriage practices of the Bukusu in the pre-colonial period. It examines the process of marriage from engagement through wedding and eventually dissolution of marriage when the spouse passes on. Marriage among the Bukusu was a very important rite of passage that brought families, clans and the wider community together and it was not just a union between two individuals. It also ensured that there was continuity socially, economically and the preservation of African culture. The cultural values and moral expectations among Bukusu a sub-group of the larger Luhya community in Western Kenya was well developed and structured by 1899.

The patriarchal structures have played an important role historically in the shaping of the gender roles, authority and family organization, among the Bukusu of Bungoma. The organization of marriage practices among the Bukusu of Bungoma is well explained by the patriarchy theory. This theory shows how social systems give the male among the Bukusu privileges in dominance and authority within family and community life. Men among the Bukusu were seen as heads of households and decision makers, while women played the roles of reproduction, domestic work, and social cohesion.

This male centered organization was to make sure that their lineage, inheritance, and property was preserved through patrilineal descent (Amutabi, 2005). Practices such as bridewealth (*likhwi*) and polygamy reinforced male authority by valuing women's role in terms of fertility and labor contribution to the homestead. Patriarchy therefore provided the ideological foundation for structuring marriage as a means of maintaining male control over kinship, wealth, and social status (Oyewumi, 1997).

## 2.2. Engagement in precolonial Babukusu Society

Marriage as a rite of passage in Babukusu society was obligatory thus everyone was entitled to it. The foremost purpose of marriage was procreation and secondly it created social networks that concretized unity in the community. It was a transfer of women productive labor from the economic unity of her parents to that of her husband. Marriage was a means through which a man began capital accumulation. Men got rights to land allocation and use only after they married. On the other hand, the family of the girl to be given in marriage acquired capital in form of livestock; cattle and goats that were paid as dowry or bride price by the family of the bridegroom (Werunga,2025)

In this community of the Babukusu marriage was exogamous. There were three types of traditional practices of marriage: elopement (*khubeya*), abduction, (*khukhwesa*) and wedding (*siselelo*). The first two practices namely elopement (*khubeya*) and abduction (*khukhwesa*) were discouraged by the elders because the man took advantage of the girl and used force or seduction. These two practices did not involve the parents of the boy and the girl nor the community. They were considered illegal and thus not binding. An oral interview by one of the respondents had the following to say regarding the two types of marriage: -

*“Usually, the man who practiced either of the two, was fined. Marriages that begun with elopement or abduction were sanitized through a proper wedding ceremony called (siselelo)”, (Musa, O. I., 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2019).*

Another research participant (Sarapai O.I., 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020) narrated that: -

*On many occasions, a girl went to visit her boyfriend and decided to stay with him in the hope of getting married. A girl also visited a relative and decided to choose a man to live with as a husband. A girl and her lover equally eloped and run to a distant place. This process was done without the consent of parents from both sides, (Sarapai O.I., 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020).*

Eloping took place when parents of either side do not approve a girl or a boy to marry somebody of his/her choice. It also happened when the suitor and his kinsmen are unable to assemble the full bride wealth that the girl's father would have demanded. Additionally, eloping also took place when somebody had a particular person in mind as a future partner but is being forced to marry somebody else.

After eloping, the partners may enter into marital relations with one another and leave it to the girl's father to take the next step. However, the father of the girl later acknowledged the marriage without holding any grudge against his son-in-law's kinsmen.

The hierarchical and consensus-oriented mode of the elders and the clan delegate in the selection process is common; especially in the traditional communities or indigenous governance systems. Their roles have been well broken down as follows: Custodians of tradition and customary law values, and norms are said to be kept by elders. They help in leading the selection process and controlling it to be in line with customs and traditions that have been there a long time now. They guarantee continuity and legitimacy in the selection of leaders (Wanyama,2017).

Elders are gatekeepers of eligibility. Elders and representatives of clans screen the candidates in order to establish their suitability. This process eliminates the conflict and as a result, the screening process makes sure that the candidates have the acceptance of all the factions. Elders also are the normal leaders of negotiations and are the mediators of conflicts between clans or groups of people. Barasa (1996) emphasizes that among the Bukusu, marriage was traditionally a corporate undertaking involving families and clans not an individual decision. Elders acted as the primary decision makers.

The community was involved in marriage decision making through various ways. Selection of a suitable marriage partner was done by parents and the extended family. To ensure

compatibility and adherence to cultural norms the elders were also involved in marriage negotiations. The payment of bride wealth was also agreed upon communally. The involvement of the community in marriage decision making helped in creating interdependence, strengthening of social networks among the families of the couple and in the preservation of cultural traditions and support system for the couple. Mbiti (1990) emphasizes that marriage in African societies was a communal affair involving families, ancestors and the living community.

Barasa (1996) detailed the criteria for selecting a suitable marriage partner as; family reputation and lineage, personality traits and moral character, economic and productivity potential, physical health and fertility and bride wealth compatibility and ritual observance.

The role of women in marriage ceremonies involved arrangement of food and décor, managing guests lists, selection of attires and organization of engagement parties. Besides that, mothers and family relatives organized, negotiated, performed rituals and could serve as advisors or mediators between families as well as managing of domestic arrangements. According to Wanjohi (2010), women played supportive roles in marriage negotiations mainly in preparing the bride for her new home and advising on domestic duties.

### **2.3. Babukusu Marriage Ceremony (*Siselelo*)**

Siselelo was in many ways synonymous to the European and modern form of wedding marriage ceremonies. Nonetheless, siselelo was unique and rather different from modern marriage ceremonies for it involved various rituals and customs that took almost two generations for it to be finalized. Oduisa (2021) observed that the Babukusu just like other Luhya societies practiced arranged marriages, which took the form of parents of the boy approaching the parents of the girl to request her hand in marriage. Though in rare cases young men would elope with a willing girl. Abductions of girls for marriage were extremely rare.

The process of marriage begun with identification of a prospective girl. Barasa (2015) opined that when a man wanted to marry, he identified a prospective wife on his own or through friends, paternal aunts, mother, grandmother or other relatives. Usually, elderly women acted as mediators between the family of the prospective bridegroom and the prospective bride.

Nangila, an oral interview respondent had the following to say about the process of finding a partner in the Bukusu culture: -

*“Customarily, finding partners for marriage among Babukusu people was a tedious process where the choice was made by parents who chose a bride for their son. The parents would at times choose a girl at the time of birth from a family that they were friends with. The parents would then patiently wait for the girl to grow and reach marriageable age which ranged from sixteen to eighteen. This implied that in one household, there was a young boy; his parents would go to another household where there was a young girl or where there was an expectant mother and propose to the parents of the girl asking for a hand in marriage”, (Nangila, O.I., 4.03.2020).*

There was a general consensus among research participants that the norm in Babukusu community was for the parents or relatives of young man who wants to marry to approach the parents of a particular girl and start marriage negotiations under normal circumstances.

Buyela while being interviewed during an oral interview session added that: -

*“There were some homes that had peopled reputed for bravery, honesty, hard work and influential in decision making. People often wished to marry from such homes and if there was a young girl growing up, a man would give some cows to the father of the girl anticipating that when the girl grew to an adult, the cattle which had been given to the girl's father would be surrendered to him for his own”, (Buyela O.I., 10.03.2020).*

Once the prospective bride was identified the two parties begun marriage arrangements.

Wamalabe (O.I., 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020) said that.

*“The mother of the boy will move to negotiate with parents of the girl and say, ‘I have a jembe (embako) without a handle and I have seen a handle in this homestead, can you give it to me?’ The mother will then hide a jembe ‘embako’ in a corner in the house and leave. When the parents of the girl later discover the jembe*

*in a basket 'endubi' they will know the visitor wants them to relate by marriage”.*

The parents of the girl will discuss the issue and if they agree, the father of the girl will then prepare a handle and fix on the jembe that was brought. Then the mother of the girl will select her fellow women and take the jembe with a handle to the boy's parents. They are received well and served with the local brew 'busaa'. The purpose of the local liquor is to make them discuss the marital issue at hand in depth.

Then gifts are sent to the girl's home regularly to create good relation between them. For example, whenever they slaughter a cow, meat is taken there. Other commodities like honey, milk and groundnuts were also given to the girl and her parents.

History of both parties was investigated to ensure no negative traits. If traits such as witch craft, sorcery, epilepsy, or night running are discovered in the family, marriage arrangements are cancelled. A team of spies was sent by the girl's parents to check the wealth of the boy's home. This was to ensure safety of their daughter, as a man with enough wealth is likely to take care of a wife apart from paying dowry.

It reached a time when a boy was sent early in the morning to go to the girl's home and assist the girl to slash and dig their farm. The boy would slash as the girl dug the slashed land. This exercise was repeated several times to ensure the girl gets used to the boy for them to start a love relationship.

The girl's parents will then ask for dowry. '*Neonula omwana engeso omuwa lusala*' literary it means that if you snatch a sharp object from a child, you give her a stick to stop the child from crying. This statement means if you marry a girl, you must pay dowry in return.

Marriage among the Bukusu was communal in nature and there were customs that regulated respect for kinship ties, fertility and how men and women conducted themselves morally. Legitimacy of the union was done through matchmaking, negotiations and settlement of bridewealth, which was overseen by the elders. Several stages were involved in marriage arrangements which included family consultations, courtship, payment of bridewealth and a number of rituals and ceremonies which led to the moving of the bride into her husband's home (Baraza,2015).

