

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

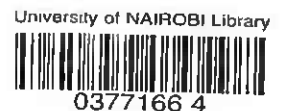
**SOCIALIZING WOMEN INTO MARITAL RESPONSIBILITIES: THE
EMERGING PHENOMENA OF BACHELORRETTE PARTIES AMONG
EDUCATED YOUNG WOMEN IN NAIROBI**

By
Naomi Njonjo

C50/61624/2010

**Research project submitted in partial fulfillment of the award of Masters
Arts Degree in the Department of Sociology at the University of Nairobi.**

2013



DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university.

Njonjo, Naomi Nduta

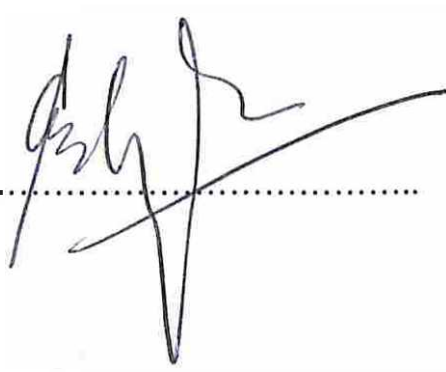
Reg: C50/61624/2010

Signature 

Date 2/12/13

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor

Prof. C Nzioka



Date 2/12/2013

Signature.....

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my dearest Mother without who this project would not exist.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First I would like to thank God for giving me the opportunity to start and finish my Masters of Arts degree in Sociology. My sincere appreciation goes to my university Prof C. Nzioka for his guidance, patience and constructive criticism while undertaking this project. I also extend my appreciation to the departmental teaching staff, my friends and MA class 2010 for their invaluable comments. I am also extremely grateful to all respondents in the study area and all the Key Informants and to many others who cannot be explicitly acknowledged for lack of space. Last but by no means least I want to thank my family and friends, especially my mum who was encouraging me throughout my project. However, the assistance and support given notwithstanding, I personally take responsibility for any error of omission or commission in the study.

God bless you all.

ABSTRACT

This study examines socialization of women into marital responsibilities with focus on bachelorette parties/ bridal showers in Nairobi County. In particular, this study sought to establish why the idea of bridal shower is gaining popularity in Kenya, what is the importance and significance of bridal showers in today's society and does it achieve its socializing purpose. This follows a series of debates from public radio stations and many questions asked in newspapers about bridal showers. Traditionally, many African communities had occasions where adolescents were taught what was expected of them regarding their gender roles and marital responsibilities. The objectives of the study were to find out how women are socialized into gender roles and marital responsibilities through bridals showers, how the event has evolved over time. The study further sought to investigate how bridal showers are understood and experienced in Kenya and the attributes of the people engaging in them.

A total sample of 80 purposive selected women were interviewed all of who had attended bridal showers through questionnaires, 4 key informants were interviewed who often participate in this events and 3 focus group discussions were conducted. Additional data was obtained through observation conducted in 4 bridal showers. The study found that bridal showers are very popular among young educated women in Nairobi and women enjoy getting together and participating in these events for different reasons. It also found other related events that socialized women to assume their gender roles in the history of many communities in the world like in Asia, Europe, America and Africa. Bridal showers offer a platform where gender and sexual roles are passed on to women before marriage. The study discovered that the party is organized in homely settings due to the privacy required in the discussions of gender and marital responsibilities. The bride-to-be is given advice and gifts by friends and family which are tied to the new roles she is going to take up as a wife and mother.

The study found women attend the event due to the useful exchange of information on sex and marital responsibilities by people who have been there or others who have specialized and done research in that field, the getting together of many friends and cathartic effect it has on women. It is also important to women because of the intentional time offered by friends and family to bid and usher the bride-to-be into another social status, marriage. The study noted a positive perception by majority of the women regarding bridal showers many indicating they are proud and happy about the quality and socializing purpose bridal showers serve in society. This is because not only are women socialized into gender and sex roles before marriage, but love and comradeship is communicated at this time to the bride by the family and friends.

The study recommended stakeholders to have a common avenue for feedback so that needs and ideas can be communicated back to better bridal showers. Another recommendation made was for incorporation of post marital counseling for newlyweds because sometimes the bride-to-be is too excited on her bridal shower to get all the advice given on her roles. The study also discovered a need to do the same research in other parts of the country and also investigate if men have an equally informative session set aside for them. In conclusion, the study found that getting married is one of the most celebrated and revered transitions in a woman's life. Therefore, many rituals and events exist to prepare a woman to become a wife. Bridal shower is one of those that is most steeped in tradition.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
ACRONYMS.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	5
1.3 The Objectives of the study	6
1.3.1 Research Questions.....	6
1.3.2 Research Objectives.....	6
1.4 Justification and Rationale.....	7
1.5 Scope and Limitation.....	7
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Background.....	9
2.2 Origin of the Term ‘Bridal Shower’ in Europe	11
2.3 Traditional Sex Education in Different Parts of the World.....	14
2.4 Evolution of bridal showers.....	17
2.4.1 <i>Brief History</i>	17
2.4.2 <i>Advice</i>	18
2.4.3 <i>Sexual purity and chastity</i>	19
2.4.4 <i>Role of advising</i>	20
2.4.5 <i>Duration</i>	21
2.5 Traditional forms of bridal showers in Kenya.....	22

