

## The Origin of the Tugen of Baringo County and their Practice of Indigenous Education: A historical perspective

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**Abstract:** Education is very crucial to any society, mainly for the preservation of the lives of its members and the maintenance of the society structures. The Tugen education before the colonial period was informal, but with the Colonisation of Kenya by the British the system of education was changed to enable the colonialists to achieve their aim of Colonisation. The Tugen had evolved an indigenous education system which was suited to their varied environment. They introduced and developed western education which involved reading and writing. In the process, they subjected the Tugen education system to several changes and demands because they were dictated by the need to promote the overall colonial enterprise in Kenya. The study, therefore, examined the social impact of western education on the Tugen community of Baringo county during the colonial period. As a background, the study attempted to trace the education history of the Tugen in pre-colonial period. On the other hand, majority of the Tugen who valued their indigenous system of education took initiatives and reacted negatively, for example establishing their own schools. In the study, the researcher used the underdevelopment theory of Walter Rodney who attempted to explain how the incorporation of peripheral economies has been influenced by metropolitan economies leading to their backwardness. The data was obtained from primary sources such as oral interviews, open ended questionnaires and archival materials. The researcher used secondary data from books and articles from the main libraries in the country. Two sampling techniques were used, that is, purposive and snowball methods. Analysis was done using qualitative and corroborative methods.

**Keywords:** Education, society, Colonisation.

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### INTRODUCTION

Kenya is occupied by five major communities namely the Bantu, Nilotes, Cushites, Indians and Europeans. The Bantus migrated from West Africa, Nilotes from Sudan, Cushites from Ethiopia, Indian's from India and the Europeans from European countries. The Africans who occupy the geographical area called Kenya came from different parts therefore the type of education which was practiced by the Africans in Kenya was similar to that practiced by other Africans currently in other parts of the continent[1]. It is also very easy to draw similarities in such things like beliefs and witchcraft which were practiced in several parts in Kenya including Baringo County. Available literature shows that African societies had organized instruction which was formal and informal Education.

Kenyatta, in *Facing Mount Kenya* analyzed how among the Kikuyu who are endowed with a pronounced age-set system, formal Education was in the past imparted through succeeding stages of initiation, from status to status[2]. The assumption of each status was accompanied by a sequence of rites which organized instruction. He further examined that in the Kikuyu community, age groups played an

important role since they determined the curriculum and the teachers to teach individuals, the two authors have given an elaborate development of African Indigenous Education which can be applied to Baringo County. Since African indigenous education had similarities these works are applicable to the Tugen community though consciously.

There are several African leaders and scholars who were surprised that Western Education was preferred to African Indigenous Education. One of them is Jomo Kenyatta who was the first president of Independent Kenya. In his book *Facing Mount Kenya*, he wondered "Why it is necessary to abandon completely this Indigenous Educational tradition and to adopt a western pattern of schooling which it is suggested is a far less efficient instrument for enabling a child fit into a society [3]. He wanted the indigenous educational tradition to be built upon to provide a pattern of Education which would serve modern purposes."

This contradicted the fact that he studied in Europe and acquired Western Education. Another Education leader and scholar who held the same view

was Julius Nyerere the president of Tanzania. In his work, *Education for Self Reliance*, he wrote that the aim of education was to socialize individuals to fit into their society, to function adequately within it when they become adults. Nyerere stressed that:

Education ----- has purpose. That purpose is to transmit from one generation to the next, the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society and prepare the young people for their future membership of the society and their active participation in its maintenance or development. This is true, explicitly or implicitly for all societies – the capitalist societies of the west, the communist societies of the east and the African societies.

This showed that both Kenyatta and Nyerere wanted the kind of education that will help the individual to fit into his/her society. Tuitoek's work, *The Tugen community* discussed the skills and knowledge which were instilled to young members of the community[4]. The skills described the lifestyle of a Tugen and highlighted in detail how the skills brought cohesiveness in the society. He strongly emphasized truth and honesty as the virtues which the community together. Tuitoek's work provided very valuable background and understanding of what has been described as the Tugen phenomenon. Anderson in his work *Eroding the Commons*, noted that in the 1930's Baringo was the first district in which development programmes were implemented[5]. It was a testing ground for ideas on how to reform should be implemented. He further noted that in the years after second world wars, as the colonial government carried enlarged programme of rural development, Baringo became an important reference point for others. He gave a detailed account of Baringo between 1840 and 1900 which captures the origin, migration and settlement of the Tugen.