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the men were the heads of households while women played very important roles in domestic, agricultural and reproductive areas. The patriarchal social structure was therefore brought out clearly in the marriage institution among the Babukusu. Socially polygamy was allowed and a polygamous man was seen to be wealth, earned status in the society and the larger family provided the needed labor in the farm. Rituals such as purifications, blessings and ancestral invocation ensured that marriage was legitimate morally and spiritually (Wolf,1971)

The way marriage was organized among the Babukusu by 1899 brought out a well-structured system socially that led to balanced family interests, communal harmony and moral responsibility. Cultural identity, social norms and inter-clan relationships were maintained through marriage in the pre-colonial Bukusu society. Wagner (1947) describes marriage as both a social and economic contract where bridewealth (likhwi) binds families and solidifies clan alliances.

### **2.3.1 Significance of Rituals Performed During Marriage**

Marriage rituals among the Bukusu are symbolic in that they help to enhance cultural, social and spiritual purposes. These rituals play an important role in bringing into forth their worldview, values to the family lineage and community, (Muleka,2022).

Culturally the rituals help in the preservation and transmission of the values of the culture among the Bukusu. Socially they bring together the families of the married couple therefore strengthening clan ties. Economically the bride price leads to redistribution of wealth and makes strong the relationships among communities. Spiritually they lead to blessings on the married couple and the prayers done lead to the protection of the married couple. Bridewealth helped in making marriages stable, bring friendship and make the unions legitimate. Colonialism, urbanization, commercialization and individualization have led to erosion of traditional, cultural and religious authority (Wepukhulu,2023).

### **2.3.2 Variations in Marriage Practices Among the Bukusu Clans**

Among the Bukusu, marriage customs vary from one clan to another although there are some elements which are common and certain practices that are different. Among Ba-Masaba they practiced arranged marriages where the role of coming up with a suitable marriage partner was done by the parents and elders while the ba-mukhe found in Mt. Elgon area allowed the young men to choose their own marriage partners before parent's involvement in marriage ceremonies. Ba-Kimweyi clan incorporated traditional dances known as Sikudi and during marriage their feasts and rituals lasted for several days while the Ba -Nabichache clan were involved in story-telling and oral history when doing their weddings.

### **2.3.3 Role of Songs and Dances in Marriage Practices Among the Bukusu**

Songs and dances play a vital role in marriage practices among the Bukusu. They are not only used for entertainment but cultural expressions. They also play a very crucial role in the social, and symbolic aspects of marriage. These songs bring unity, educate and sanctify a marriage and this enhances the continuity of traditions and the Bukusu identity across the generations

Songs are involved during every stage of marriage: for instance, during courtship and engagement songs are sung by the young men and women to show their affections and

admiration to one another. During bride-price negotiations (*khuchukha*) the songs are done in order to enhance unity among the families and promote friendship. When it comes to the wedding ceremonies there is singing and dancing by both families to signify that the marriage has come to a climax. In post wedding rituals there is singing as a way of celebrating the bride being part of the bridegroom's family.

#### **2.4. Bride Wealth**

There is a sustained debate on the role of bride price commonly referred to as bride wealth in African marriage practices. Some scholars perceive it as a purchase of a woman that legitimizes violence against a married woman. While others simply take it as a form of appreciation to the parents of the bride. Obudho (1985) asserts that, bride wealth was the basis of a whole network of interpersonal relations and an expression of gratitude from the husband to the family members of his wife. Mbiti (1969)" holds the same view. He notes that, bride wealth was a token of gratitude on the part of the bridegroom's people to those of the bride, for their care over her and for allowing her to become his wife. The above scholars make it clear that the payment of bride wealth by the young man's family is an essential element in the establishment of legality of the marriage institution, therefore stabilizing marriage. Through bride wealth, family alliances and contracts are made between the families of the bride and the groom.

Bride wealth was a hallmark of traditional Bukusu marriage. There was no consensus on the price tag of bride wealth as noted by Ndalila during an oral interview session on 24th May 2020. He observed that: -

*“The Bukusu kept hundreds of cattle and thus the team from the bride would be allowed to come and take vigil at the bridegroom's homestead during the time the cattle were being sent to drink water. Then the bride's team would throw a sort of javelin stick alongside the trail of the cows. Where the javelin stick landed, the cattle were taken as bride wealth” (O.I., 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020).*

Another research participant opined that: -

*“There was no fixed bridewealth. Usually, the team of the bride would negotiate with that of the bridegroom and arrive at an amicable amount of cattle that would be paid” (Namunganga O.I.10<sup>th</sup> August 2020).*

Bride wealth, helped to strengthen the relationship between the two families. It was a form of gratitude from one kinship group to the other.

Bride wealth has an important social, economic and religious significance. Through bride wealth, a new relationship is formed between the families of the spouses. The union between the two families remained effective beyond the lifetime of the original individual spouses. The wider the family extends, the stronger the bonds of kinship and the chances of social disintegration are lessened.

#### **2.4.1 Bridewealth as a Legal Contract**

Wepukhulu (2023) explains how bridewealth (bukhwe) was historically mandatory to make the marriage valid, acts as a compensation to the girl’s family and show that the man is stable. Bride wealth was legally binding in the customary laws and is regarded so by the community regardless of the pressures from the modern world.

#### **2.5 Polygamy**

This is one of the outstanding marriage practices of the Babukusu society. Indeed, polygamy characterized marriage practices of the entire Luhya community, that the Babukusu are a component of, and indeed it was entrenched in all African societies in West Africa, Central Africa, North Africa and Eastern Africa. Wagner (1949) observes that polygamy was common and socially accepted among the elders and wealthy men.

Polygamy was embedded in Bukusu marriage practices. However, it was not evident from the research respondents when it was assimilated into the milieu of the Bukusu society. Elaborate marriage ceremonies were conducted in most cases for the first wife who was given respect and recognition. In the homestead of the Bukusu man, the house of the first wife was the first one from the gate while those of her co wives were hidden behind that of the first wife (Nasimiyu.O.I.6<sup>th</sup> April 2020). Co wives could only cook in their houses after a ceremony had been conducted which allowed them to put up cooking stones or else the co wives cooked in the house of the first wife. Wives were selected on the basis of their good character.

Kalavulu, (2015) noted that structures within the compounds followed a prescribed layout, although there were variations. Houses were circular with thatched roofs. The first wife's house was directly opposite the gate, with the houses of junior wives organized to the left and right, according to seniority. The married sons' houses were near the gate and were arranged according to birth order. Because unmarried children who had reached puberty were not permitted to sleep under the same roof as their parents, unmarried sons slept in special houses called *chisimba* (single, *esimba*). Girls, and sometimes younger boys, slept with classificatory grandmothers in girls' houses (*ekogono* or *eshibinze*).

The final marriage ceremony that made the wife a complete member of the clan was called Sitekho (cooking). Here the wife would go back to her parents' home and they slaughtered for her a goat. She was then dressed in special clothes. The wife would then go back to the husband's house where all the meat would have been transported to. She would also be given gifts including a pot that was then used in the Sitekho ceremony. The couple would then be confined in their house where they would share meat and Ugali and for the first time be allowed to call each other by their surnames (Nabalayo. O.I. 23.3.2020)

Marriage was dissolved either if the wife broke norms of society or when her husband passed on. Society did not condone a wife who practiced witchcraft, a woman would be forced to leave her matrimonial home and go back to her parents. The children were not allowed to leave the home for they were members of the clan. Once a husband passed on the marriage literary was dissolved. Nonetheless the wife had to go through a series of cleansing rituals which ultimately legitimately made her free to remarry. Bukusu traditional society did not entertain and accommodate women who were single parents. The widow usually would be remarried into the clan of the deceased husband. The brothers of the deceased were automatic suitors. This cleansing ceremony was organized at three levels as described by Namunganga during an oral interview session:

*“There was the shaving ceremony immediately after the deceased husband had been buried. It took place on the third day after the burial. The widow would be shaved and all the mourners who had stayed in the homestead of the deceased. After shaving ceremony in the night of the third day after burial the Lusuli of the house of the deceased was broken and one of the poles of the house was removed, an indication that the owner of the homestead had passed and that the wife was free. The second ceremony took place after forty days. This was a secretive ceremony described as ‘khukhala kumulindi’. The widow would travel far away from her village and seek a stranger to have sexual intercourse with. This sexual cleansing rite was to make the widow a new member of the society. She would be rejuvenated and now ready to seek a new suitor for marriage” (Namunganga, O.I., 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020).*

Widows whose deceased husbands were in their middle age were allowed to marry immediately after the second purification ceremony. This was to facilitate the widow and her children, have someone to provide security, food and comfort. Widows who were elderly where the deceased was an elder, had to wait for the final purification rite called ‘*khukhala kimikoye*’ where the house of the deceased was destroyed and now the widow was free to move on to a new life.

## 2.6 Levirate Marriage (*Khukerama*)

Philips (1953) states that, levirate marriage is based on the idea that the death of the husband does not put an end to the marital relationship. Whereas Radcliffe-Brown writes that leviratic union is seen to be the continuation or renewal of the existing structures of social relations.

