



Content Knowledge Investigation of Youth Education in the Traditional Bukusu Community of Western Region, Kenya

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Abstract: The study in Bungoma County investigated the content knowledge of youth education of the traditional Bukusu community of Western Kenya (1844-2019) using a phenomenological research design. Theoretical framework used was phenomenological theory. Respondents were selected by purposive sampling and snowballing sampling procedures from the Bukusu council of elders, the Bukusu community traditional educators, leaders of culture council of the traditional Bukusu community and the Bukusu community traditional circumcisers. The research tools were oral interviews and participant observation. The sample size of 72 respondents consisted of 20 Bukusu council elders, 21 elders of culture council of Bukusu, 02 Bukusu community traditional educators and 29 Bukusu community traditional circumcisers. Credibility of instruments was done by triangulation. Reliability of data collection tools was done by dependability. Data was analysed by inductive analysis. Results of data analysis were presented in a descriptive form and in the form of tables, frequency counts and percentages. The study recommends a compulsory teaching of multiple courses to students to help reduce high levels of unemployment in Kenya. It is hoped that the findings of this research would trigger more studies in African traditional education. The study has preserved a section of the Bukusu community traditional customs.

Keywords: Education, Content knowledge, Youth, Genealogy, Circumcision, Clan

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1. Introduction

The word education emanates from two Latin words, educare and educere. Educare basically means to educate, to up bring, to rear, and to direct (Bass & Good, 2004; Little et al., 1968). Education is thus the process of nurturing children and mentoring youth by mature members of the society, a process of guidance and raising children and youth, offering direction and educating children and youth to become estimable members of the family unit and the community at large. However, the educare process is not a preserve of children alone. Adolescents and adult members of the society are also incorporated for guidance and mentorship. Moreover, the educare tasks that entail

upbringing, rearing, guiding, mentoring, directing, and educating, cannot be accomplished by the school alone hence the need to compliment with traditional education.

Educere means to draw out, to lead out, and to uplift (Bass & Good, 2004). Consequently, a more extensive definition of education arises; education is a slow and dexterous process of drawing out the hidden potentialities and dedication among learners. This is contrary to indoctrination, which entail the inculcating of a set of ideas and beliefs in the child's mind. Contrastingly, indoctrination disregards the notion of freedom and emphasises on an unquestioned adoption of a set of ideas and beliefs whereas education embraces the idea of freedom of selection. Bass and Good (2004)

noted that as in the case of *educere*, the tasks implicit or explicit in the meaning of *educere* cannot be given by the school alone. All members of the family, the peer-group, the age-grade organization, community leaders, the church, the mosque, the shrine or other places of worship, the school and the mass media have their distinctive roles to play. Conclusively, there is a need to blend *educare* and *educere* for holistic learning to be realized in our learning institutions.

In accordance with Sifuna et al. (2006) education is the integral process dedicated to the development of human ability and behaviour. It encompasses a well arranged and structured instruction aimed at communicating knowledge, skills, values and understanding valuable themes of all activities of life. In essence, the word education points to both the individual and social development processes which cause a person's intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical abilities to mature, thus enabling an individual to fully participate in community affairs. Education may be categorized based on the kind of organization involved and the various methodologies utilized. The three main categories include: formal education, non-formal, and informal education. The paper will mainly focus on traditional youth education among the Bukusu of Western Kenya. This type of education is an amalgamation of both the informal and non-formal education modes.

No study of history of education in Africa is complete without adequate knowledge of the indigenous educational system prevalent in Africa before the arrival of Islam and Christianity (Occitti, 1968). Every society, whether simple or sophisticated, has its own system of training and educating the youth, and education for the good life has been one of the most persistent concerns of men throughout history. However, the goal of education and the method of approach may differ from place to place, nation to nation and people to people (Fafunwa, 1974).