### **Colonial Education**

After Kenya was declared a British colony in 1895, there was an influx of European settlers into the country. These settlers practice modern agriculture in the white highlands alienated for them. Their arrival and subsequent settlement in Kenya which was a new place and completely different from their home country meant that the new settlers had to think about and plan for the education of their children. During this period colonization was evolving and there was no organization of government to the extent that there was neither a structure policy nor even a development plan of any kind which would guide the government in its participation in the field of Education Development.

Anderson in his work *The Struggle for the School* argued that formal Education, even in Europe, only became a mass social institution during the

nineteenth century and as such it was introduced into Africa well before its functions were fully appreciated in western society. He went further to lament that the Europeans, Missionaries and settlers tended to concentrate on the schools capacity to socialize, assuming that this would enable them, by manipulating the content and level of teaching, to influence the development of Africans peoples skills and values[6]. Kettle dealt with the impact of colonial rule on the Tugen of North Baringo[7]. He concentrated mainly on one section of the Tugen leaving behind the Somor of central Baringo.

Mutuatraced the development of colonial educational development for the Africans [8]. By so doing she showed the aims and motives of colonial education which were contrary to the aspirations of the Africans. Of immediate relevance to the study is the discussion of the policies in the education sector in the colonial period. She argued that the imposition of colonial rule and the entrenchment of colonial education affected the development of Kenyan education sector .she concentrated on the most basic and salient features of colonial education administration. The work however did not go deep into areas of administration at specific levels of education such as the curriculum, school management and the type of schools. The author noted that the work should be used as a beginning to deeper complex educational system that was bequeathed by the British colonial administration.

Rodney's work is of great relevance to this study[9]. He did an analysis of underdevelopment during the colonial period and attempted to give certain solutions in a correct historical evaluation. He did a lot of research on colonial education in developing countries and made conclusions that African development is possible only on the basis of a radical break with the international capitalist system which has been the Principal agency of underdevelopment of Africa over the last five centuries. He recommended that it was necessary to have fundamental transformation in the ordering of the political, cultural and economic forces that have dominated the world.

### **The impact of Colonial Education on the Tugen Community**

Mbiti attempted to explain the meaning and nature of Education, its scope and its relevance to national developments of various categories [10]. He wanted Education that can have distinct separation of roles between general Education and occupations training. His conclusion was that the major failures of Education among developing nations has been exacerbated mainly by the attempt to combine both general Education and occupational training in an effort to produce fully qualified skilled workers. He asked the question "Does education induce development"? [11].

His answer was that Education is a worthwhile investment, but its economic returns are of a long-term nature. Furthermore, Education must be directed by careful planning and must be under constant review if it is to induce economic growth. Digolo, stated that Education plays a strategic role in development since it opens doors to broadened thinking and empowers people to make informed decisions and natures ones confidence and uplifts ones social economic status[12]. In support of education and the strategic role it plays in development. The World Bank categorically stated that:-

Education is a cornerstone of economic growth and socio development and a principal means of improving the welfare of individuals to increase the productive capacity of societies and their political, economic and scientific institutions. It also helps reduce poverty by increasing the value and efficiency of the labour offered by the poor and the mitigating the population health and nutritional consequences of poverty.

Despite the confidence and the apparent significance people attach to education as a tool in development it has not been critically analyzed and the many challenges facing it examined. At another level, colonial educational practices, established at the basis of cultural retreat has stunted out technological development. Mazrui, Rodney, and Davidson, gave detailed accounts of how far Africa had advanced in technology on its own before the disruptive forces of slave trade and colonialism set in[13-15]. This means that Africa had developed to high levels but Colonial education and practices disrupted this development.

