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RESEARCH ARTICLE

EFFECTS OF BUKUSU MALE CIRCUMCISION SONGS METAPHOR ON THE EDUCATION OF THE BOY CHILD AMONG THE BUKUSU COMMUNITY (A CASE STUDY TRANS-NZOAIA COUNTY, KENYA.)

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine how Bukusu Male Circumcision Songs Metaphor have affected the Education of the Boy Child among the Bukusu Community in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya.. The study was guided by the following objectives: To establish the importance of Luhya male Circumcision songs metaphor among the Bukusu community, to establish the effect of Luhya Male Circumcision songs metaphor on the behavioral development of the Bukusu youth. To determine how Bukusu male circumcision songs metaphor have affected the Education of the Boy child among the Bukusu Community in Trans-Nzoia County.. The researcher adopted mixed research design whereby mixed research method utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data was collected using open ended questionnaires while quantitative data collection method included closed ended questioners. The study was done in Trans-Nzoia County. The study targeted a total population of 2000 youths from 10 locations. Simple Random sampling procedure was employed. Stratified sampling technique was also used. The scope was limited to youths in Trans-Nzoia County. The study made use of questioners and interview guide. Validity of the instruments was established through pilot testing while reliability was established from consistency of the results obtained from the field. In chapter two empirical literatures was done on independent variable, dependent variable, and the four indicators of independent variable.. It also revealed that the circumcision songs metaphor affects the education of the boy child greatly and as a result it also affects the behavioral development of the youth immorally. In conclusion this therefore calls for the Bukusu community this songs metaphor in such a way that the messages they carry be moral and educative to boy child.

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Introduction:-

This chapter consists of the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, and justification of the study, significance of the research, scope of the study, delimitations and the shortcomings of the research, conceptual and theoretical framework.

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Background of the study

One of the ways through which people communicate in a society in matters that concern love, death, patriotism, nationalism, social issues and many others is through music/songs (Akuno, 2017). Music performance and many African ceremonies go hand in hand. The music acts as a carriage which embodies various forms of short solo response phrases that carry relevant metaphoric messages (Wanyama, 2006). Luhya circumcision songs are normally functional and whenever they are sung, they accomplish specific roles.

They are usually the venue and avenue for community social controls. Composition of these songs is dictated by the day-to-day occurrences in society. This study sets out to focus on the bukusu circumcision songs metaphor, have affected the Education of the Boy Child among the Bukusu Community in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya, as part of the philosophical setting in which the bukusu circumcision songs are deeply rooted (Wanyama, 2006). A metaphor is a way of conceiving one thing in terms of another or can be defined as a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things that are basically dissimilar or simply put, a metaphor describes one object as being or possessing the characteristics/features of a second object (Akuno, 2017).

The Bukusu circumcision songs and the varied number of figures of speech incorporated in them make them lively and informative to the community for corrective and/or educative purposes (David, 2016). The messages contained in these songs are through different parts of speech and are passed across poetically or indirectly by passing messages bearing warnings to unacceptable behavior exhibited by some members of society, taboo actions, praises among others through metaphors, similes, personification, symbolism, onomatopoeia etc. as easily as possible because the messages are well disguised, hurtles, and humorously presented (David, 2016). The parts of speech are the flavor in the circumcision songs, without which the songs lose their aesthetic value. It is important to mention, however, that the lyrics in these songs do not always present issues from a neutral or even balanced perspective because they constitute mediated reality which positions composers in critical and privileged positions from which they reflect on societal concerns, expectations and views of issues of interest (Chimbarange, 2019). According to Musolff (2012), a metaphor has a dominant nonchalant value that allows singers to express and insinuate very extreme views disguised as subjective colored figurative speech, which is, in the name of art, to disseminate polemic points of view, escaping the backlash that normally attracts such views as well as enabling the singers to obviate what is considered taboo to talk about in certain contexts. This enables the circumcision songs to perform other roles of songs other than the foremost role of entertainment which are; informing, educating, persuading and even rebuking (David, 2019).