African people and those of other origins all over the world need to be properly educated about Africa's glorious past. The past has been, at best misunderstood, and at worst taken out of context. The education system in Africa should teach Africans (as their ancestors did before) to invent, create, manufacture and sell things on world market just as the Japanese, Americans and Russians do! No history of mankind has been as distorted as that of Africa and the Africans (Nangoli, 1987). When Ludwig Krapf, a German missionary was sent to Eastern Africa by the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) of England in 1844, he established a mission station at Rabai near Mombasa. He was the first missionary to arrive in Eastern Africa. He aimed at putting an end to traditional religious practices, spread Christianity, prevent spread of Islam and stop slave trade (Kamau et al., 2009). An African man conceals his feelings. Traditionally, his tears are not supposed to be seen by friends or foes, even under the worst conditions. This is considered shameful and demeaning (Matei, 2017). The ways of our ancestors are good since their customs are solid and not hollow. They cannot be blown

away by the wind because their roots are deep in the soil. Furthermore, it is said that the pumpkin in the old homestead must not be uprooted. There is no bad origin of a person, regardless of one's economic endowment since all people's history is good (Walibora, 2012). On contact with Africans in the early 19th century, European missionaries called the former primitive, uncultured, and barbaric. Also Africans were said to have no system of education. The young were said to be left to total ignorance. Most missionaries, therefore, assumed that they were faced with a *tabula rasa* on which to introduce education for the first time. They mistakenly took literacy and schooling to constitute the entire education or all human experience. However, because education prepares man to live in his society by initiating him into his culture, there is no society which does not educate its youth hence Africa was no exception (Johannes, 2010).

The paper explores content knowledge of traditional youth education among the Bukusu people of Western region of Kenya. It entailed passing down the community's culture to the youth for onward transmission to future generations. According to Jacobs and Hanrahams (2005) culture is the distinctively human capacity, meaning or belief, or symbolic system or a conglomeration of the three since it's the peoples' way of life. Therefore, traditional education of the Bukusu community is a vital aspect of their culture hence the need to research on it.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Education is the most vital catalyst to development. The importance of African traditional education as a whole and the Bukusu culture in particular have been misunderstood and looked down upon at the expense of western education. Consequently, the Bukusu community's traditional culture is waning. With the advent of modern times, the old order has been disrupted and social values drastically modified or changed altogether. With few exceptions, majority of young people are generally away at school and others are away at work. In addition, very few parents are now fully conversant with their original customs and traditions. The training which was available for the young is no longer generally forthcoming except, perhaps, in the sphere of storytelling. Very soon, as members of the older generation die out, it will no longer be possible to record these traditions. Now is the time to embark on research about the Bukusu traditional youth education and most importantly preserve it for posterity. It is a matter of utmost urgency. Some scholars have advanced that there was no education in the traditional African communities. Since 1970s, many studies have been carried out on African traditional education. To date, however, there has been insufficient research on the Bukusu community traditional education. Furthermore, African Indigenous studies investigating the content of youth education of the Bukusu community of Western Kenya are lacking.

1.2 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the study findings will enrich the teaching of African traditional education. The study investigated the genealogy, clan clusters, circumcision ceremony, important personalities, and sex education of the youth in the traditional Bukusu community of Western Kenya. The study has thus exposed content knowledge of youth education in the traditional Bukusu community of Western Kenya and thus helped do away with the assertion that Africans never educated their youth.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by phenomenological theory. This theory provides an insight into the subjective “lived” experience of individuals (Fotchman, 2008; Wojnar & Swanson, 2007). In addition to investigating a broader meaning of the lived experiences, phenomenology gives more meaning to the phenomena under study through consciousness (Cresswell, 2007).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Content Knowledge Investigation of Youth Education in the Traditional Bukusu Community of Western Kenya

Ghonge et al. (2020) noted that the traditional youth education in India was mainly by orals and debates. Youths were exposed to practical knowledge of the topics handled in class to foster and practice what they had learnt. This prepared them to be useful members of the society.