### **The origin of the Tugen of Baringo County: Migration and Settlement**

It is not clear when the Tugen settled in their current settlement because available records are scanty. Anderson in his work *eroding the Commons*, attempted to highlight on pre-colonial history of the Tugen though he is subjective and even refers to the Tugen as 'lazy' [16]. According to recorded account of Ehret C, the Kalenjin migrated from their original homes in northern Africa in the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D and moved southwards along river Nile at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This country in the North, according to Kipkorir[5] and chesaina was either Sudan or Egypt and was referred to as '*emetabburgei*' which means the hot country. They then moved East wards and by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, they had reached and settled around Mount Elgon or *tulwetabkony*[17]. This became the first great dispersal area of the Kalenjin. Their divisions constitute the present Kalenjin sub-ethnic groups that remained in

Mt. Elgon region and became the great descendants of the present Kony, Bongomek and Sebei.

One group moved out of Mt. Elgon around the 18<sup>th</sup> Century through Kerio valley up to the areas North of lake Baringo called Somo[18]. At this region the Tugen separated from the other groups like the Nandi and the Kipsigis which was caused by a famine known in Kalenjin as *Kemeutab Reresik* which means famine of bats. The written records continue to indicate that, during this famine a bat brought blades of green grass which were taken as a sign of good omen signifying that the famine could be averted through movement to greener pastures. The Tugen were therefore forced to move and settle around Tugen Hills which was generally greener. From Somo, a section of the group moved westwards to form the Pokot, as they are known today[19]. The Kipsigis and the Nandi moved eastwards and settled around Rongai where they co-existed for many years before splitting again due to aggression from the warring Maasai subgroups from UasinGishu area. From Rongai, the Kipsigis and the Nandi moved southwards and settled in their present area.

The second wave moved from *TuluopKony* (Mt. Elgon)in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and travelled Southwards through *Katalel* (Kitale), *Oldorito plains* (Eldoret) Ainabkoi and to Londiani area near Molo where they lived up to the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century when the various groups moved in various directions[20]. The Kipsigis group left Londiani and went Southward's towards Kericho, the Keiyo group went northwards towards Kipkabus area, the Nandi group went westwards towards Kesses area and the Tugen group went eastwards towards Rongai, Kipsogon and Solai areas[21].

The third group of the Tugens left *TuluopKony* in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and travelled through *Katalel*, Cherangany and crossed over the Kerio river and lived in the now Tugen hills[22]. The last wave of Kalenjin speaking group left *Tuluop Kony* through Cherangany for Tugen hills around early 19<sup>th</sup> century. On arrival to the Tugen hills area they found another Tugen group who had occupied the area. They were directed to move southwards towards the Solai area. This group was later called the *Samo* rpeople as they are called today. Those who directed them (*Kiror*) remained behind in the Tugen hills and became known as the *Arros* people to date. Another split occurred here and a group trekked further to Eldama ravine where they mixed with the Maasai, Kipsigis and the Nandi. That is why today the Tugen Somor group of mixed origin while the TugenArros are seen as the pure blooded ethnic group.

Apart from the historical documented accounts, oral traditions and myths give other varying accounts that an ancestor of all Kalenjin groups lived at *Tulwob Kony* with his seven sons when at the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century a severe drought occurred[14]. They all dispersed forming the present day seven Kalenjin groups. From the narratives of the interviewees, they confirm that the Tugen did not enter Baringo district in single migratory file. Deducing from the historical accounts, relevant facts and from stories it is clear that they entered the district in four groups and each was composed of several clans.

By 1903 the areas between *Kamasia* or Tugen hills, Londiani Mountains, the Nandi and UasinGishu plateau were sparsely occupied. There were a few number of Tugen who lived over the edge of the Tugen hills down the rivers of Lake Baringo and up the slope of the Tugen hills near Ravine station in the southern region. The early inhabitants were a few Dorobo or Okiek who were living in the forest [23].