Levirate marriage refers to a situation where a brother inherits the wife of his deceased brother, and cohabits with her. This type of marriage is found in two ways: First, where a married man with more than one wife inherited a deceased brother's woman and second, where an unmarried man (*Omusumba*) inherited a woman of a deceased brother or cousin brother. In this case, a woman was not considered to be a full wife of *Omusumba*. However, the *Omusumba* had to marry his own rightful wife in future, that is why levirate marriage was not considered a new marriage, as no old relationships were severed and no new ones established. Levirate marriage was therefore a convenient arrangement to protect and give support to the women and their children in the future.

Marriage was also dissolved when the bride groom's parents returned bride wealth when a wife voluntarily ran away from her matrimonial home and eloped with another man. Such a woman was referred to as *nasikoko*. Makomboti (O.I., 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020) stated that:

*“This happens when a woman decides to desert her husband for another man, or when a woman has been chased away by her husband then she decides to get married to another man. Such a woman is called nasikoko. When this happens, the father must return the bride wealth to pave way for the second man to pay the second bride wealth. The bride wealth for nasikoko is not as high as for a normal union unless she was childless and the original bride wealth had not been fully paid. Nasikoko was free to go with her first husband's children, so long as the bride wealth has been returned” (Makomboti O.I., 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020).*

When the bride wealth was not returned to her first husband, at her death, the new man had no right to bury her; she had to be buried at her first husband's homestead. If *nasikoko* did not bear

children with the new man but left her children with the first husband, she must be buried at her first husband's place. This would make it easier for her sons to inherit their father's property.

Pauli (2000) examined the stages of marriage and pointed out that it had a starting and end point. She identified exchange of cattle and gifts in form of bride wealth as the climax of the stages in marriage. However, in her opinion marriage in African societies was flexible and could be reversed and dissolved. Children legitimized marriage though women who do not bear children do not lose their position in the union. Pauli is of the opinion that marriage reproduces and rearranges social structure.

## **2.7 Summary**

This chapter has described the marriage practices of the indigenous marriage practices of the Bukusu people from the time of engagement, through marriage wedding and eventually when marriage was dissolved. The dissolution of marriage for the widow symbolized a new beginning of engagement. This affirms the cyclic life philosophy in African societies. There was hardly any information on what happened whenever a wife died. It could be because polygyny was a common practice among the Bukusu.

In this chapter patriarchy theory illustrates that marriage practices among the Bukusu were not merely traditional customs but they were dynamic social systems which were maintained through the transmission of culture and gendered power relations. The foundational influence of patriarchy continues to shape the organization of marriage among the Bukusu despite the contemporary changes that have been brought by education, Christianity and modern law which have introduced equality and negotiation elements in marriage. The next chapter discusses the encounter between western civilization and Bukusu marriages practices.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN WESTERN CIVILIZATION WITH BUKUSU

#### MARRIAGE PRACTICES,1900-1945

##### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the establishment of colonial rule and missionary activities among the Bukusu. It also discusses the impact of Western civilization on marriage practices among the Bukusu by highlighting how the colonial policies such as cheap labour, introduction of money economy, formal employment and Christianity affected marriage among the Bukusu. The contact between Western civilization and Bukusu marriage practices between 1900-1945 can be well analyzed through the social learning theory, which emphasizes that individuals acquire behaviors, values, and social norms through observation, imitation, and reinforcement within their social environment (Bandura 1977).

Before the coming of the colonialists the Bukusu marriage practices were very much communal, involving family negotiations, payment of bridewealth and the traditional rites were observed which emphasized kinship and continuity of lineage, (Were, 1967). New cultural models that put much consideration on monogamy, Christian wedding ceremonies and nuclear family structures started coming up. These western practices were brought through mission schools, churches, and colonial policies that subtly ensured that people conform to Christian marital ideals (Makila,1978).

Amutabi, (2005) opines that, African converts mostly students, and mission workers began to observe and copy the marital behaviors of European missionaries and began practicing Christian monogamy due to the mechanism of social learning. The church's reinforcement mechanisms, such as baptism, church membership, and social recognition, served as rewards for adopting

Western marital values. Polygamy and bridewealth which were some of the traditional practices began to decline because those who engaged in them were seen as pagans. With time traditional and Christian marriage practices started co-existing with individuals starting to adopt to new norms selectively based on their social context. The younger generation, exposed to mission education and Christian moral instruction, adopted to these new ideals through continuous observation and reinforcement-hallmarks of social learning (Bandura,1986).

### **3.2 Establishment of Colonial Rule Among the Bukusu and their Reactions**

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the British came into contact with the Bukusu society. The Bukusu initially did not accept the British rule as the colonial agents and those supporting them like the Soga and the Bagisu were seen as threats to their territory and land. The Bukusu put up a resistance against the British imperialism at Chetambe Fort near Webuye in 1894-1895. Their leaders such as chief Kabujanja and Mayo constructed fortified villages (*likholo*) so as to act as a defense against the British.

Many Bukusu warriors were attacked and massacred at the Chetambe Fort by the colonial troops in 1895 led by Captain W.H Grant and Semei Kakungulu. The British established military posts and administrative Centres at Bungoma and Webuye which marked the beginning of colonial rule in Bukusu land, (Makila 1978). The British used indirect rule as a system of administration, whereby they used local chiefs to collect taxes and maintain order. They also came up with hut tax and forced labor systems whereby the Bukusu men were recruited to work on settler farms and railways especially during the building of the Uganda railway. The colonial chiefs (*bakopi*) were put in position to make decisions over the clan elders.

The missionaries followed later on and established first mission stations in Kabula by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) around 1906-1908, Mill Hill Fathers (Catholics) in Kimilili and Ndivisi around 1910-1912. They introduced western education and Christianity by building schools, churches and dispensaries. This led to the first local converts and clerks who were trained by the mission education and ended up working for colonial administration. Marriage and family life among the Bukusu changed because the missionaries were against polygamy, bridewealth and initiation songs. Bukusu beliefs and initiation rituals were challenged by the Christian beliefs. The Africans who went to mission stations and became elites ended up joining nationalistic movements (Wekesa, 2000).

A few Bukusu's practiced Christianity and still went on with their traditional beliefs leading to dual faith. Some of the local leaders used missionary education to champion for land rights and political representation (Barasa, 1996).

### **3.3 Colonial Policies on Marriage among the Bukusu**

Colonial governments spearheaded various policies, which interfered with the traditional setup of various people in Kenya (Akong'a 1995). These colonial policies included the East African Marriage Ordinance of 1902. It laid emphasis more on Christian marriages and disregarded the customary African marriages. This led to these customary marriages not being excluded from legal legitimacy unless the married couple agreed to be sanctioned under Christian rites.

The Native Christian marriage ordinance of 1904 included into law the 1902 ordinance thus rejecting customary marriages and giving Christian marriages privilege. Under the Marriage of Native Christians Ordinance of 1931, the stigma on married individuals who had stayed together

as husband and wife without formalizing their customary marriage was reduced. Christian widows were given rights over their children and this led to the limited authority of kin groups.

In the late 1920s the effort to have customary marriages registered did not succeed as only few couples accepted to undergo registration. The colonial laws marginalized the broader, legal and economic systems of marriage practices among the Bukusu and only recognized Christian marriages.

### **3.3.1 Cheap African labour and Urbanization**

Colonial policies in Africa had diverse intentions and mostly in favour of the colonizers. Some of the colonial policies were primarily intended to secure what Akong'a (1995) calls "a steady flow of cheap African labor for European-owned dairy and cash-crop farms, mines, and plantations." These measures included the head taxes which were to be paid in rupees obtainable only through employment. This requirement compelled "men to seek wage labor away from home for a period extending from months to years" (Akong'a,1995). In such circumstances, some men generally preferred to conveniently have a wife in their rural residence as well as one in their urban residence, a situation which eventually resulted in marriages.

Usually, the rural wives remained in the rural areas to perpetuate the man's rights to land and the family's subsistence requirements while the migrant male worker acquired another wife as a domestic helper who resided with him at the center of employment. In any case, the migrant husbands' wage incomes were inadequate and therefore their rural wives' work was essential to the survival of the groups. This is similar to what Parkin (1978) called the persistence of marriages among urban Luo in Kenya which culminates in two fairly discrete "nuclear" family households, one urban, one rural, replacing the traditional joint domestic units.

The colonial period witnessed a number of changes in the Bukusu marriage practices. These changes were necessitated by the process of urbanization, monetary economy, demand for cheap African labour on European maize plantations in Trans Nzoia and other white European areas in the country and new values introduced by European westernization and Christianity. Though markets were prevalent among the Babukusu society in pre-colonial period, women and men business people would go to trade in the day and come back at night to their families. The advent of colonialism introduced urban centres where young men and women went to seek for wage employment. The urban centres included; Kitale and the settler farms in Trans-Nzoia, Eldoret, Kisumu, Bungoma, and Kakamega. Remittances from wage laborers introduced cash into local communities, which began to circulate within local markets. Bukusu markets such as Chwele, Kimilili and Webuye became centers for the sale of agricultural produce, livestock and consumer goods (Wanyama 1996).