Character training and religious education were identified as the two main objectives in the traditional Yoruba and Poro community education in Nigeria. Other objectives were pursued through the latter (Majasan, 1967). Additionally, Wandira (1971) noted that mothers and nurses in the Buganda community made conscious efforts to make the child aware of social etiquette as any attempts by the child to dominate others or adults was not tolerated. In addition, the approach to maturity was marked by special ceremonies and dramatized by intensified moral education. The young boys were taught by an elder of the clan. Moreover, Fafunwa (1974) notes that most professional groups in the Yoruba society especially herbalists, hunters, chiefs, cult leaders and priests had an elaborate and complicated systems of pre initiation training.

It is worth noting that both the traditional Ameru education and the western education system provided for specific outcomes on the child (Gitari, 2006). He further noted that the Ameru people had the tendency of making the child believe that the supreme creator (*Murungu*) lived in the sky. Henceforth, the sun was considered sacred and thus hailed during prayers. The

clan head was the intermediary between God and the people. He said prayers and offered sacrifices on behalf of the people from a central shrine. Education rendered to the traditional Ameru people was a lifelong process with girls learning to carry out domestic chores from their mothers. Likewise, uncircumcised boys joined the group referred to as *Kamichu* at attainment of age seven. The training offered entailed locating objects. At the age of ten they joined (*Kigumi*) during which they learnt how lead a disciplined life and were instructed on good conduct and a sense of duty. At fifteen the boys joined (*Gatuuri*) during which they were educated to develop a sense of responsibility and respect. Circumcision was performed on both boys and girls at about the age of twenty five. The current study sought to determine and investigate content knowledge of youth education in the traditional Bukusu community of Western Kenya.

The traditional Luo people believed that in the beginning *were* the creator was alone in the world which was beautiful. The traditional Luo people believe that *Were* is a spirit and a spirit is like a flame, you can only see it, but you cannot get hold of it. It is like air which you know it is there but which you cannot touch. It is like the wind which can uproot a tree and hurl it afar but has no substance. It is like lightning which is seen in many places at once but is in none. Yes, it is like the essence of man which makes him all that he is yet departs from him quietly and suddenly leaving only a dead image. Their *Were* is a great spirit. He saw that the world needed more than spirit forms. So he created Ramogi and his brothers who were men. Man has a form which is spiritual. *Were* sent the men he had created to various parts of the world to settle in it. Ramogi was sent to the country around the lake. His wife was *Nyar Nam*. They had many children including Rachuonyo, Sakwa, Asembo, Yimbo, Gem, Uyoma, Nyakach, Seme and Ugenya (Ogola, 1994). On the other hand, the Bukusu traditional community taught the correct position of their society and culture as authenticated in their local oral traditions (Makila, 1976). The current study sought to describe and investigate content knowledge of youth education in the Bukusu community of Western Kenya.

On the contrary, the western education system offers many and relevant subjects that conform to the modern economy as noted by Republic of Kenya (2002): English, Kiswahili, Physical Education, Arabic, French, German, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Agriculture, Home science, History and Government, Geography, Christian Religious Education (C.R.E), Islamic Religious Education (I.R.E), and Hindu Religious Education (H.R.E). However, only four subjects are compulsory for every student at the end of the course: English, Kiswahili, Physical Education, and Mathematics. This implies that character training for youth and adulthood is missing in western education. The current study sought to determine the influence of youth education on content knowledge of teachers in the traditional Bukusu community of western Kenya.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a qualitative approach since qualitative data was collected. A phenomenological design was used. This design was relevant because it helped the research to understand the meaning of the traditional Bukusu community's youth lived experiences concerning content knowledge. Additionally, Neubauer (2019) avers that the design is a powerful research strategy suited for exploring challenging problems in health professions education (HPE). The research employed ethnographical and phenomenological methods of qualitative inquiry. Ethnography involved immersion in the target respondents' environment to understand goals, cultures, challenges and themes that emerged.