By 1910, Tugen from *Aror*, *EwalelandChapchap* were still roaming in the district. Tugen were not rich in cattle, and their attempts to make fuller use of the northern Baringo pastures were then being challenged by the Pokot. As early as 1904 several Tugen families were reported to be living close to Arabel and a significant numbers of Tugen had crossed the Molo River and entered Northern portion of Endorois by 1911. Others moved to Maji Moto along the western shore of Lake Bogoria, where they settled and formed the endorois subgroup of the tugen.

To the west near Perkerra, *Radad* and *Koitegan* hills became key settlement areas for Tugen emerging from the forested hillside of Tenges and Kabarak. By around 1914, overcrowding became acute here and there was a severe drought in 1918. They then moved to Solai escarpment including the Tugen of *Kamaruswo*, *Keben*, *Kakimor*, *Lembus*, *Endoros* and *Pokor*. This place was greed and had water from Lake Solai. To the south settlement was interrupted by European settlement who took concession of land such as Torongo and Sabatia who took the Lembus forest to start a timber industry. Further migration depended largely on the fortunes of the individual member or families. A determinant factor was how they adjusted economically to the new environment[24]. The physical state of the Tugen hills determined not only the course of clan settlement but also their mode of subsistence. There are three ecological zones in the Tugen area which are *soin*, *kurget* and *mosop* which fitted well with Tugen hunting and herding activities.

Further migration was witnessed when a small section Nandi who had settled in Kesses moved towards Koibatek hill, through Torongo area and travelled on to

Kipsogon in Lembus and lived there among the Tugen[25]. There are several reasons for expansion of the Tugen in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. First, the movement of the Maasai from Baringo plains lessened competition for grazing and water thus creating a more settled and safer herding environment. From 1900 onwards cattle raiding were much less prevalent than before. Secondly, land pressure had become more acute in the Tugen hills towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Tugen stock holdings also increased at this time largely due to the better survival of their herds on the hilltops of the Tugen hills during the Rinderpest pandemic. Expansion between 1900 and 1920 coincided with a climatically favourable period. Evidence of this is to be found in the traditions of the Tugen. During the time of *Kipnyige* age set there was generally good rain's and prosperity[26]. Rainfall data for government stations within the Molo catchment areas indicating rains for the years 1904 to 1917. The oral tradition indicates that security from enemies was the major factor expansion. The Tugen found the hills (Tugen hills) secure for themselves and animals and therefore settled there [27].

The Tugen migration was finally checked by the arrival of Europeans in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This migration between 1900 and 1920 coincided with the arrival of European settlers in Kenya. The colonial government forcefully moved the Tugen out of their territories in North West Nakuru area and some parts of *Lembus*. The areas of Solai and Subukia, bordering Baringo to the east and OIBonata, Lomolo, Rongai and Eldama Ravine, lying along the southern marches, were all alienated as areas of European settlement prior to 1920[28]. These farmlands came to mark the administrative limits of Baringo District, but more importantly they marked the limits of lands that could be freely used by the African herder. In taking possession of this land's the European settler community had seized seasonal grazing areas and watering points that were crucial to the survival of the African herders on the lowlands of southern Baringo. Their property in this land was reinforced by the might of the state, and they sought to keep it to themselves. After independence in 1963, some Tugen community from the hills went back and bought farms from the outgoing colonialist's that is the *Sabatia* settlement schemes[21].

### **The Characteristics of Tugen Indigenous Education**

The Tugen indigenous education was a lifelong process of learning whereby a person progressed through predetermined stages of life of graduation from birth to death. This implies that African indigenous education was continuous throughout lifetime from childhood to old age. It can generally be defined as the form of learning in African traditional societies in which knowledge, skills and attitudes of the tribe were



passed from elders to children, by means of oral instructions and practical activities[29].

The characteristics of Tugen indigenous education were like for other African societies though it varied due to the geographical location. Firstly it was community oriented geared to solving the problems of the community the instructions given were therefore, directed towards the social life of the community, so as to prepare the learners to fit in their community. Kenyatta states that it was taught in relation to a concrete situation [30]. The boys and girls learnt about what was in the environment, for example birds, trees, rocks.