Bakusu community is one of the Eighteen sub-tribes of the Luhya cluster of interlacustrine Bantu tribes of Eastern Africa (Wanyama, 2006). The Bukusu inhabit majorly Bungoma County (bordered by Kakamega County on the East, Mt. Elgon on the West, Busia on the South and Trans Nzoia on the North) and are also the majority in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya. The other Luhya sub-tribes include: Tiriki, Maragoli, Banyore, Bakhayo, Bamaraki, Banyala (of Kakamega), Manyala (of Busia), Basamia, Isukha, Idakho, Bakisa, Batsotso, Kabras, Taconi, Wanga, Marama, Barechea (found in Gem, Siaya County).

This research will be conducted in Trans Nzoia County, which is a county with fertile land and well watered with rainfall experienced throughout the year which has enabled the inhabitants to successfully practice farming mainly maize and animal rearing where cows, goats and sheep are kept. The cows are very important since they are the ones sacrificed in the month of August every year for the male circumcision ceremonies.

Statement of the problem

History and Previous studies carried out on circumcision songs had mostly concentrated on the generalization of the figures of speech, origin of the songs, circumcision in general among other areas but never had concentrated on metaphors as employed by the singers in the songs plus the message communication therein. This necessitated the researcher to analyze the Luhya male circumcision songs metaphor on the effect in the Education of the Boy Child among the Bukusu Community in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya and also come up with the best ways to assist the community on the best songs that can provide good moral messages.

Purpose of the study

To analyze Luhya Male Circumcision Songs Metaphor on the Have affected the Education of the Boy Child among the Bukusu Community in Trans-Nzoia County. This will enable the community to be very much selective on the circumcision songs that can enhance development of good morals in the education of their male children

Research objectives:-

The study will seek:

1. To determine the negative causes Bukusu Male Circumcision Songs Metaphor on boy child education.
2. To establish the positive effect of on the behavior of boy child in the Bukusu community

Justification of the study

The Bukusu circumcision rites ceremonies have changed a great deal for the worst over the years. The youth have transformed the ceremonies into occasions for misbehavior. Presently, many youths who have undergone the Bukusu circumcision rites or participate in the ceremonies have ended up not completing school due to the immoral songs that they normally sing and dance hence bad elements of words in their mind that leave them practicing and involving themselves in what they sing. This development has necessitated the need for some form action to right the wrongs going on during these ceremonies and hence the need for this study

Significance of the study:-

The study will enable policy makers to come up with decisions that will enable the Luhya community, specifically the Bukusu, to come up with good circumcision songs metaphor that will enhance development of good morals among the youth during circumcision preparations. The study will assist future researchers to use the elements that might have been researched on and applied in the future research as their literature review.

The study will enable future scholars to come up with a new mechanism that will provide good circumcision songs metaphor that will have positive impact on the Education of the Boy Child among the Bukusu Community in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya. That will be constructive to the mind of the youth and their future development. The educationists will come up with good educational songs that will be able to impart good knowledge and skills into the youth for the development in their good morals hence are good leaders.

Literature Review:-

A theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research. It introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under the study exists (Abed, Gabriel 2008).The study was anchored on the Symbolic Interactionism Theory,

Symbolic Interactionism Theory

Symbolic interactionism is a micro-level theory that focuses on the relationships among society individuals. According to the theorists Herman and Reynolds (1994), communication, as the exchange of meaning through language and symbols, mirrors people as being active in shaping the social world rather than simply being acted upon. Symbolic interactionism is considered to have been the work of George Herbert Mead (1863-1931). LaRossa and Reitzes (1993) however noted that George Herbert Mead never published his work but his then student, Herbert Blumer came up with the term “symbolic Interactionism” and outlined the basic premises as being; humans interact with things based on meanings ascribed to those things; and that the ascribed meaning of things comes from peoples interactions with others and society; the meanings of things are interpreted by a person when dealing with things in specific circumstances.

This theory will assist in the analysis of the male circumcision songs metaphor among the Bukusu community because the circumcision rites are part of culture and are interactively practiced and enjoyed in society. During the singing of the Bukusu circumcision songs, the participants interact while dancing in different styles without self-control but on rhythm of the song while communicating the intended message metaphorically.