3.2 Population and Sample Size

Sample size is the number of items to be selected from the universe (Kothari, 2004; Oso & Onen, 2009). Sampling error decreases with an increase in the size of the sample and it happens to be a smaller magnitude in the case of a homogeneous population (Kothari, 2014). Gay (1992) recommends that when the target population is less than 1,000 a minimum sample of 20% is adequate for educational research. Table 1 shows the sampling matrix of the study. From the 98 members of the target population, the researcher selected 72 participants which formed 73.4% of the target population. The following participants were selected by purposive sampling who subsequently helped identify other participants: one member of the Bukusu council of elders, one member of the Bukusu community traditional educators (omuseni mise), a leader of the Bukusu culture council of elders (musambwa) and one Bukusu community traditional circumciser (omukhebi).

Table 1: Sampling Matrix

Description	Population	Sample size
Bukusu Council of Elders	24	20
Leaders of Culture Council (musambwa)	24	21
Traditional Educators (baseni be kimise)	05	02
Traditional Circumcisers (bakhebi)	45	29
Total	98	72

Source: Field data (2019)

3.3 Instruments of Data Collection

The study used participant observation and oral interviews to gather the required information.

Kothari (2011) asserts that in participant observation, the participant observes by making himself/ herself more or less a member of the group he/she is observing so that he/she can experience what members of a group go through. The merits of this method of data collection are that the researcher is enabled to record the natural behaviour of the group, verifying the truth of statements made by informants in the context of a questionnaire. The interview schedules were prepared by the researcher. Interview schedules were used to guide the administration of oral interviews that were conducted.

3.4 Dependability of Instruments

Marian (2009) states that positivists and interpretivists address alternatives such as credibility, dependability and transferability as opposed to validity, reliability and generalisability when determining the trustworthiness of qualitative research. The study used dependability and a research audit trail as a strategy for establishing trustworthiness of a qualitative inquiry. Marian (2009) notes that dependability is important to trustworthiness because it establishes the research study's findings as consistent and repeatable and an audit trail enables readers to trace through a researcher's logic and determine whether the study's findings may be relied upon as a platform for further enquiry. A qualitative

researcher was used to review and examine the research process and data analysis in order to ensure that the findings are consistent and repeatable.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

A research permit was obtained from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) after approval by the University of Eldoret. Thereafter, the office of the governor of Bungoma County, Bungoma County Commissioner and County Director of Education of Bungoma County were contacted before the start of the study. The researcher administered interview schedules to the Bukusu Council of Elders, Culture Council of Bukusu Elders (musambwa), Bukusu Community Traditional Educators (baseni muse) and the Bukusu Community Traditional Circumcisers (bakhebi). Oral interviews were conducted with the Culture Council of Bukusu Elders, Bukusu Community Traditional Educators, Bukusu Community Traditional Circumcisers and the Culture Council of Bukusu Elders (musambwa). Participant observation was done. The respondents were assured that the information they gave would be used strictly for academic purposes.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

The research yielded qualitative data. Qualitative data was analysed qualitatively using inductive analysis which refers to approaches that use readings of raw data

to derive concepts and themes through interpretations made from raw data by a researcher or an evaluator. Data was reduced into content knowledge of youth education of the traditional Bukusu community of Western Kenya.

4. Results and Discussion

The study entailed investigation of content knowledge of youth education in the traditional Bukusu community of Western Kenya. Qualitative data was collected and analysed inductively. The study investigated the genealogy, clan clusters, circumcision ceremony, important personalities, and sex education of the youth in the traditional Bukusu community of Western Kenya.

