

# The Contribution of Church Missionary Society to the Development of Teacher Education in Kahuhia Normal School, 1922 to 1961

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** This paper describes the contribution of church missionary society (C.M.S) to the development of teacher education in Kahuhia Normal school. **Methodology:** This being a historical study, it is based on the analysis of Primary sources of data local written sources, oral sources and archival material through an historical inquiry. Other archival sources referred to were school records documents, photographs, correspondences, minutes and reports of colonial annual meeting. Secondary sources were used to supplement primary data such as books and unpublished and published documents. The interviews were noted, transcribed and a thematically analyzed using qualitative method. **Results:** The findings demonstrated that Missionaries were major providers of teacher education in the colonial Kenya leading them to gain acceptance and this culturally and socially changed the people of Kahuhia. Consequently, Church Missionary Society employed a strict program of enculturation of African catechist through the provision of education. This led to the emergence of pioneer teacher evangelists and educated elites.it can be concluded that C.M.S played a vibrant role on the growth and development of teacher education in Kenya through the establishment of Kahuhia Normal School. The historical growth and development of the institution from 1922 to 1961 can be greatly attributed to the activities of the C.M.S as well as the Africans who played significant role such as providing land for the establishment of as schools in their area. The establishment of Kahuhia Normal school in turn was consolidated Kahuhia's social and economic power bring transformation in Kahuhia community and Kenya at large.

**Keywords:** Church Missionary Society, teacher education, development.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Christianity was introduced in Africa in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first pioneer CMS missionary was J.L Kraft who introduced Christianity in the coast in 1844(Strayer, 1978).This was after failed hopes to approach the Galla people that he settled in Rabai and was later joined by Johann Rebman in 1849. According to Oliver, Kraft believed that Africans needed to be converted in order to achieve civilization (Oliver 1952). Kraft's efforts intensified missionary efforts coming to Kenya and penetrating to interiors of Kenya in the 1860s. However denomination missionaries had churches, stations and schools concentrated in there sphere of influence hence CMS activities in the central province. The impact of missionaries in education in Kenya has been much documented by various authors such as Bongonko (1977), Barasa (2013) Maina (2015), have documented the role of CMS in Abugusii, Ngiya and Nyeri respectively, Nzioki 1986 work has interesting

data on role of Anglican church in Nyanza province, Kafu 2013 discusses in-depth on teacher education in Kenya and Kipkorir (2000), the history of colonial education in Kenya. While the role of CMS in teacher education and their impact on different parts of Kenya has been widely documented, none has been documented in Murang'a, particularly in Kahuhia. This study strived in filling this prevailing gap by giving comprehension on the role.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Tracing the contribution of Church Missionary Society to the development of teacher education can be best illustrated using colonial education theory. As a background, the teacher education as it existed in pre-colonial times is briefly observed in historical investigation. In respect to historical research, it dealt with and used materials from the processes as complex, interdependent and intensely responds to human

biological and social processes. This is broken down to actors who are stakeholders such as the CMS missionaries, K.N.S authorities, Kahuhia community, teacher who underwent training at the normal school former principals and educators. This theory illustrates of constant change and initiatives which CMS missionaries strived to implement teacher education programs. The implication of this value based and mission propagated agenda requires understanding which causes fragmentation on information that can only be stabilized through conservation, an example being this research process. The researcher by conducting this study was able to collect fragments on information analyzed them through internal and external criticism to come up with a historical narrative that was beneficial in this study and the Kahuhia community. This assisted the documenting on contribution of CMS missionaries to the development of teacher education in Kenya with special reference to Kahuhia Normal School from 1922 to 1961.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the objectives the study employed both primary and secondary sources of data. First, secondary data sources were used such as books, journals, unpublished and published sources, seminar papers etc. Thereafter, archival documents which augmented secondary sources were sourced at Kenya national archives, the Macmillan county library at Murang'a and school library records. Primary data was explored through oral sources by utilizing interview guides containing structured and semi-structured interviews on activities of CMS in Kahuhia. This enabled participants to provide adequate and relevant information. Field work was carried out in Murang'a County. Here the researcher employed purposive sampling. Purposive sampling aided the researcher to identify village elders who had custody of knowledge to describe historical development of the school and its contribution to Kahuhia community. Snowball sampling technique was also used to link the network of participants with the same information. A well-known former village elder in Kahuhia assisted the researcher in identifying the other participants. The participants were predominantly elderly men and women. The participants included retired school teachers, former students, and church elders. Similarly, education officials who had served during this period were sorted and consulted. Information from the oral interviews were recorded and transcribed. To ensure a systematic approach of the field data, information was arranged into themes in line with the objectives. The data was subjected to evaluation through the process of external and internal criticism for authenticity and reliability. External criticism ensured the genuineness and misinterpretation of the photographs, documents or any other source of data. While internal criticism was done to determine the credibility, reliability and accuracy of the contents in the data (Creswell, 2011). Data was analyzed qualitatively by subjecting the evidence from the field data into codes, themes and historical period (Borg, Gall 1983).