It is from the individual actions and drama accompanying the singing that also brings in sociologist Erving Goffman (1922-1982) who developed a technique that he called dramaturgical analysis due to the focus on the importance of symbols in building a society. He used theatre as an analogy for social interaction and recognized that people’s interactions showed patterns of cultural behavior. Goffman (1958) further noted that people improvise roles according to unfolding situations the part they may play in the whole singing process may be unclear before they start singing.

This theory will also be important to this study since the study is qualitative in nature and the use of qualitative research methods in seeking to understand the symbolic/metaphoric nature of the Bukusu male circumcision songs.

According to Barasa (2015), circumcision among the Bukusu has several definitions. Barasa posits that these definitions are categorized, firstly, on the original motive(s) that made the community to adopt circumcision, secondly, the symbolic meaning of the numerous rituals involved in the ceremony. Circumcision in Bukusu community is referred to as *embalu* a term which was derived from the circumciser's knife (*embalu*). Barasa (2015) also states that circumcision is also referred to as *sikhebo* which originates from a verb "Khukheba" meaning "cutting and removal of the prepuce from the tip of the initiates penis." The last meaning/definition was also derived from a verb "khukhwingila" which literally means "to enter" which connotes morbidity in the community's cultural life cycle, simply put, entrance of a "boy" into the adulthood.

The Bukusu circumcision ritual is organized into eight age-sets called *bibingilo* which have been chronologically categorized by the elders, who are the custodians of the structure, as follows; Bakolongolo (1900-1910), Bakikwameti (1912-1922), Bakananachi (1924-1934), Bakinyikeu (1936-1946), Babanyange (1948-1958), Bamaina (1960-1970), Bachuma (1972-1986) and Basawa (1988-1998). After a century, and after ensuring that no man outlives his age-sets into the next age-set of the same name, the categories start afresh and run through the same format. For example, a boy circumcised in 2020 will fall under the Kikwameti age-set.

According to David (2016), a song is an organized piece of artwork that has a tune, beats and reflects a people's philosophy, beliefs and in many cases, their political development and social values. Songs can be accompanied by instruments to enrich the rhythm among others. On the other hand, circumcision songs are songs sung during the circumcision ceremony with each community doing it in its own unique way even though several similarities do exist among communities. In Bukusu community, songs form part of the entire process which starts from when *omusinde* (the initiate) declares his readiness for the rite, and permission granted by the parents, to the day the actual circumcision all through to when he is admitted into the adulthood. David (2016) noted that songs are organized according to the occasion. For example, pre-circumcision songs are meant for the preparation of the *omusinde* for the rite of passage, special songs are sung during the circumcision process while after the ceremony, other songs are sung that signify the end of the ceremony. These songs are organized in a way that a resident of the place or a community member knows exactly which stage of the ceremony is in progress. The songs contain messages that are carefully but understandably hidden figuratively and passed across poetically or indirectly on varied topics touching on parenthood, sex, marriage, morals, taboo words like sexual organs among other relevant topics as per the occasion.

All this is done through metaphors, similes, personification, euphemisms, symbolism, onomatopoeia (the heartbeat in circumcision songs in Bukusu community) among others in very easy ways since the messages are disguised, hurtless, softly criticize the targeted members of society, and are humorously presented, not forgetting the entertaining manner in which they are sung and form of dancing styles accompanying them. The parts of speech are important because they add salt in the songs without which the grounding of songs will be missing leaving them to lose the aesthetic value.

Importance of male circumcision songs on education of boy child

Bukusu male circumcision is carried out for purposes of marking the transition of the initiate from childhood to adulthood (Makila, 1986; Wanyama, 2006; David, 2016). The circumcision songs sung during this period, among other purposes, give the initiate advice on adulthood. David (2016) posits that the circumcision rites are divided into three categories i.e. pre-circumcision period, circumcision period and post circumcision period where each stage has its own songs with different form of messages wrapped in the songs sung for the initiates. These songs carry messages that, besides the initiates, also target the other participants and society at large. The songs pass messages poetically and proverbially, and of most relevance to this study, metaphorically.