4.1 Genealogy of the Traditional Bukusu Community of Western Kenya

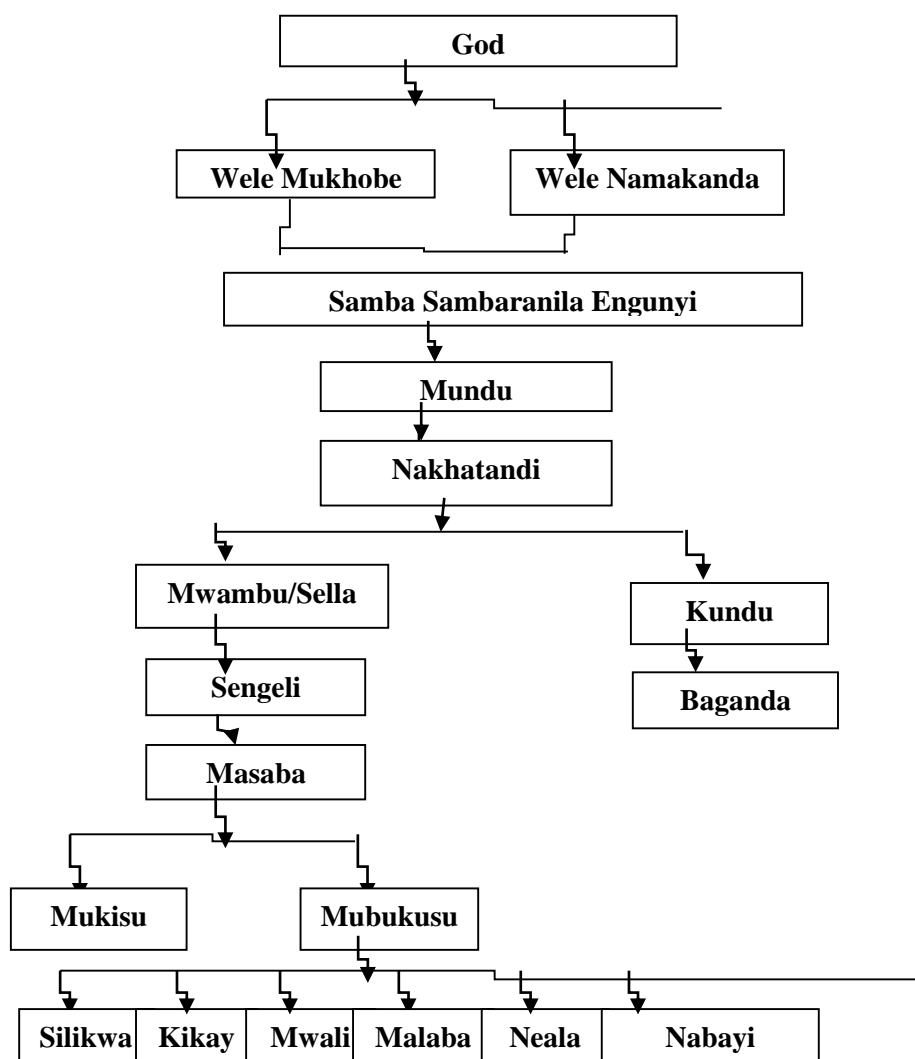


Figure 1: Genealogy of the traditional Bukusu community of Western Kenya

As it is evident in the archival document (KNA/92-248/K.306KEN), according to the Bukusu oral traditions, Wele (God) caused heaven (likulu) and the fertile essence (waneloba) to unite and procreate the first life and human being, Mundu. Mundu gave forth to Mwambu, the man and Sela the woman. These two produced Mubukusu, the eponymous ancestor of the Bukusu people. All these events are said to have taken place at Esibakala, sometimes referred to as Emisiri. However, this Emisiri is not Egypt as a Bible-based

interpretation would have it. Emisiri is rather the general area north of Mt. Elgon (*lukulu lwa Masaaba*).