Tugen indigenous system was illiterate. The learning experiences were made orally and the knowledge was stored in the heads of the elders. The instructors were carefully selected from the family or clan. Their task was to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes to the young informally either verbally or practically. At the informal levels the teaching process took the form of stories, legends, riddles and songs whereas in practical levels they imitated and watched what their elder's performed [31].

Tugen traditional education put emphasis on practical learning and the young adult learned by watching, participating and executing what they learned. The skills like carving, masonry, clay working, and cloth making cooking and home management were insisted among the children in the community. These were skills opened to all, as they consisted of the basic skills, knowledge and attitudes that enabled individuals to live and function effectively in their tribe. The best way to learn farming is to farm, the best way to learn cooking is to cook and so on.

Tugen indigenous education was not separated from other spheres of community activity .this implies that it was the whole life of the community and it had no special time of a day or life when it took place. Instead it took place in the entire span of life. It can therefore be viewed as a lifelong process in which an individual acquired skills, knowledge d values from birth to death. Election was essentially part of life and not separated from the societal culture. It had no paper word testing and certificates but learners graduated ceremoniously. There were basically no formal exam at the end of a specific level of training, but a learner was considered graduate hen he or she is able to practice what he or she had learnt. A ceremony was held to mark the completion to training and thus assuming more community responsibilities .This was common especially during the rite of passage.

### **The Goals of Tugen Indigenous Education**

The role of teaching and learning was to equip the Tugen boys and girls with the appropriate skills to their gender in preparation for their distinctive roles in the society. In the Tugen society most girls were taught how to become good mothers and how to handle their husbands soon after marriage. The boys were prepared to become warriors, manual farmers, good fathers or heads of the family and other male dominated occupations.

It was to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to the social economic activities of the individual. Education was for utility value. It was provided for immediate induction into real life in the society, learners learnt by observing, imitating and initiation ceremonies.

Learners acquired a common spirit to work and that the means of production were owned communally. The education was also to form an integral part of culture. For example children upbringing was a whole community's role. If for instance a child misbehaved in the absence of his or her parents, any adult member of the community was responsible to correct him or her on the spot. That implied that children belonged to the society.

### **Types of Tugen Education**

There are two types of Tugen indigenous education, that is, formal education and informal education. Formal education was developed when cultures began to expand their knowledge beyond the basic skills of gathering food, religious practices, trade and communication, formal education was developed. Formal education was institutionally used by the Tugen community using vernacular language.<sup>54</sup> Informal education is a lifelong process that provides an individual with skills, attitudes, values and knowledge from daily experiences and through social interactions. Agents of informal education include the family, religious bodies, the media, the state and peer groups. They introduced the learner to the roles and behaviour that are acceptable in the society. In this system learning takes place unconsciously and often aimed at imparting moral values. It takes place everywhere and in most cases occurs concurrently with formal education [32].

### **Stages of administration of Tugen Indigenous Education**

Education has been described as being 'about the way in which human beings live their lives' [33]. This implies that education is a continuous process. It begins the moment we are born and ends only with death [34]. At every stage in life there is something new to learn. It is generally not interest but social

acceptability that makes us learn more about things in life. We like to feel we are somebody in society. We do not live in isolated islands, but we are constantly in contact with individuals and groups that make up society. We need to take our place in the society thus involves an element of usefulness. This is really the role of education; to enable individuals to become useful members of the society they live in.

The Tugen indigenous education aimed precisely at that. It prepared everybody for his or her part in the society. Being a closely knit society the Tugen culture was maintained by the presence of rigid rules and regulations governing the lives of every member. There was nobody idle or unemployed at any given time. Conformity was the keyword because only then could society ensure continuity and permanence. The system of education of the Tugen prior to the advent of the Europeans developed from a simple to a complex structure. A deliberate effort was therefore made to instruct the young not only to preserve the cultural heritage but also to make sure succeeding generations benefited from it. Society developed and progressed along established lines. All through the ages, men everywhere have had the same experience at one time or the other.