Urbanization triggered a new form of polygamy where young men had two wives, one who was resident in the urban centers and the other who worked on the rural farm. Indeed, in the 1930s the colonial government that was in dire need of migrant labour in European plantations encouraged polygamous families. Urbanization promoted elopement as a common marriage practice where formal customary marriage negotiations would be conducted later after the couple already had children.

### **3.3.2 Monetary Economy**

This was a fundamental innovation in African societies in the colonial era. For a long time, barter system of trade was the norm. The measure for exchange was in form of grains, potatoes, cassava, arrow roots in baskets or livestock in form of sheep, goats, chicken and predominantly cattle. For

example, iron smelting was a key craft among the Bukusu who traded iron implements for food and livestock with neighboring communities (Makila,1982).

The growth of regional trade introduced a monetary economy based on the Indian rupee that was predominantly used in the first period of British colonialism in Kenya. However, by the onset of 1930s, currency in shillings and coins based on the British monetary system had been incorporated in Kenya.

With the introduction of money economy, Babukusu marriage practices begun witnessing drastic changes particularly in the area of bride price or dowry. As early as the end of the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century bride price was not just limited to livestock but a new ingredient was introduced. This was payment of money as part of the gifts or appreciation in marriage negotiations.

Traditional bridewealth transactions, formerly paid in cattle, began to incorporate cash payments, signaling the blending of traditional and modern economic practices (Nasimiyu,1985).

### **3.4 The Introduction of Western Christianity**

Christianity was a major cultural force that transformed Bukusu cultural beliefs and practices in the colonial era in Kenya. The Bukusu occupied most of the territory in Bungoma County, in the colonial era. European missionary organizations founded mission Centre's in different areas in the Babukusu community in the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Roman Catholic and Friends Africa Industrial Mission were the first to set mission centers in this community in 1902, followed by the CMS in 1906 and the Salvation churches only came in by 1927 when they set up mission centers at Kolanya from where they diffused to Ndakaru, Yabeko, Namwela, Chwele, Kimilili and other parts of Bukusu land. The Friends African mission set up their first mission Centre in Lugulu and then spread to Matulo, Kimilili and Kabuchai. The

Catholic began their first Centre at Kibabii and then expanded into other areas of Bukusu Land. The Anglican church began at Kabula and spread into the rest of Bukusu land (Wolf,1971).

The impact of Christianity on Bukusu marriages can be discerned at three levels. These are; engagement, wedding and the perceptions on polygamy.

Christian religious belief systems and teachings were a direct affront to the Bukusu culture on which marriage practices derived its legitimacy and sustainability. Christians drawing from Western culture emphasized monogamous marriage as the ideal, perfect and only legitimate marriage practice in the world. Any other practice of marriage was dismissed as barbaric and demonic. This was a direct attack on polygamy that was the acceptable and ideal practice in the Bukusu community. In fact, monogamy was derided in many cultural learning and teaching sessions among the Bukusu elders. One informant sarcastically commented that:

*“a man with one wife cannot sit behind a beer pot when elders are taking traditional beer (busaa), because if someone was to bring a message that his wife was dead, he would run over the beer pot pouring it as he ran out to absorb the shock of the news. For the polygamous man he would simply ask which one of the wives is dead as he sipped his drink”. Another informant laughed it off and opined that a man who was monogamous was perceived as a one-eyed person who would lose sight if something hit the only eye” (Wamukota O.I., 2th January 2021).*

Yasuku (1997) commenting on Christian impact on polygamy states that the culture of polygamy in sub-Saharan Africa remained relatively undisturbed until the entry of European colonialism at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Together with the Christian missionaries the colonial administrators attempted to replace polygamy with monogamy through changing marriage regulations and giving preferential treatments to monogamous men.

Wolf (1971) added that among the Bukusu different missionary societies held different opinions on polygamous families attending church services. The Salvation Army church was very liberal and accommodated polygamous families into the services and their sermons did not condemn polygamy. The Anglican church and Friends African Mission and catholic insisted on monogamy and church members who married second wives were chased out of the church together with their second wives.

The African Christian marriage and Divorce Act of 1941 held that the Christian marriage was monogamous and a spouse cannot marry anybody else as long as the marriage is not dissolved.

Thomas (2000) in her writings lamented that African Christian converts had challenges in getting suitors who were Christians and thus they got married when they were very mature. This was because Christian teachings had instilled in them the power to make decisions on who to get married to and when to get married.

While in the mission centers, they were given monetary allowances, so they understood the value of money and the benefits of western life of consumerism, and thus wanted suitors who had the capital to provide such a life. Missionaries were usually disappointed whenever the male African Christian converts decided to marry heathen or girls from the village as opposed to those in the mission Centre.

Christianity with its emphasis on monogamy has significantly depressed the practice of polygamy. For instance, among the Bukusu, the Friends African Mission has been associated with the abolition of many of their pre-colonial traditions (Bradley 1995). In general, Christianity viewed many African customs such as bride wealth payment and marriages "as primitive, if not repugnant" (Akong'a, 1995). This accounts for the massive efforts Laban Moogi Gwako expended by Christian

missionaries towards the creation of "a new personality in the African, while simultaneously changing traditional social structure and culture" (Akong'a 1995). It is this kind of motivation which partially inspired the Europeans and their agents to vigorously establish schools and churches among the Bukusu and other Kenyan societies.

The Church prohibits traditional union among the Bukusu by emphasizing that upon the death of a husband, a woman should either remarry or live singly without a marital partner. Consequent to prohibition of the Bukusu traditional union, the Church seems to have established another way of caring for the woman. However, the most critical question to pose is whether the Church has brought any advantages or disadvantages on social structure and values of both Bukusu Christians and non- Christians, on leviratic marriage.

Indeed, has the Church applied a reasonable pastoral adaptation process that leads to the prohibition of the leviratic institution? The answer to this question is no, because from the field evidence collected from Church leaders, there is no reasonable application of the principle of adaptation. Dinah (2021) examines conflict and accommodation between Bukusu widowhood rituals and the Friends quarker missionaries' practices.

Missionaries condemned traditional marriage on the basis of some obscure analogy to be an unlawful sexual union, cohabitation, which was considered immoral and unchristian. This study therefore, does not need to call for a new and radical theology of Christian marriage for the African Church, it rather calls for the Christian Church to be consistent in the application of its own principle of pastoral adaptation in Christian marriage. Ng'etich (2024) places missionary doctrine and British colonial control in local context and outlines which marriage practices e.g. polygamy were targeted by missionaries.

Christian Church marriage is either forbidden 'or discouraged between persons who have blood relationship in the direct line ascending and descending, and in the collateral line but only up to the third degree. The Church forbids marriage between father-in-law and daughter-in-law, mother-in-law and son-in-law, because between them exists a final relationship. Affinity in the direct line without a dispensation makes marriage in any degree invalid. Nganga discusses missionaries condemnation of certain traditional practices and the broader religious transformation that reshaped social practices including marriage.

Christian European missionaries did not permit remarriage unless one's partner is dead or the marriage has been declared by the Church officials as invalid. If one remarried while a valid marriage still existed, one would be practicing bigamy. However, Christianity may allow the husband to separate from his wife under certain conditions, but he cannot remarry because his marriage with his wife still exists. The Church would permit in some circumstances a non-Christian husband to remarry if he wished to become a Christian, though his former wife was still alive. If a non-Christian husband wished to become a Christian, he may give up all his former wives, but one. The church may even permit the husband, according to "Pauline Privilege", to expel all his former wives and marry another woman who is ready to become a Christian as well (Wepukhulu,2023).

The Church insisted that marriage is possible only between one single man and one single woman. Monogamy, according to Christianity, is the acceptance and exclusive form of marriage. It is the pattern and proto-type of human marriage, on the other hand, it is universal, sexual union, production and care of children, and the co-operation which marriage implies, requires, in the Christian view, essentially only two people. For Christianity, monogamy is, has been and will remain the only true type of marriage. The Christian Church demands that each partner has been

leading a good Christian life. Today, the Church has included "love" as one of the important requirements and objectives of marriage. The second Vatican Council declares about the nature of marriage (Wapukha,2020).

The intimate partnership of married life and law has been established by the creator and qualified by his laws. It is rooted in the conjugal covenant of irrevocable personal consent. Hence, by that human act whereby spouses mutually bestow and accept each other, a relationship arises which by divine will and in the eyes of society, too is a lasting one, - authentic married love is caught up into divine love and is governed and enriched by Christ's redeeming power and the saving activity of the Church. For this reason, Christian spouses have a special sacrament by which they are fortified and receive a kind of consecration in the duties and dignity of their state.

The Christian preparatory marriage rites consisted of calling of the banns, carrying out inquiries about the bride and the bridegroom. Then the church minister investigated whether there are any impediments between them, and that both partners are baptized and their intention to marry comes out of free will, and that they have never been married before. The minister then explained to the couple the importance of matrimony. He also informed them of their responsibilities as a married couple.

A Christian marriage becomes effective when the bride and bridegroom give their consent freely to marriage before a church minister and in the presence of at least two witnesses. Christianity insisted that the marriage bond is not a mere contract, but also a sacrament which confers grace to the recipients, and may not be dissolved until death. The Church teaches that, at the death of a spouse, one is free to remarry somewhere else given the nature of the situation. This is contrary to the Bukusu, who insist that a woman must enter leviratic union, with a brother-in-law (Wolf,1971).