However, in a participant observation exercise during the after death ceremony (*khusena kumuse*) of a departed elder, a traditional Bukusu educator, Kituyi Maratani, (Maratani, 8/6/2019), notes that the Bukusu traditional community of Western Kenya believe that before everything else, there is God the creator (*Wele khabumbi*) who is all knowing, ever present and

extremely powerful. He made two lesser gods: 'Wele mukhobe' and 'Wele namakanda'. 'Wele mukhobe' was male while 'Wele namakanda' was female. The two deities became husband and wife. This incident was coincidental when one deity discovered that their sexual orientations were different. This led to the attraction of the two deities toward each other. That encounter unfolded when one lesser god was thatching a hut while the other was watching from below. The two gods got married and gave birth to many children. The names of their children are not known. After a while, the elephants attacked that community and killed all men.

Kituyi Maratani, (Maratani, 8/6/2019) notes that after sometime, ogres (*kamanani*) invaded the community unleashing terror and demanding for food from the inhabitants. It was mandatory that every person present was to give some food to the invaders, lest, they were murdered. All women gave out whatever food they had except one helpless pregnant woman who did not have anything to give out at that time. Instead, she pleaded with her attackers to spare her life and in exchange promised to donate the child she was carrying in her womb to them upon safe delivery. The monsters gave into the plea of their captive.

Consequently, Maratani, (8/6/2019) and Nasong'o (2011) note that the woman gave birth to a baby boy and named him *Samba Sambaranila Engunyi*. In addition, Maratani (8/6/2019), notes that the woman contravened her promise of surrendering the toddler to the ogres. Instead, she hid the baby far away from her home. Samba Sambaranila Engunyi grew up into an energetic but frightened young man while in hiding. Samba Sambaranila Engunyi decided to change his residence in an effort to increase his chances of survival. Consequently, he bumped into another community of women. He secretly stayed on the periphery of their compound feeding on food remains thrown in the dustbin.

4.2 Clan clusters of the traditional Bukusu community of western Kenya

In oral interviews with the Bukusu Council of Elders (BUCOE, 14/7/2019), Culture Council of Bukusu Elders (CCBE, 11/5/2019), the Bukusu traditional educators, Situma Situlungu and Kituyi Maratani, (Situlungu & Maratani, 8/3/2019) it was noted that the Bukusu traditional community of Western Kenya comprises of six large clusters of clans: basilikwa, bakikayi, bamwalie, bamalaba, baneala and banabayi. Basilikwa cluster (proudly refer to themselves as: *basilikwa becha nende chikhendu sikanda, mbirira machabe bakutusi*). They comprise of batukwiika (banambobi, basakha, baluleti, bakitang'a and bakwangwa) and bakimwenyi (babulo, bakiyabi, basefu, bachemayi, bakolati, babichachi, babambo, batilu, basimisi, baliango, basiabo and bamulanyi); bakikayi clan cluster (proudly refer to themselves as: *efwe bakikayi naluwa nawanga*). It is made up of the following clans:

bakipemule, baechalo, bakhoma, bayasama, bachelekeyi, basituyi, bamukoya, basibacho, bakhwami, bakhelenge, bayaka, bamasike, babwoba, bamula, bata, banangunga, banekembe, babikala, bakibeti, bamuyonga, bakisobe, basimaolia, bamusomi, basubende, batemulani, bangale, bakewa, babambocha, bamadali, basabi, bachone, baafu, balend, banakanda and babamanga; bamwalie clan cluster (They came in through Malakisi: *Babandu balichananga, babandi befumbo*). It comprises of the following clans: bamalicha, babichu, balukulu, basonge, barefu, babangachi, baengeli, basang'alo, bamakina, bawayila, bamwaya, baabiya, bamakhuli, basaniaka, bakusi, basamo, bakobelo, bacharia, bakamukong'i, bayumbuandbanyangali.

However, it is worth noting that some Tachoni clans are not mutually exclusive. They are also found among other luhya communities to a greater extent. Twenty seven of such clans, for example, occur amongst Babukusu (KNA/LD907.67628WAN). Such clans include, but are not limited to babangachi, babicha, bakamukong'i, babichu, bayumbu, basang'alo, bamakhuli, baengele, bacharia, bakusi, bawayila, basonge and balukulu (Maratani & Situlungu, 8/3/2019).