Tugen indigenous education was definitely organised. It was formed within the family setup, to neighbouring related groups and to the whole tribal organisations. Within each group there is the process of character formation in the routine of Tugen lifestyle. In the Tugen community indigenous education was education for living. Its main function was to train the child for adulthood in the society. It entailed systematic socialization of the younger generation into norms, religions and moral beliefs of the society. The Tugen believed that a child belonged to the community and the value of the community is based on how knowledgeable and disciplined the members are. It therefore placed great emphasis on learning practical skills and the acquisition of knowledge which was useful to the individual and the society as a whole for example blacksmithing, construction of houses and farming.

It also emphasized character building and the acquisition of moral qualities which forms the integral part of adulthood. The child should get knowledge and techniques needed for active participation in social life of the young who were made familiar with norms expected so as to be responsible members of the society. It also emphasized physical development of the child. Children had to be physically fit to cope with the challenges of life. He will be the head of the family and should be physically fit to defend the family in case of a problem. It may have seemed a simple life by today's standards but it involved activity suited to its environment [35].

Formal methods involved theoretical and practical inculcation of skills. One way of doing this was by apprenticeship [36]. The homestead was the school and this meant that parents had a grave obligation of seeing that their children were educated properly in the tribal ways of life. Failure to do this obligation meant that the family would be despised and looked down upon by the clan or the tribe. For example, to be a full member of a family or clan it was necessary for the person to be physically, emotionally stable and socially accepted.

In the Tugen community education was principally precept much of what was learnt was heard or imitated. In this case children were sent by their parents to work with craft men such as blacksmith or basket maker who would then teach them formally for example (*Kapkitony*) blacksmith such as Kiptombul from Tirimionin who made agricultural tools from iron ores like *Aiwo*(axe), *Moru*(cutting blade), *Ngotii*(spear), *Kotik* (Arrows) and *Mogombe*( Hoe) [37].

The same was also true with acquisition of hereditary occupations herbalist (*Chepkerichin* and *chepsakitin*) [38]. Parents would hand over their secrets about which medicine to use for which disease and how it was administered. The child will sit and work with him from time to time until he became knowledgeable in the practice. An ageing *chepkerichon* may pass her knowledge of herbs and other method of treatment to her favourite child or sell it to another person. The accepted price is an uncast rated he goat which symbolizes fertility. It will ensure purchasers growth in wisdom.

Formal instructions were also given in the constant corrections and warnings to the children. The main occupation of the society would be the determining factor. There was division of labour where boys assisted the fathers in herding cattle and hunting. The girls assisted the mothers in domestic chores like cooking, taking care of child or gathering. This was to prepare them on the smooth running of a new home and stressing parental and marital obligations. The girls and boys were warned against certain practices such as the girls should not sit on the father's bed or the boys should not sit on the mother's bed. There are also some drinking vessels for milk or water (*kerebe*) which should not be shared [39]. The children were also expected to behave respectfully with relatives or important people.

Another important form of formal education was initiation which was meant for both boys and girls. Initiation was done in stages so as to serve the intended purpose at a particular age. The Tugen believed that

certain facts could easily be understood better and have proper meaning at a certain age. At ten years both boys and girls had the lobes of the ears pierced. After the lobes were created the children fixed ornaments on them such as ear rings which were called *almunyeny* and *soolik*. These lobes developed until they were wide holes. They wore shining copper metal rings which were put in the ear holes and left to swing. This promoted beauty in both boys and girls especially in adolescent period[40].

Removal of two lower teeth from one's jaw was another form of initiation. It was a sign that the child at the age of ten had advanced from childhood to boyhood or girlhood. The boys can accompany his father to a case as witness so that he could be able to speak of it after his father's death.

During the newborn stage the teaching of the society is purely done by the mother who feeds, cleans and sings to the child. At the stage of infancy, the education of the child takes a different shape. It was the responsibility of the mother to train the child and she starts by weaning with the acceptable food in the society. During this period education was informal, though attention was paid to language and physical movements. The child is taught how to crawl, sit and walk properly to avoid having bow legs. The mother also pulled the legs of the child when they were bathing so as to have a straight figure. The child is taught how to use the hands properly to cope with the tribal activities. The child was given precaution against fire, suffocation, accidents and evil glances [41].