### **3.5 Western Education and Marriage Practices**

Western education and formal schooling played a decisive role on changing views on marriage and marriage practices among Bukusu women and girls. Missionary's organization did a lot work to establish schools for girls and boys in Bukusu land. Every missionary society set up a church and a school as the key agents of spreading Christianity and western civilization in colonial Kenya.

The Friends African mission, Anglican mission, Roman Catholic mission and Salvation mission were predominantly involved in development of education in the Bukusu community. By 1920s, western education begun impacting marriage practices in the Bukusu community. Initially parents were hesitant to send girls to schools for they feared that western education would destroy the traditional values of woman hood in the girls. By the end of 1930s, parents were sending their daughters to acquire western education. This education had the following effects on marriage practices.

In the first place, western education kept girls in school for a long time and thus had a change on the age one got married. Since they enrolled in school when they were already over age, they completed the first level when they were eighteen years and by the time, they got married, they were mature in contrast to the age when girls got married in the pre-colonial era. Similarly, there was a drastic change towards engagement. Overtime the role of parents in the engagement process declined and it was the girl who gradually attained the rights and power to choose a suitor. The educated young men also got the opportunity to choose their wives to be. Colonialism eroded the role and power of elders and the family in deciding a suitor for girls. Indeed, elopement as opposed to siselelo became the common practice of marriage among the Bukusu towards the last quarter of the colonial era (Wolf,1971).

Western education and Christianity gradually destroyed the customary practice of siselelo and introduced the wedding as the modern and legitimate marriage ceremony. Most educated girls demanded a wedding as evidence of marriage.

### **3.6. Summary**

This chapter has discussed the impact of marriage practices among the Babukusu in the colonial period. It has examined changes in engagement, bride price and wedding ceremony. It has also shown that Christianity and the European colonial administration and western education were the agents that caused transformation in marriage practices.

The application of social learning theory in this chapter shows how the Bukusu community were able through adaptation, imitation and reinforcement to put into practice Western marital models and were able to negotiate changes in marriage practices not merely through being coerced. The theory also reveals that western ideals of marriage were observed, changed and mixed with Bukusu traditions leading to hybrid marital practices that continued throughout the colonial period and beyond. This showed that that cultural change came about as a learning process.

Traditional practices such as polygamy and bride price were seen by the Christian missionaries as paganism. Christian converts were encouraged by the church to engage in monogamous church wedding marriages. The Bukusu traditional marriage underwent transformations due to encounter with colonialism. The next chapter examines the influence of British colonial rule on marriage practices of the Bukusu, 1946-1963.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### IMPACT OF WESTERN CULTURE ON BUKUSU MARRIAGE PRACTICES, 1946-1963

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the influence of British colonial rule on marriage practices of the Bukusu in Bungoma County. The chapter looks at colonial laws and policies, role of western education and African peasant commercial economy, role of Dini ya Msambwa and the transformation of bride wealth. Missionaries, colonial administrators and formal education systems intensified interactions between Bukusu cultural practices and Western influences. This interaction affected the marriage institution greatly which was the most important pillar in the identity and continuation of the Bukusu social organization. Traditionally Bukusu marriage practices had well defined customs such as bridewealth negotiations, polygamy, clan alliances and levirate marriages which led to reinforced communal cohesion, gender roles, and intergenerational responsibilities (Makila 1978; Barasa 1996).

The introduction of Western cultural influences brought changes to these cultural norms due to the role played by the missionaries and colonial authorities. The Christian missionaries came up with church rites which promoted monogamy and were against traditional practices such as levirate marriages and polygamy, hence promoting new forms of marital legitimacy. On the other hand, the colonial legal framework provided legal frameworks for the regulation of marriage through statutory laws often at odds with customary norms. These external pressures catalyzed both change and continuity in marriage practices as the Bukusu selectively adapted, resisted or reinterpreted western ideals to fit local realities (Ochieng, 1989; Were, 1967).

Understanding the impact of Western culture on Bukusu marriage practices during this period is important for appreciating the broader dynamics of cultural interaction, negotiation and adaptation.

It shows how indigenous societies navigate external pressure while striving to preserve cultural identity particularly in the intimate and socially central domain of marriage. This study shows the interplay between tradition and modernity, hence bringing out the transformation of marriage practices among the Bukusu due to the western influence between 1946 and 1963. This period laid the foundation of post-independence social restructuring in Bungoma County.

Patriarchy theory has been applied in this chapter. It brings out the encounter with Western culture during the late colonial and early post-war period (1946-1963), a period that brought out new change in Bukusu marriage practices by reorganizing the institutions and symbolic forms through which male authority was reproduced and not doing away with male dominance. Patriarchy theory defines gendered power as embedded in social structure, legal, religious, economic and culture which allocate authority and control over resources to men (Walby 1990).

In the case of the Bukusu, new institution sites (mission churches, schools, courts, wage labor, markets) that mediated marital relations and inheritance were brought about by the missionaries, colonial authorities and monetizing economy. These new sites ended up reproducing and strengthening male control through new terms. Christian marriage practices and missionary discourses that popularized monogamy and the church were often against some indigenous practices like polygyny and plural residence but simultaneously relocated decision-making power to male actors who negotiated with colonial administrators and mission leaders for social status and access to resources (Makila, 1978; Amutabi, 2005).

#### **4.1 British Colonial Laws and Transformation of Bukusu Marriages**

British colonialism introduced the English law and morality into Kenyan African societies. This English law was administered by the judicial organs introduced into colonial Kenya. The colonial

courts were established ostensibly to dispense justice in the colony. The indirect British system of colonial administration did accept African customary laws to be used to litigate conflicts and disputes among the African subjects. However, criminal cases were adjudicated using the English law. The reforms in international law in the 1930's played a role in making the British colonial government in Kenya recognize African customary law as authentic. Nonetheless colonial courts in many ways determined the content of African customary law.

It was the colonial judicial system that litigated disputes in African marriages and thereby triggered changes in the Babukusu marriage practices. It created native courts whose judges it appointed and whose jurisdiction it regulated. Customary law thus became politicized and bureaucratized and was alienated from the people and societies that were supposed to be the beneficiaries.

The British colonial government enacted a hut tax law as early as 1901. This was an initiative to raise revenue so that the colony could support part of its recurrent expenditure. The more the huts one had in a homestead the more the hut tax he paid. The men in the Bukusu community were polygamous and thus they had to pay the tax for every hut in the homestead. Usually, every wife had their own hut and all the boys who had been initiated too had their own huts called "*Simba*".

Initially the men used surplus capital such as cattle, goats and sheep which were sold to pay tax. As time passed on the surplus livestock resources got depleted and the men were left with minimal options as to whether to continue with a polygamous lifestyle or reduce the number of wives and automatically number of children and save on hut tax.

Taxes were introduced in 1901 but it was not until 1910 that they were paid monetarily rather than in kind.

By 1902, the hut tax had been introduced to areas that were under proper administration. It was later extended to other regions as colonial administration became properly established. It was, however, only after the First World War that the tax began to be increased sharply and to be collected efficiently (Kavulavu and Chang'ach, 2019). In 1903 poll tax was introduced so that men from ages of 16 could join the tax bracket since hut tax did not capture them and if it did it was their fathers who paid.

The colonial regime was convinced that taxation was the only effective tool to force Africans into wage labor in order to raise money for payment of tax. Refusal to pay taxes in any form was punishable by confiscation of property and imprisonment for unspecified period. By 1919 the rate for almost all Africans was five rupees. In 1920 tax was again raised to ten rupees equivalent to twelve Kenya shillings then. Those who were unable to pay were charged a fixed penalty of two months labor.

The colonial state needed African labor to support the European large scale plantation economy and also to facilitate construction of public infrastructure such as roads, health centers, schools and administrative centers. Poll tax was the initial strategy that the colonial state envisaged to collect more tax and in 1919 it enacted the Northey Laws which required every male adult of age sixteen to forty-five to provide at least 180 days of labor in the European large scale agricultural sector.

Enacting of the Northey Laws in 1919 led to massive rural urban migration and migration to settler farms by men from the Bukusu community to comply with the labor laws and also to seek for money for tax payment. Most of the young men in Bukusu community went to Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu to seek employment in European settler farms. The settlers in these regions were

growing maize and wheat. A few of the young men also sought employment in Kitale and Eldoret towns.

The resultant effect on African marriages in the rural areas among the Bukusu was enormous. The men who were available to marry many wives and construct huts for them were very few because the majority spent more time in the settler farms and urban centers than in the village. This led to gradual decline of polygamous marriages. However, a new form of marriage sprouted in the settler farms and urban areas where the young men had spouses who took care of them. This was the come we stay marriage. The young men would have an official wife in the village and another one who was not recognized by the family and clan in the urban /settler farms.

The institution of bride wealth and marriage among the Bukusu was greatly affected by colonialism. Marriage by abduction which was very common, was considered illegal by the colonial government, a view that is further supported by an archival source (KNA/DS/PC/NZA/3/33/8).

As early as 1916, Bukusu migrated in large numbers to Trans-Nzoia and settled as squatters on European farms to get a living and cash for taxes while others fled to town to evade taxation and forced labor KNA/DC/KMG/4/2. After the First World War, taxes were usually paid in cash as most people had depleted their livestock, as a result of colonial destocking policy.