4.3 Circumcision Practice of the Traditional Bukusu Community of Western Kenya

The Bukusu traditional community holds circumcision as a practice that identifies them amongst the 18 ethnic branches of the Luhya community: Babukusu, Maragoli, Batachoni, Banyala, Banyore, Bakabras, Isukha, Wanga, Tiriki, Basamia, Batsotso, Bakhayo, Marachi, Idakho, Marama, Kisa, Abakhenye, and Batura (Republic of Kenya, 2019). In the life cycle of a male individual in the Bukusu community, circumcision together with the elaborate initiation rites that surround the actual operation, is undoubtedly the most important and outstanding single event, even more than birth and conclusion of marriage as it involves greater change in social status (KNA/MAC/57296WAG).

Circumcision differs from other rites essentially in how it is performed collectively and not individually like all the other rites of transition. However, these events, too, furnish the occasion of observances that affect much wider groups and serve wider functions than those bearing directly and immediately upon the individual concerned (KNA/MAC/57296WAG). It is evident in the archival document (KNA/92-248/K.306KEN), that circumcision ceremony played a very important role in the education of children in the Bukusu traditional community. This is because after circumcision, the initiated boys were supposed to assume adult roles and responsibilities. However, the Bukusu people stopped circumcising their girls in the early years of this century as boys were circumcised between the ages of sixteen and twenty.

4.4 Important Personalities in the Bukusu Traditional Community of Western Kenya

Some of the important people who foretold the future, guided, and entertained the Bukusu community of western Kenya are Mutonyi owa Nabukelembe, Wachie owa Naumbwa and Maina owa Nalukale.

According to Makila (1976), Mutonyi owa Nabukelembe was one of the greatest Bukusu prophets of the 19th Century. Through dreams and supernatural powers, he was able to make predictions about wars and the destiny of the Bukusu tribe. Mutonyi was born around 1820 and died around 1890. He was circumcised under 'Bakinyikeu' age set (*sisingilo*) and 'namayeya' age grade (*ebololi*). His father was called Natala of the Bayitu clan. Nabukelembe was his mother's name. The real name of Mutonyi was Walubengo, as given at the time of his birth according to the Bukusu customs. In confirmation of the above, the Bukusu Council of Elders (BUCOE, 14/7/2019), notes that Mutonyi got his name as a result of one of his earliest predictions: the Bukusu people had been defeated by Barwa bakoyonjo (sabot enemies) in an earlier war. The people had always sought for an opportunity to revenge. Mutonyi (then called Walubengo) predicted that the Bukusu warriors would emerge victorious at the deciding battle at Mutonyi village, somewhere in the present day Malakisi area, in Bungoma County. He foretold that the warriors would suffer very few casualties provided they followed his advice.

Makila, (1976) and Nasong'o, (2011) note that Wachiye Owa Naumbwa was the most miraculous personality ever produced in the Bukusu history, combining powers of prophecy and mystery. He was widely known for his miracles and mysteries. He was born around 1810 and circumcised in 1832 under Kananachi age set. He was an Omutukwiikwa Mukwangwa by clan, fourth generation descendant (*simiila*) of Mbirira, the famous Mutukwiika ruler. His father was Lwasaka and his mother was Naumbwa. Nasong'o (2011), established that Wachiye owa Naumbwa hailed from Ndengelwa (*ekitale*) area near the present day Bungoma town.

Oral interviews with Wafula Wabukoyi (Wabukoyi, 7/7/2019) and the Culture Council of Bukusu Elders (CCBE, 11/5/2019), noted that the most miraculous performances done by Wachiye owa Naumbwa included the following: "Lighting fire on top of a grass thatched hut without burning it: He could invite people to go and witness him seated up there either warming himself or smoking his pipe and conversing with a delighted audience; Sitting on water in a river without drowning. At one time Wachiye invited neighbours at a riverside resort and slaughtered a bull for them to enjoy. He took a large hide and spread it across the surface of a flooded river. He made a big fire and roasted meat from there. While meat was roasting, he put a beer pot at what was considered the deepest part of the river and started drinking from it while sitting on his three legged

stool; and sitting on the sharp point of a spear without getting hurt."