At the childhood stage, the parents introduce co-education system in form of plays to the children. The children are left to indulge in any game that appeal to them provided that game is not injurious to them. The children do most of the games in imitation of their elders play was generally important to the extent that a child who did not play was suspected to be ill or abnormal. The Tugen environment was rich with materials for making toys which were used for play such as trees, mud, reeds and clay. The toys included animals, houses and vehicles of their own choices. The popular games were[42].

Wrestling was a game staged by children who were inciting each other. To be declared a winner one had to throw his opponent down so that his back touched the ground. This game made children to be more proficient and to compare their physical strength. The child who was defeated on a number of occasions by his age mates became a laughing stock of the group and was considered a weakling. On the other hand, the child who had distinguished himself as the strongest assumed the power of leadership of the group.

Children imitated the rolling wheel of the vehicle to make *kwiringkwiri*-a form of vehicle which was using rollers. Others were walking on hands with legs up but only done by boys, Swinging using hanging creepers in the numerous valleys, Sliding down a gentle slope using beehive like structure, hide and seek was very popular for both boys and girls (*kuruguru*), Swimming was done in the numerous rivers and streams (*kiptambel*), hunting of animals such as rats ( it was accompanied by singing which gave them moral to move on ) skipping using ropes made of reeds or creepers (*Changuku*). At advanced age the Tugen men played the *kechoik* (arranging stones or pebbles) on holes on the ground.

The girls worked with their mothers by plaiting baskets of grass and grind grain corn as well as making little pots of the local clay. They took care of the young ones, a role they will play in future when they become mothers. During the evenings when the day's work was done, the children curiosity about their ancestors, origin of tribe, customs and traditions were satisfied by their parents and their elders. During the gatherings family relationships, clan relationship and tribal relationships were greatly emphasized. All these were meant for the physical development of the child, to develop endurance skills and develop good memory.

The most drastic step in the ladder of initiation is circumcision which was done at puberty (12 -15 years) which was intended to admit a boy or a girl to full membership of the community. The circumcision ceremony for boys took about three months in a secluded area known as *tirioy or menjo*. Circumcision was normally accompanied with formal lessons and songs. The instructors were referred to as *motiren* who are charged with turning children into men and women. If they do their job properly, the initiates will have a hard time during the rite but will afterwards become useful members of the society. The initiates are referred to as *torus*. This becomes the school of the Tugen society and the importance in the life of the community is illustrated by the impressive methods used at this stage to mark the entrance to manhood.

The education given does not concern only sex but also how to respect elders, manners to superiors of different grades and how to help his community? The trials of circumcision teach the youth how a man must bear pain, meet with misfortune and bear himself like a warrior. He is taught to think matters seriously, carefully and not to act on impulse of the moment. He should know how to behave to certain people of his wife's family by using special salutations. Questions were asked in the form of riddles for the initiates to interpret their meaning. Such questions dealt with issues pertaining to the protection of the homestead against enemies or committing adultery. The *torus* and *motiren*

undergo rigorous physical experience and regulated fighting. Apart from the *motiren*, elders also instil the importance of courage and fearlessness to torus .all these were geared towards making the initiates better members of the society. Girls were taught to be responsible mothers and women of the society.

Basically both the boys and girls were indoctrinated into the values, ethics, rules and taboos and other norms of the community and what required of them. Being a traditional society it not only acted as the community educational body where patience, fortitude and other important custom were taught, but ordained those who went through it with community responsibility ,the moral and legal obligation to their own families and the society as a whole. Circumcision was seen as the foundation, if not the nursery of future members, who were to be integrated into the communities various institutions.

By the time boys and girls came out from circumcision, they were more or less ready to perform the tasks of adulthood. During this period the child was given skills of thought and reasoning. They were more involved in production activities. They were given more family responsibility and improve their apprenticeship in family occupation such as trade, blacksmithing, pottery or art and craft.

With time, children came to learn collective discipline and self discipline and undertook duties meant for their age. Through interaction with members of their community, children learnt good manners, respect for elders and various beliefs that affected their everyday life.