Information acquired was each critically separated and classified into themes and sub-themes that correlated with the objective under this study. The themes and sub-themes were interpreted so as to shape particular information and generalization. This was guided by historical facts from which the objectives were sourced (Sifuna, 1995). The outcomes were grouped into three topic and respective subtopics and presented descriptively as research findings of the study. This helped in drawing conclusion and suggestion of further research.

## 4. Findings on the role of Church Missionaries Society on the development of Teacher Education

### 4.1 Church Missionary Society and Teacher Education

The evangelization and contribution of CMS to teacher education commenced with rehabilitation of most Africa freed slaves in the Indian Ocean. These slaves lived in shelter homes such as Sharanpur near Bombay. These 'Bombay slaves' as they were called were first taught history, English, geography, arithmetic, cooking, masonry and carpentry (Strayer, 1978). These African elites became the first African teachers and catechists. During this period of change from slavery to world war and colonization was dominated by African teachers and catechist paving way for missionaries into the interior of east Africa. They acted as translators hence facilitating European to communicate their objective to natives. It was at this period that in January 1885 that Dr Crawford, a honorary CMS missionary set foot in East Africa and arrived in Kahuhia in 1906 (KNA/MSS/15/61/386). This was after 1900 and completion of the Kenya Uganda railway that ran up to Nanyuki at the foots of Mt Kenya. Crawford was relocated to Weithaga and replaced with the Hooper's who had briefly settled in Jilore in Mombasa and later Kahuhia.

### 4.2 Establishment of Kahuhia Mission Station

It was at this point that significant education activities were experienced in Kahuhia spearheaded by Douglas Hooper with his son Handley and grandson Cyril (KNA/MSS//61/381). These efforts were dearly supported by Cicely and Ethel Soles, introducing girls education and training while Handley concentrated on teacher education and opening of bush schools in outstations to for teacher training (KNA/2/2 Handley Hooper to friends). A formal training was started by Handley in 1922 with a curriculum and timetables hence its name Kahuhia normal school. However, there was growing competition to establish two training institution one at Kabete and Kahuhia (KNA/MSS/ 11/61/382). Due to the growing demand for trained teacher and evangelist Kahuhia normal school was preferred since it had a vibrant young missionary, Handley rather than Kabete under Harry Leakey. In order to sustain the demand for more education government had provide grants for upgrading of teacher training institutions (Karanja 1999). Kahuhia was also favored since it had available quarry

stones to build the mission station and had favorable climate.

### 4.3 The historical Development of Teacher Education in Kahuhia Normal School

Teacher education in the Kahuhia Normal School (K.N.S) had far reaching impact after Handley returned from voluntary service in carrier corps in 1918. Handley resumed his role to train men to help him to run out-schools that he had planned to start around Kahuhia after the government to start more schools was lifted (KNA/MSS/61/392). Handley thoroughly trained people with elementary education to serve as teachers with a formal curriculum and timetable hence the name normal school. The K.N.S was a central school within it was an elementary school; sub A and B later named practicing school, the primary school where pupils took vernacular and C.E.E examination to enable them join an intermediate or junior secondary school (KNA/MSS/61/389). It's worth noting prior to this; some girls had to join classes in the intermediate classes, Kahuhia girl's school, industrial school under instructor Joseph Macharia and normal school which trained T3 teachers and Kahuhia women's college training T4 teachers (KNA/MSS/1/61/383). KNS experienced the leadership of numerous missionary as center managers namely; Handley, Capons, Watts and Beecher (KNA/MSS/61/2/131). The launch of this kind of school, raise controversies on some residents within Kahuhia community. The people in the Kahuhia area wanted more emphasis put on girls' education like Alliance school despite Beecher's attempts to support the colonial government in improving teacher training at Kahuhia (KNA/MSS/61/2/131). Due to lack of space in Kahuhia and it was suggested that the girls T4 school under Miss M. C. Howard to be moved to Kigari. To create room for K.G.H.S, Kahuhia intermediate was moved to Gateru with headmaster being Fredrick Muturi, a disciplinarian and Kahuhia practicing school was moved to Gitui in 1962 (KNA/MSS/61/385). This made it difficult for teacher training to continue in the institution, since there was need for more land which was unavailable.