The messages are carried out in a number of distinctive characteristics in a call-and-response song form which is a form where the lead singer calls out with a sung message and the whole group responds with an answer or completion of the song message in a myriad of ways and marvelous creativity. This form is very flexible that it depends on the needs and goals of the song when it's being sung. David (2016) further classified the call-and-response form into two categories for purposes of effective message communication; low-text-load songs and the high-text-load songs. The scholar further explains that low-text-load songs are those with few words and phrases (where only a few words change/repeated throughout the song) while long-text-load songs have many different words and phrases.

According to Wanyama and Egesah (2015), pre-circumcision ceremony songs communicate the message of intent, resolve and commitment of the omusinde(the initiate) to face the knife. This stage officially sets off the circumcision process. The process starts when omusinde declares to his father that he is ready to be circumcised and the father gives permission for the process to commence by fixing a date for the boy to be circumcised. The boy is then handed the circumcision bells (chinyimba) and he starts jingling and the Bukusu traditional and special circumcision song (sioyayo) is echoed by the elders before allowing omusinde to go inform the relatives of the upcoming ceremony. This is done by the initiate playing the jingles accompanied by a number of singers to the homesteads of the selected relatives to invite them as witnesses of his facing the knife and eventual transition to adulthood on the fathers' given date.

Diverse Effects of Luhya Male Circumcision Songs Metaphor on boy child education

According to Simiyu (2016), music of the time accompanies every era in time which is a narrator of what people in that particular society have gone through and are still striving to become. Songs are an integral part of life and poetically composed songs play a very important role in people's lives, with particular mention being mental and physical health. Most African/Luhya songs employ figurative language that play the role of teaching, mourning, criticizing, saying thank you, soothing, love expression, entertaining, consoling and inspiring others in society. David (2015) further noted that songs are composed according to situations for which they are sung, situations like; child bearing, wedding, initiation ceremonies among others.

The figurative language used in Bukusu circumcision songs represent a complex relationship between the songs as they are sung and the message they communicate among the Bukusu of Western Kenya (Simiyu, 2016). The interpretation of the lexical items (metaphors) in the selected Bukusu circumcision songs are the words that facilitate the transfer of meaning in such a manner that the songs set out to communicate. It must be noted that deducing meaning from the metaphoric messages in the songs is not as easy as the songs may be brought out and entertaining as they may appear. Simiyu and Mukhwana (2016) noted that the hearer's background information plays an important role towards making the correct inferences of the message between the singers/speakers and the hearer/audience, effective message communication. The way the lexical items are brought out in a song helps in understanding the message carried in the song.

The Bukusu Circumcision songs metaphor as brought out in the songs, have both positive and negative effects on society.

Research methodology & Design:-

A research design is a systematic plan to study a scientific problem. The design of a study defines the study type as descriptive, correlation, semi-experimental, experimental, review, meta-analytic and sub-type for example, descriptive-longitudinal case study, research question, hypotheses, independent and dependent variables, experimental design, and, if applicable, data collection methods and a statistical analysis plan (Gorard, 2013). The researcher used the survey research design. This is whereby the researcher interacts with the respondents in the field. The survey research design is also called field research. A Survey is a type of research design often used to assess thoughts, opinions, and feelings (Shaughnessy, Zechmeister, and Jeane, 2011). The field research has been chosen because it is less costly and easy for generalization of findings. This research approach enabled the researcher to obtain authentic data from respondents.