### Scope and Content of Traditional Tugen Education

It was determined by the physical and social environment of the children. They were to survive and overcome the dangers in the environment. Much of what was learnt was heard or imitated included riddles, puzzles, myths, legends, proverbs, fork tales all designed to familiarize the young with customs and traditions.

The riddles (*tanguoch*) were some of the required lessons which were retention, imagination and any talent to promote capabilities on research lessons and acquire conditions in life[43].For example,

Abuchmabe - kindaptany  
Siling barak - aeroplane

*Kigirei* (constitution) was very important word in the whole culture in the Tugen. It was constituted by the elders when they meet in their council meetings. The elders proposed the law and then discussed it in their council meetings. The elders proposed the law and then discussed it in the details before adopting. Anyone

who broke any of the laws could die or went mad. This law made the Tugen to refrain from indulging in wrong doing since the Tugen did not have arresting soldiers or prison cells facilities they had to curse the laws they made so that should any person broke them death was the resultant penalty. *Kigirei* worked were and helped keep the Tugen community in a cohesive manner for many centuries

Oral literature was also used as a method of instruction [44]. It was done through myths and legends. Myths were tales which effectively describe phenomena. Elders narrated tales about things which were beyond the understanding of men such as death or the origin of man. Myths were used to explain to children things they did not understand. Apart from myths as a form of oral literature legends were also used. Legends were tales fabricated to account for real events that took place in time immemorial. Legends sounded like fairy tales but were actual history. Legends were used to tell children about people or things that actually existed. Fork tales were used by the elders and they were based on day to day happenings. Fork tales were used to pass ethical teaching to the children. Most of the fork tales had happy endings and involved triumph over difficulties. It instilled values such as communal unity, hard work, honesty, uprightness and conformity to society. It enabled children to learn about human problems, faults and weaknesses hence morals were uplifted.

The most popular form of informal education was dancing and fork songs [45]. Many rites, ceremonies and festivals were performed to the accompaniment of music and dancing. The songs were important sources of teaching and instruction. They were used to develop memories, discipline, good sounds, self expressions and entertainment. They were effectively used as a means of communication when entertaining elders and other dignitaries.

Proverbs (*kalewenaniik*) were used mainly in conversations [46]. There were proverbs dealing with co-operation and personal human qualities. Others were related to authority and domestic life .others were to show relationships between children and parents or wives and husbands .old people used them to convey precise moral lessons, warnings and advice since they made a greater impact on the mind than ordinary words .proverbs used codes concerning the regulation of behaviour. They were used to show the wisdom of the great ancestors examples of Tugen proverbs are;

*Makibolebobannebochi*(you cannot take away someone else's luck)  
*Ngo samismurrian k obo kotnebo* (a rat stinks but it has its home) [47].



Health teaching was done for both boys and girls. They learn easily that certain things are not safe and regard them as taboos children are trained not to go into a house where there is smallpox, not to touch a dead animal or the bones of a dead person. They were taught to brush their teeth using a tree brush with a substance from a certain tree called *tusanik*. Teaching children about good manners and respect (*konyit*) was very supreme among the Tugen [48]. They that their happiness in the homestead their popularity, their present comfort and their future prospects depends on giving respect and obedience maximum attention. Disobedience to those above them was a grave offence. These laws of the society were highly valued. All these were sources of knowledge for the Tugen children.

### CONCLUSION

The study concludes that there are various social institutions governing the social, economic and political life of the Tugen. It was clear that as the Tugen were migrating they encountered other Tugen groups through trade, circumcision, marriage and religion which informed expansion of their rich culture. However, this expansion was halted by the arrival of the white settlers and colonial government who were more powerful. The Tugen saw the biasness of Western Education and took part in providing education for the Tugen, as a result of what they saw as deliberate effort on the part of the administration to limit their opportunities. In Kenya, generally, there was a strong feeling rightly, that the government expenditure in education discriminated in favor of European and Indian schools and this killed most indigenous education systems such as of Tugen people.

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