### 4.5 Community patterns and challenges experienced in Kahuhia

Missionaries in their goal to spread gospel by education Africans to higher level of civilization exposed Africans to both benefits and woes. Africans in their eagerness to quest thirst for education had to provide land for building of mission station which enabled missionaries achieve social control over them. On the other hand, in attempt to change the Negro's mind, missionaries made it possible for imperialism and self-governance for the Africans especially in Kahuhia. The first converts like Elijah Gachanja, Obadiah Kariuki accepted to join *Revival movement* from Ruanda in 1927(KNA/MSS/61/387). This movement was popular among Christian converts and teachers who after the First World War joined Harry Thuku. Kahuhia later became a cradle of politics with leading preachers and

teachers such as Samuel Ngoce, Gideon Mugo, Levi Gachanja and Ezra Mwenjwa supporting Kikuyu Central Association party (KCA) (KNA/MSS/61/390). Other students from the T3 normal school like Maina Ngumi and even women such as Nyambura joined the liberation. Kahuhia bore politicians such as Kenneth Matiba, a member of parliament in 1979 who was a grandson to Gideon Mugo and son to Stanley Njindo. Both who were students and teachers at Kahuhia.

As missionaries sought to extend their foreign denomination they experienced different challenges. However this did not hinder the attitude towards education development in Kahuhia normal school. Some of this challenges included lack of enough staff, inadequate water which had to be sourced from Kabuki River using a hydra ram. As ben Ngumba highlighted in his petition, he argued that African teachers were not paid enough salaries, had no medical insurance and used their own paraffin to do school work like preparing lesson plans. Some of the Africans deliberately neglected mission education arguing that it brainwashed their own culture and values. Some of these clashes came between non-Christians and adherents over refusal to participate in tradition ceremonies such as "*ituika*" and female circumcision. As Jocelyn Murray states in Strayer's book, "the admission to boarding for girls favored non circumcised girls.

Despite this challenges teacher education in Kahuhia witnessed a remarkable progress and started to meet the rising demand for education. As stated in CMS Annual letter from Comely, y 1924 Kahuhia had 3 out school which later expanded to area such as Gikandu, Gituto, Iyego, Wanjegi and Gatumbi.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The paper has outlined the role C.M.S played in Kahuhia area, Murang'a County. The study has revealed that the CMS played a vital role to the growth and development of teacher education in Kenya and Kahuhia. This was through the establishment of teacher training and support from people such as the Hooper's' family, Ethel Soles and teachers like Eleanor Brown. At Kahuhia there was primary and elementary education, junior secondary, intermediate boy's school, T3 teacher training and T4 Kahuhia women's college. This displays the enormous efforts of C.M.S to provide basic elementary education and teacher training all in one school at Kahuhia. Furthermore these benefits were accompanied by establishment of St. John church, a hospital and maternity for the Kahuhia community. The contribution of CMS to teacher education in Kahuhia remain recognized and its effects turned out to be rather short lived but it achieved more valuable impact in providing teachers to meet nation educational goals.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is notable that teacher education is a concern especially after the government took over its management role after independence. The study recommends that missionary activities in teacher education should not be underrated as it laid a foundation to historical growth of teacher training colleges and schools in Kenya. Therefore government should welcome genuine stakeholders and adopt a traditional alternative method to elucidate and build alliances between teachers, church sponsors, members of the community and parents. This will help teachers make a real contribution and work actively for an impartial society. Due to technology and globalization, similar studies are recommended to be undertaken to help government to come up with policies to guide the proper management teacher preparation and training programs. Furthermore this study recommends, that teacher training colleges should be encouraged to embrace practices instilled by missionaries since the value it portrayed are still relevant to their training.

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