The total premium for bride wealth in the colonial period kept on changing. The colonial regime appointed chiefs as functionaries of their administration. In the location of Malakisi the chief by the name Sudi Namachanja imposed a standard of thirteen heads of cattle as the bride wealth. In every marriage ceremony where the family of a bridegroom paid thirteen cows as bride wealth, it

became mandatory that two of the cows would be given to Chief Sudi Namachanja. The colonial chiefs in Kitoshi location took advantage of their positions of authority to confiscate cattle from the people who had been accused of committing a crime. The people lost many herds of cattle during the reign of Sudi Namachanja and the subsequent colonial chiefs. This had an effect on marriage practices in the sense that the majority of the common people could not afford bride wealth and so were unable to fulfill marriage requirements (Wepukhulu, Matisi and Mutsotso, 2023)

#### **4.2 Influence of Western civilization to Bukusu Marriages**

The young people both men and women had been positively influenced by westernization which manifested itself in form of wage employment, Western education and consumerism. Satia, et al. (2021) states that the shift to cash economy, land alienation, and wage labour made it harder to accumulate traditional bridewealth and follow older marriage rites. The period 1940s witnessed a new social status that was associated with people who were in gainful wage or salaried employment. The social status symbols that had been institutionalized in cattle, polygamy, and house wife drastically changed.

Barasa (2015) provides indirect evidence that marriage ceremonies themselves shifted in form and ritual due to Westernization and modernization. Young women wanted to be married to a man who was earning money. It was prestigious to introduce your husband to colleagues as working either in Bungoma, Kitale, Eldoret, Kisumu, Nakuru and Nairobi. Among the Babukusu, Trans Nzoia represented civilization, development and actualization of modernity. The majority of the young people wanted to get wage employment in Trans Nzoia and or Uasin Gishu and urban centers and towns. Most migrant laborers no longer looked with respect at the old rules for guidance. The migrant returned to the village with a new outlook, an attitude of skepticism and respect for elders

went down. This created disruptive moral standards and family life. There were disputes over long absence and the laxer morals of the returned workers. The young migrants who returned home briefly were not only eloping with young girls but also with young lonely wives of their fellow migrants. For example, some of the young migrants went to the extent of eloping with young wives of those who did not migrate.

In the period 1950 to 1960 the customary court at Sirisia had hundreds of cases which involved young men who eloped girls without their parents' permission. The young men would then take them away from the village. There were also many cases involving young men who had not paid dowry for the wives they were staying with to the in-laws. These were new developments in Bukusu marriage practices that developed because of westernization and modernity (Satia, Mukhwana and Mukamgai,2021)

Payment of bride wealth became a challenge such that there arose many cases of non-payment that were taken to the LNCs. Polygamy, which was encouraged among the traditional Bukusu became an offence as the colonial government passed marriage ordinances that forbid polygamy. The rising cases of non-payment of bride wealth made the colonial government to legislate laws on marriage and bride wealth such that men who failed to pay bride wealth could be prosecuted and marriage could only be considered legal and valid after bride wealth had been paid.

LNCs introduced registration of native marriages, as depicted by archives KNA/DS: PC/NZA/2/9/21. This was exacerbated by the gradual change in payment of bride wealth from primarily use of cattle to monetary payment. By the 1940s, there was a fixed monetary value paid alongside with cattle for bride wealth. Whereas, parents and relatives could contribute cattle for bride wealth payment, it was the responsibility of the bridegroom to mobilize enough money for

dowry payment. This forced the men to seek wage employment away from the village. This ultimately affected traditional marriage and particularly polygamy among the Bukusu. The cost for bride wealth among the Bukusu in the period 1940 to 1963 shifted from thirteen cows to include monetary benefits which ranged from Kenya shillings ten thousand to almost Kenya shillings fifty thousand depending on the level of education of the bride and the social status of her parents (Wolf,1971).

When the colonial policies eventually permitted the growing of cash crops on smallholder farms owned by the Africans, the women somehow lost their rights to both cash and a food supply that existed previously (Brabin 1984). Because almost all the money earned from cash crops exclusively ended in the pockets of male household heads, some men started to see expanded marriages as a means of taking advantage of new opportunities provided by the cash economy.

Yasuku (1997) observed that through schools the western ideal of the nuclear family based on a strong conjugal bond were transmitted. By commercializing the economy, they created income opportunities to young adults and hence weakened the parental authority. The urbanization process further physically removed many young adults from the social constraints of their family compounds. The prevalence of polygamy declined by the end of the colonial era.

Among the Bukusu, men historically married between the ages of 18-20 while women would get married at the age of 16. There was an increase in the age when one got married due to increased education level. There were cases of delayed marriages among the Bukusu girls due to most of the mid-teen years being taken over by education. Mission schools were established by missionaries and colonial authorities but education was limited and only a small group was given priority and it dealt mainly with religious instruction, basic literacy and vocational training. Wandibba and

Ikanda (2005) talk about how the attainment of education led to the changing views on wife inheritance and shows that attainment of higher education led to opposition of traditional practices of marriage.

Parents gradually began to demand more bride price for their daughters who were educated. Education was seen as an instrument that trained women in better primary health care, better cooks, efficient farmers and women who understood the emerging monetary economy were good shopkeepers and business people (Nasimiyu 1987).

### **4.3 Summary**

The foregoing discussion has given an analysis of the transformations in the marriage practices of the Bukusu society in the period 1946 to 1963. It is evident from the analysis that bridewealth became monetized and only the rich could afford marrying many wives. The penetration of western education and liberalism brought a new value system that changed social status to the extent that women preferred wage earning and salaried men and this ultimately encouraged monogamous marriages. The taxation system and migrant labour demands led to continuous migration of men into the settler farms and urban centers and therefore they had no time to marry and take care of many wives.

Patriarchy theory helps to explain how the selective adoption and adaptation of Western marital norms influenced and led to legal registration of marriages. The male heads of households ended up being the formal legal actors who were in charge of their households. The male who were privileged in customary systems consolidated male authority in new bureaucratic forms. The spread of mission education led to new masculine ideals where the illiterate household heads were given jobs, social prestige and better prospects in cash economy. Male dominance was hence

brought up via these symbolic and material incentives. Due to these rewards' practices that empowered women to have negotiating power within the kin group (such as female networks that influenced bridewealth negotiations or widow rights) they were being looked down upon by the Christian discourse on moral and formal legal structures that had given some privileges on conjugal guardianship, effectively narrowing the arenas where women exercised the influence (Oyewumi,1997; Were,1967). Hence the traditional norms of male dominance were brought down in some areas but institutionalized in others therefore producing hybrid marriages where men were predominantly in control over marriage, property and perpetuation of lineage. Thus, rather than bringing about equality in gender, patriarchy was enhanced through the cultural penetration of western culture.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The summary has been organized according to the objectives of the study.

#### 5.1 Summary

Marriage was and is still considered an important institution in the society and hence accorded ultimate respect not only in Christian but also the traditional circles. Hence the rituals that surround it are expressly articulated. During courtship a proposal will always begin with negotiations in marriage and the groom's family are the ones who initiate their proposal formally. The groom's family visits the bride's family so as to express interest. Both have to agree putting into consideration the bride's interests. Payment of bridewealth is symbolic and livestock especially cattle are given by the groom's family as compensation to the bride's family. This is also a show of respect to the bride's family, cements the family bonds and acts as compensation for the loss of the bride's labour.

Marriage ceremonies and rituals among the Bukusu included blessings which were offered by the elderly people who attended prayers and rituals invoking ancestors. They ate and drank during the ceremony in celebration of the union. The husband and the wife shared responsibilities where the husband acted as the provider and the protector while the wife was in charge of household duties. The extended family helped in supporting, resolving disputes and bringing up of children.

Polygamous marriage was allowed because it raised the social status of the man because having many wives showed that the man is wealthy. These marriages were well organized both socially

and economically. There were certain circumstances where divorce and separation were allowed such as adultery, incompatibility or failure to fulfill marital duties. When this happened, elders were involved in the negotiations and this could lead to: returning of bridewealth or reinstatement. Remarriage was also a common practice among the Bukusu. Socially marriage creates bonds between families and clans. This ensures continuity in the lineage and ensures stability in marriage. Vansina (1966) analyzes the traditional African political and social structures, including marriage practices among East African groups.

The establishment of Christianity and Western education had a far-reaching impact on marriage practices among the Bukusu people of Bungoma county. There was a growing population of Christian converts who denounced rituals and traditional ceremonies that accompanied Bukusu marriage practices. The Christian converts embraced monogamy marriage practices which were legitimized by the priests and pastors of the Christian missions that took root in the County.

The Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Church and the Friends African Mission Church/the Quakers were very strict on monogamy and denounced polygamy as evil and a deviation of Christianity. The Salvation Army Church was more accommodative because it allowed converts to keep their wives but did not allow further polygamous marriages. Christianity undermined the foundations of polygamy which was a dominant and popular marriage practice among the Bukusu society.

Western education, which was provided largely by Christian missions, was also instrumental in the decline of traditional Bukusu marriages. It introduced new social status in that those girls and boys who attained higher levels of education were assured of formal employment which in turn translated into higher incomes and improved standard of living.