Target Population

The study targeted a total population of 2000 youths from 10 locations. Simple Random sampling procedure was employed. Stratified sampling technique was also used. The scope was limited to youths in Trans-Nzoia County. The study made use of questioners and interview guide. Validity of the instruments was established through pilot testing while reliability was established from consistency of the results obtained from the field

Sample Procedure and Sampling Techniques

Sampling is concerned with the selection of a subset of individuals from within a statistical population to estimate characteristics of the whole population (Dillman, Smyth, and Christian, 2009). Trans-Nzoia County is consisted of 4 sub counties, the sub-counties were selected using stratified sampling technique. This technique identifies sub groups in the population and then proportions and select from each sub group to form a sample. The table below shows sample size for the various categories of respondents;

Table 1.1:- Number and sample size for the various categories of respondents.

| Population categories(sub-counties) | Total number (N) | General sample (n) | Sample per sub-county |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Kwanza | 370 | 400 | 5/5 = 1 |
| Saboti | 1500 | 500 | 500/5≈100 |
| Kiminini | 37 | 32 | 500/5 = 100 |
| Cherangany | 256 | 250 | 250/5 ≈ 50 |
| County commissioner | 1 | 1 | 1 |

NOTE: the sample size of people in each sub-county was 100 giving a total sample of 400 for the 4 sub-counties as opposed to 500. However, the researcher used a sample of 400 because there were some sub county which didn't have the Bukusu community. Many had less than 100; others had 50 to 60 and some 130 and above. Therefore, the differences in numbers helped the researcher to balance the sample size among selected sub county.

Stratified sampling and simple random sampling techniques were also used in the study.

Data collection

The methods of data collection included were survey and documentary review.

- A. Instruments of data collection
- B. Questionnaires

This study employed a questionnaire as the main data collection instrument. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Mellenbergh, 2008).

Interview Guide

An interview guide is a list of topics, themes, or areas to be covered in a semi structured interview. This is normally created in advance of an interview by a researcher and is constructed in such a way as to allow flexibility and fluidity in topics and areas that are to be covered, the way they are to be approached with each interviewee (Mason, 2013).

Focus Discussion Guide

This is a tool of data collection used to collect data from many people at a time with the investigator as the moderator in a session (Mason, 2013).

A Focus discussion guide was used to collect views from students. Hundred people were organized from each sub-county and the researcher served as the moderator during the exchange of views. Responses were written concurrently while sharing views about the problem being investigated.

Data Analysis

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modelling data to discover useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making (Hollerstein, 2008). The data was analysed using SPSS. This was used to work out percentages. Pearson's Chi Square was used to test the relationship among variables. Qualitative books, journal articles, internet material (such as articles, papers), reports, research papers and interviews of findings were obtained and presented descriptively to back-up or complement the quantitative data. The majority of respondent confirmed that Bukusu Male Circumcision Songs Metaphor have affected the Education of the Boy Child among the Bukusu Community in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya on a higher percentage.

Findings and Discussions:-

This chapter presents discussion findings and analysis. The discussion is prepared according to study objectives establishing relationships between the current literature and findings obtained from the study. The major contents of this discussion were;

1. Background information.
2. How Bukusu Male Circumcision Songs Metaphor have affected the Education of the Boy Child among the Bukusu Community in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya

The objectives were stated for proper identification and establishment. The research findings in the field were based on the obtained data provided by the respondents who filled the questionnaires. They were true records that were given by the respondents and didn't vary or differ in any manner they reflected the opinion and the perception of the researcher. The study established that Bukusu Male Circumcision Songs Metaphor have affected the Education of the Boy Child among the Bukusu Community in Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya adversely.

Conclusions And Recommendations:-

According to the study the researcher conclude that the study results showed, circumcision songs

Regarding the effects to the behavioral development and education of the boy child the message these songs metaphor deliver affects the boy child negatively to a greater extend.

Research also established administrators are in the opinion that circumcision songs metaphor affects the boy child positively just to a smaller extend but affects him negatively to a larger extend. This therefore calls for the Bukusu community to amend these songs metaphor in such a manner that the messages they carry be moral and avoid all immoral messages in the songs. This also call for law makers to amend the period for circumcision ceremonies and put forward proper structures and guidelines

The study recommends that:

1. Parents should have regular meetings with teachers to discuss circumcision issues affecting the education of the learners and come up with a way forward
2. Schools should set up rules regarding cultural practices at home and in schools; there should be tough disciplinary actions for those learners who break the set rules and regulations
3. The government and law makers should set a policy that prohibits circumcision ceremonies during school days. They should set up regulations on the type of songs sang during these ceremonies.

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