Makila (1976) and Nasong'o (2011) note that Maina was the son of Nalukale, Omutukwiika Omukitang'a by clan. He was an agemate of Sanjamolu. He gained great fame so quickly that he overshadowed Sanjamolu as a communal leader. The long golden peace under his reign was shattered by a domestic incident in which his elder son, Namunguba, fell in love with the eighth wife of his father. An oral interview with a member of the Culture Council of Bukusu Elders, Wafula Wabukoyi, (Wabukoyi, 7/7/2019), it is noted that after Maina owa Nalukale had pronounced his prophecies, he took his three legged stool and disappeared along with his barren wife, Nabusamba. The elders slaughtered an ox and a sheep to cleanse Namunguba and his step mother. It is believed that Maina hid himself around the nearby river. People got worried about his disappearance and started searching for him without success.

4.5 Sex Education for Youth in the Traditional Bukusu Community of Western Kenya

Sex education among the Bukusu people revolved around promotion of girls' moral values, teenage girls using special foods, and using special grasses and concoctions for family planning.

An oral interview with the Bukusu Council of Elders, (BUCOE, 14/7/2019) denoted that teenage girls are encouraged to be morally upright when they spend nights in their grandmothers' houses where to receive special instructions. For those who do not have grandmothers, they put up with their age mates who have grandmothers. Such arrangements are supported by elders. Here is where essential teachings on sexuality education are done in the Bukusu traditional community of Western Kenya. This is corroborated by a member of the Culture Council of Bukusu Elders, Margaret Nafula, (Nafula, 12/6/2019) who noted that sexuality education is mostly done at night around the fire place where grandmothers encourage girls to retain their virginity till marriage. Quite often, teachings are accompanied by singing and moderated dances and relevant gestures. Everything is informal, unsystematic and virtually a pastime in which events are recounted, young girls are taught how to wash their private parts and also to help them improve their confidence in youth gatherings and interactions with other people.

In oral interviews with Magaret Nafula, (Nafula, 12/6/19) and the Culture Council of Bukusu Elders, (CCBE, 11/5/2019), it was noted that grandmothers prepare traditionally skimmed milk (*kamabele kamesache*) for teenage girls. There is a common belief among the Bukusu traditional community that skimmed milk reduces libido and therefore helps promote morality among youthful girls.

As it is evident in the archival source (KNA/92-248/K306KEN), most of the elders from the Bukusu

traditional community felt that rather than spend a lot of money and time on using western family planning methods which could become dangerous to their wives, they opted to use their own traditional techniques in family planning. In the past, they agreed that old women could hold a girl's menstruation blood until such a time she felt she was ready to get children. Sometimes the girls were shown the medicinal herbs to use which they did by themselves. This method was an important measure for girls from getting children out of wedlock. In the adults, family planning techniques depended on the restraint of the couples from coming into contact. For instance a man could not come into contact with his wife until a child was about to have its milk teeth. Polygamy was also used as a way of planning the family.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the study findings, it can be concluded that youth education in the traditional Bukusu community of

Western Kenya promotes multiple learning of skills, values and attitudes by learners to help the youth lead a successful life and be productive members in the society. They are equipped with special knowledge on the genealogy, clan clusters, circumcision ceremony, important personalities, and sex education of the youth in the traditional Bukusu community of Western Kenya.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations were arrived at:

1. The government should encourage impartation of traditional youth education among learners to promote morality and help them lead a successful life.
2. The government should make it compulsory for learners to acquire multiple skills so as to address the problem of unemployment.

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