The educated Africans preferred monogamous marriages which were conducted in the church and not by elders. Gradually, the role of the elders, clans and lineages lost relevance in society. The marriage practices of the Bukusu were organized around a subsistence system of economic production based on farming and livestock keeping. The Bukusu were engaged in local and regional trade but their core economy was farming and keeping of cattle, goats and sheep.

The advent of British colonialism in Kenya introduced a new form of production based on large scale plantation economy. European settlers established maize and wheat plantations in Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu. They required cheap labour for their farms. The colonial government enacted legislation and policies that introduced taxation and migrant labor in Kenya. These laws undermined the Bukusu marriage practices because the surplus produce that was used for bride wealth and supporting polygamous families was channeled into payment of taxes.

The men who were to marry and take care of the wives were forced to migrate to settler farms and urban centres to look for wage employment to raise money for taxation and also to purchase household goods for their families. The colonial economy gradually led to the decline of polygamy and the expansion and entrenchment of monogamy in Bungoma County.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

While some of the changes in family structures discussed in this chapter have created new opportunities for some people to enjoy life and given them a great sense of optimism, in other respects they have had a distinctly negative impact and have become a major source of frustration for some men, women and children. Although family disruption does not necessarily cause lasting harm to those affected and may indeed, in some cases, enrich their lives, some of the deleterious effects of divorce, single parenthood, cohabitation and clandestine polygamy have led to the

general perception that the social ecology in Africa is being severely damaged by the systematic erosion of its fabrics and that marriage is becoming an endangered institution. For instance, family disintegration under conditions of extreme poverty have had undesirable effects on the well-being of women and children, some of whom have turned to street life in order to survive under some of the most difficult, deprived and deplorable circumstances in human experience. A more creative effort to help cope with changing family traditions is to expand the range of social and economic opportunities and increase their access to resources, as a sustainable solution to most of our social problems, including the deterioration in the well-being of women and children.

Colonialism, modernization, urbanization, individualism and commercialization have changed bridewealth into a more pragmatic transaction rather than a sacred rite. This plays a vital role in the marriage customs of the Bukusu as well as compensation to a bride's family. In the Bukusu marriage there was respect accorded to the in-laws for instance, a wife was not allowed to shake hands with her father-in-law and waving was considered disrespectful. Through these norms respect was reinforced but these norms are increasingly adopting to modern settings. Gender roles are reflected during the marriage rituals performed traditionally among the Bukusu. The cultural norms and socialization would be seen in linguistic patterns where men and women spoke differently during marriage ceremonies.

There has been a decline in polygamy and a rise in monogamous marriages due to Christianity although there are some families who still honor their traditional culture in blended ways. Due to the modern Bukusu embracing education this has made them turn away from most traditional cultures in order to invest in education. Many customs continue to be practiced despite pressures from urbanization, Christianity and individualism.

Patriarchal theory is linked to this study through the weakening of patriarchal structures which in turn has had an impact on the decline of factors like bride price, polygamy and elder controlled matchmaking. The factors behind the weakening of the patriarchal structures are education, urbanization and legal framework. Education and formal employment have also led to women being empowered and thus this has led to a change in the dynamics of marital power. This is where you find that male dominated structures in marriage have been taken over by women. The practice of monogamous marriage has been emphasized due to Christianity and legal systems and this has created conflicts with the patriarchal structure.

Social learning theory was useful in this study because the Bukusu observe, copy and learn new norms as they come into contact with the current institutions and the globalized values. This in turn has had an impact on the formation of marriage. This is because of other models of relationships and marriage that religious institutions and schools have come up with. There are also new behaviors and attitudes about marital rights, gender equity and domestic violence which have come into place due to legal awareness. This theory shows how marital expectations and behaviors have reshaped due to the rise of new norms and role models among the Bukusu. The study gave valuable insights into how cultural traditions adapt or persist despite the pressures brought about internally and externally.

There are conflicting conceptions of marriage and family and a general lack of consensus on acceptable moral and social standards of behavior. The main reason for this is that conventional marital relationships within the traditional African society were embedded in a certain system of moral and social obligations, and everyone was expected to submit to the social regulatory discipline within a culturally acceptable normative framework.

The processes of modernization have had far-reaching consequences for the twin institutions of marriage and the family. One of the consequences of this transition is the weakening of the extended family system, the decline of polygamy and emergence of alternative family options which are designed to suit individual needs. Some of them now tolerated, or simply just ignored, depending on the context. Thus, the pattern that has emerged is that of formal monogamy often practiced alongside informal polygamy involving “outside wives” and “outside children” who participate in a pararell programme and are usually condemned by the “inside wives” for messing up their lives.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The County government of Bungoma should set up a cultural Centre in which the heritage of traditional marriage practices is preserved because modernity will soon wipe out traces of traditional African marriages. A study on capitalism, bride wealth and social classes in Bungoma County should be undertaken to demonstrate the socio-economic position of bride wealth in Bungoma County and Kenya as a whole. A study on independent churches and alternate marriage practices in Bungoma County: The Case of Dini Ya Msambwa, should be undertaken to examine the impact of modern religion on marriage practices ion Bungoma County.

## REFERENCES

### Oral Sources

#### List of Oral Interview Respondents

S/N	Name	Age	Village
1.	Makomboti Nasimiyu	84	Tongaren
2.	Musa Keya	85	Pwani
3.	Sarapai Nanjala	81	Kewa
4.	Nangila Cionga	81	Sirakaru
5.	Namunganga Daudi	80	Naitiri
6.	Ndalila George	83	Milima
7.	Buyela Francis	80	Kabuyefwe
8.	Wamalabe Tiberius	84	Mwikhupo

### Archival Sources

KNA, DC/BN/1/3, Bungoma District Annual Reports, 1908-1914.

KNA, DC/BN/5/1, Bungoma District Annual Reports, 1928-1934.

KNA, DC/BN/7/4, Native Tribunal Cases on Bridewealth, Divorce and Widow inheritance among the Bukusu, 1939-1944.

KNA, DC/KMG/4/2 Reports on Native Affairs and Marriage Practices in Kimilili and Bukusu Areas 1935-1938

KNA, DC/NZA/11/2, Native Affairs-Marriage and Succession among the Bukusu, 1918-1921.

KNA, DC/BN/9/5, Marriage Ordinances and Enforcement of Customary Marriage Laws in Bungoma District, 1947-1952.

KNA, DC/KMG/2/1, Reports on Initiation and Marriage Rites among the Bukusu, 1930-1935.

KNA, PC/NZA/2/9/21, Political Records of North Nyanza District, 1925-1931

## Published Books

- Afshar, H., & Maynard, M. (Eds.). (1994). *The Dynamics of "Race" and Gender: Some Feminist Interventions*. London, Taylor & Francis
- Amutambi, M.N., (2007). *The NGO Factor in Africa. The case of Arrested Development in Kenya*. New York, Routledge
- Barasa K.W. (1996) *The Bukusu customary marriage*. Nairobi, University of Nairobi press
- Barasa, S. (1996). *Bukusu Cultural Heritage and Social Change*, Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau.
- Beck, U., & Beck-Gernsheim, E. (2018). *The normal chaos of love*, New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons.
- Beck-Gernsheim E. (2002). *Reinventing the family in search of new lifestyles*, New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons.
- Giddens, A. (2013). *The transformation of intimacy: Sexuality, love and eroticism in modern societies*, John Wiley & Sons.
- Hannerz, U. (1992). *Cultural complexity: Studies in the social organization of meaning*, Columbia University Press.
- Mae R.A. (1999). *Widows: The challenges and the choices*, Nairobi: Salamta
- Makila F.E. (1978). *An Outline history of the Babukusu of Western Kenya*, Nairobi, Kenya Literature Bureau.
- Mbiti J.S. (1969). *African Religion and philosophy*, London: Heinemann
- Mbiti J.S (2002). *African Religion and Philosophy*, Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.
- Nagashima, N. (1987). "Aspects of Change in Bridewealth Among the Iteso of Kenya" in Parkin, D. and Nyamweya, D. (Eds), *Transformations of African Marriage*, 183- 198, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

- Nasimiyu-Wasike, A. 1992. "Child Abuse and Neglect: An African Moral Question." In J.N.K. Mugambi and A. Nasimiyu-Wasike (eds.) *Moral and Ethical Issues in African Christianity: Exploratory Essays in Moral Theology*, p. 153-169.
- Ngubane, H. (1987). "The consequences for Women of Marriage payments in a society with patrilineal Descent". In Parkin, D and Nyamweya D (Eds.), *Transformations of African Marriage*, 173- 182 Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Thiong'o, N. (1986). *Decolonizing the mind: The politics of language in African literature*, Nairobi, Heinemann
- Ochieng, W. R. (1989). *A modern History of Kenya 1895-1980*, Nairobi, Evans Brothers.
- Owino J. P, (2000). "Chira" and wife inheritance" Among the Luo community in Kenya. *Kisumu: OSIENALA*
- Oyewumi, K. (1997). *The invention of Women: Making an African sense of Western gender Discourses* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- Parkin D. J. (1978). *The Cultural Definition of Political Reference: Lineal Destiny among the Luo of Kenya*, Nairobi, University of Nairobi press.
- Philip, K. E., Collete, S. and Njeru, E. (2000). *Street Children in Kenya: Voices of children in search of a childhood*, Westport, Connecticut, Bergin and Garvey.
- Pritchard, E. (1951). *Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer*, Oxford: Clarendon press
- Rostow, G. M. (1960). *The Stages of economic growth: A non-communist manifesto* Cambridge University Press.
- Schiller, H. I. (1976). *Communication and Cultural Domination*, Routledge.
- Shaw, A. (2000) *Kinship and Continuity: Pakistani families in Britain*, Routledge
- Vansina, J. (1966). *Kingdoms of Savanna: A history of African Central states until European occupation*. Madison.WI: University of Wisconsin press.
- Wagner, G. (1949). *The Bantu of North Kavirondo: Tribal, Linguistic, and cultural groupings*,: Oxford University Press for the International African Institute.
- Walby, S. (1990). *Theorizing patriarchy*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Wanjohi G. J. (2010). *The wisdom and philosophy of African proverbs: The Gikuyu worldview*. Nairobi, Pauline publications Africa.

Were, G. (1967). *A History of the Abaluhya of Western Kenya; C.1500-1930*. Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau.

Zomi. T., Ginzamang (2014): *An introduction to Sociology*. Imphal, Edu Care Publishers

### **Journal Articles**

Brabin L, (1984). "Polygyny: An indicator of nutritional stress in African Agricultural societies Africa." *Journal of the International African institute* 54, (1) 31-45.

Caldwell, J. C., & Caldwell, P. (1987). "The Cultural Context of High Fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Population and Development Review*, 13, 409-437.

Ellwood, D. T. and Crane. J, (1990). "Family Change Among Black Americans: What do we know," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 4 (4), 65-84

Ezeh A, Doodoo F.N. "Institutional change and African fertility transition: the case of Kenya." *Genus*. 2001;57(3/4):135-64

Kavulavu L., and Changach, J.K. (2019). "Influence of colonial policies on Isukha Marriage 1894-1945." *International Journal of African Societies, Cultures and Traditions*. 7(2), 1-24.

Khisa, A.W., Mukhwana, D., Mukangai and Koyi, S. (2022). "Nature of colonization and peazantation in Trans Nzoia Kenya between 1920 and 1970." *International Journal of Recent innovation in Academic Research*. 6(8), 69-80.

Kyalo, P. M. (2011). "Quran and Cultural and Legal Challenges Analysis of the Practice of Islamic Law of Marriage and Divorce among the Akamba Muslims in Kitui, Kenya." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(8), 189-197.

Meeker, D. (1993). "The Noble Custom of Roor: The Marriage Practices of the Shona of Zimbabwe." *Ethnology*, 32(1), 35-54.

- Nganga, S. (2018). "Perspectives on Traditional Bukusu Religion in Kenya." *Journal of Pan-African studies*, vol.12, No.5, 67-89
- Ng'etich, B.K. (2024). "Historical trajectory of the New Jerusalem Church of Tongaren, Bungoma county," *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 8 (5) 107-128
- Precious, W. J., & Onyango, G. (2020). Masculine Justification of Polygamy Among the Bukusu of Bungoma County Kenya. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(6), 804–812.
- Redfield, R., Linton, R., (1936). "Memorandum for the study of acculturation." *Journal of American anthropologist*, 38(1), 149-152
- Satia, M., W., Koyi S., and Mukangai D. M. (2021). "Effects of Colonialism on the Bukusu Culture. Bungoma County of Kenya between 1900 and 1970." Research Article, 2 (2). P. 61-75
- Stevenson, B., (2007) "The impact of Divorce Laws on Investment in Marriage, Specific Capital". *Journal of Labor Economics*. 25 (1): 75-94
- Stevenson, B. & Wolfers, J. (2007). "Marriage and Divorce: Changes and their Driving forces." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. vol. 21(2), 27-52
- Vitalis (2014) "The socio-cultural changes in the Kenya Luo society since the British Invasion and the Effects on the Levirate Custom: A critical survey." *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 13(09), 1360-1370.
- Wandibba, S. and Ikanda F.N. (2005) "Changing Perceptions on Wife Inheritance in the Bukusu Community of Bungoma District, Western Kenya", *Mila Journal*, 6: 13-22
- Wepukhulu A.N. (2023) "Evolution of Beliefs and Practices of Bridewealth and Their Role on Marriage among the Bukusu." *Iconic Research &Engineering Journals* 34 (5) 341-347
- Wolf, M. M. (1971). "Achievement Place: The modification of behaviors of Pre-delinquent boys within a token economy." *Journal of Applied Behavioral Analysis*, 4: 45-59.

### **Theses, Dissertations, Seminar Papers, and Unpublished Materials**

- Barasa R.M. (2015). *“Impact of Christianity on the Traditional African Family System: A study of Bungoma County,”* Eldoret, MA Thesis, Moi University.
- Dinah D.H. (2021). "The Ababukusu traditional widowhood and the (interface) with the Friends church rites." MA Thesis, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology.
- Kara Njeri (2011). “Enforcing and Implementing the Law on Defilement in Kenya: A critique,” PhD Diss. University of Nairobi
- Makila F.E. (1982). “The Significance of Chetambe Forts in Bukusu History.” Unpublished typescript, UoN Library.
- Musungu. J. (2016). “Oral narrative performance and the construction of Bukusu perceptions on communal co-existence.” PhD Diss., University of Nairobi.
- Wanyama K. (2017) “Polygyny in marriage among the Bukusu of Sirisia Constituency of Bungoma county c.1850-1960,” MA Thesis, Kenyatta University
- Wekesa, B. M. (2015). “Cultural Continuity and Change: A Historical Study on Music and Dance among the Bukusu of Bungoma County, Kenya, Circa 1900–2012.” PhD diss., Kenyatta University.
- Yuya K. (2017) “Why is the practice of Levirate Marriage Disappearing in Africa? HIV/AIDS as an Agent of Institutional Change” (Discussion Paper, Institute of Developing Economies).

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Focus Group Discussions

The researcher's main role would be to listen and moderate the discussion by probing and prompting views from the participant. The researcher would discuss research questions with groups of a few purposively sampled respondents such as cultural consultants. The researcher will use the following question to carry out the discussion:

1. What is your name and the reason you are participating in today's discussion
2. What can you say about the number of people who have married through the traditional method as compared to those who have been married in the modern way.
3. What in your view constitutes traditional marriage.
4. Has westernization affected the marriage institution in your community
5. How do people view marriage in your society.
6. How often do you attend marriage ceremonies?
7. How are the ceremonies conducted?
8. How many people in your village do you think have been married through the modern way?
9. Do many people in this place embrace the modern style of marriage
10. Do many people in this place still hold to traditional mode of marriage?
11. Is there any difference in form of behavior between those couples who have been married in the modern way of and the traditional mode of marriage?
12. What is the impact of modernization on traditional marriage ceremony?
11. Has the media affected the Bukusu traditional culture?
12. How has the coming of technology influenced the cultural practices of the Bukusu?

## **Appendix II: Interview guides for married and unmarried people**

The structured interview schedule contains question which will solicit only one particular type of answer from the e respondent. The answers which will be provided from the interview schedule will be used to fulfill the objectives as outlined in the study. This will be by the way of providing the meaning of the marriage practice s and their relevance to the people within the contemporary setting of the Bukusu.

**Name of Location**.....

**Name of the Person**.....

**Date**.....

**Time**.....

1. What is your marital status?
2. Where did this practice begin from?
3. Mention the importance of marriage among the Bukusu.
4. Give the aims of getting married among the Babukusu.
5. Name the marriage practices among the Bukusu
6. What are the impacts of these practices on Bukusu Culture?
7. How popular are these practices among the Bukusu?
8. If they are popular state the reasons behind it,
9. If not popular, state the reasons.
10. Is the Bukusu marriage practice still being performed?
11. If yes what makes them to be performed?
12. Which traditional marriage practices among the Bukusu in your opinion have never changed in their presentation,
13. Give reasons why the practices have been maintained until today.

14. Do these practices have the same purposes as they used to have that time, if yes which are these purposes?

15. Do the practices provide new meanings to the current generation of the modern Bukusu? If yes, give titles and explain their meaning to the modern generation of Bukusu.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Meaning</b>

16. State the impact of the media on the cultural practices of the Bukusu.

17. Name the changes brought by technology on the traditional Bukusu culture?

### Appendix III: Research Authorization Letter



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: [dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)

P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 020-8704150

Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

**Internal Memo**

**FROM:** Dean, Graduate School

**DATE:** 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2019

**TO:** Mr. Wanyama W. Reuben  
C/o Department of History,  
Archaeology & Political Studies

**REF:** C50/CE/24753/2012

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL**  
=====

We acknowledge receipt of your Research Proposal after fulfilling recommendations raised by the Graduate School Board of 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2019.

You may now proceed with your Data collection, subject to clearance with the Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking Forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the Progress Report Forms. The Supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Thank you.

**EDWIN OBUNGU**  
**FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

CC. Chairman, Department of History, Archaeology & Political Studies

**Supervisors:**

1. Dr. Pius Kakai  
C/o Department of History, Archaeology & Political Studies  
Kenyatta University
2. Dr. Julius Nabede  
C/o Department of History, Archaeology & Political Studies  
Kenyatta University