2.6 History of marriage preparation in Kenyan tribes	26
2.6.1 <i>Among the Luos</i>	26
2.6.2 <i>Among the Maasai</i>	27
2.6.3. <i>Among the Kalenjin</i>	28
2.6.4. <i>Among the Marakwet</i>	28
2.6.5 <i>Among the Nandi</i>	29
2.6.6 <i>Among the Luhyas</i>	30
2.6.7 <i>Among the Digo and Duruma</i>	31
2.6.8. <i>Among the Gikuyus</i>	32
2.7 Theoretical Framework.....	34
2.7.1 <i>Social Learning theory</i>	34
2.7.2 Symbolic Interactionism.....	37
2.8 Conceptual Framework.....	39
Figure 2.1 Shows the cause-effect relationship	39
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION	41
3.0 Introduction.....	41
3.1 Research Design	41
3.2 Study Site.....	41
3.3 Sample Population	42
3.4 Data Collection Methods.	43
3.4.1 <i>Literature Review</i>	43
3.4.2 <i>In-Depth Interviews with Key Informants.</i>	43
3.4.3 <i>Focus Group Discussions</i>	45
3.4.4 <i>Participant Observation.</i>	46
3.5 Data Analysis.....	46
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS	48
4.0 Introduction.....	48
4.1 Site Description	48

4.2 Sample Characteristics.....	49
4.2.1 Age of the Respondents	49
Table 4.1: Age of Respondent.....	49
4.2.2 Marital Status	50
Fig 4.1: Marital Status of Respondents	52
Table 4.2: Level of Education.....	53
4.2.4 Main Occupations	53
Table 4.3: Respondents Profession	54
4.2.5 Religion.....	54
4.3 How Bridal Showers are Understood and Experienced in Kenya	55
4.3.1 Awareness	55
4.3.1.1 Learning of Bridal Showers.....	55
4.3.1.2 Age of First Bridal Shower Attendance	56
Fig 4.2: Age Respondents First Attended A Bridal Shower.	56
4.3.1.3 Number of Bridal Showers Attended	57
4.3.2 Organization of Bridal Showers	58
4.3.2.1 Planning and Hosting.....	58
4.3.2.2 Venue	60
4.3.2.3 Time	62
Table 4.5: Time the Party was Held	63
4.3.2.4 Activities	63
4.4 Importance of Bridal Showers and Factors behind its Growing Popularity.....	64
4.4.1 Reasons for Attending Bridal Showers	65
Fig 4.5: Reasons for Attending Bridal Shower.....	66
4.4.2 Gifts	66
4.4.3 Advice Givers.....	67
Fig 4.6: The Special Speaker Invited.....	68
4.4.4 Topics Discussed	69

4.5 Views on Bridal Showers	70
4.5.1 Opinions of the Party.....	70
4.5.2 Disadvantages of Bridal Showers.....	71
<i>Fig 4.7: Are There Any Disadvantages of Bridal Shower Response.</i>	72
4.5.3 Changes Desired in Bridal Showers.....	73
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND	
RECOMENDATIONS	75
5.1 Introduction.....	75
5.2 Summary and Conclusion.....	75
5.2.1 Evolution of Bridal Showers	75
5.2.2 How Bridal Showers are Experienced and Practiced n Kenya Today.	77
5.2.3 Significance and Importance of Bridal Showers.	78
5.2.4 Factors behind the Growing Popularity of Bridal Showers	79
5.2.5 Attributes of the People Involved in Bridal Showers.....	80
5.3 Recommendation	81
5.3.1 Policy Making.....	81
5.3.2 Programmatic Integrations	82
5.3.3 Further Research Studies	83
5.4 Conclusion	83
REFERENCES	85
APPENDICES	90
APPENDIX II: FGD QUESTIONNAIRE.....	100
APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KEY INFORMANTS.	102
APPENDIX IV: OBSERVATION CHECK LIST	104

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Age of respondent	49
Table 4.2: Level of Education	53
Table 4.3: Respondents profession	54
Table 4.4: How respondent knew about the last party attended	58
Table 4.5: Time the party was held	63

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 2.1 Shows the cause effect relationship.....	39
Fig4.1: Marital Status of Respondents.....	52
Fig 4.2: Age respondents first attended a bridal shower.	56
Fig 4.3: Number of bridal showers attended within a year.....	57
Fig 4.4: Pie chart of who hosted the bridal shower party.	60
Fig 4.5: Reasons for attending Bridal shower.	66
Fig 4.6: The special speaker invited	68
Fig 4.7: Are there any disadvantages of bridal shower response.	72

ACRONYMS

US	-	United States
WHO	-	World Health Organization
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's fund
KI	-	Key Informant
CBD	-	Central Business District
FGD	-	Focus Group discussions

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Marriage is a very important rite of passage (Mbunda, 1991). It has been there for the longest time. Getting married is one of the most celebrated and revered transition in a woman's life. Therefore many rituals and event exist to prepare a woman to become a wife. Bridal shower is one of those that is most steeped in tradition. It may be viewed as an event in which women, friends and family members must participate either as a form of bidding farewell or orienting a woman to her wifely duties. Macionis & Gaber (2011) agree with socialization theory when they state that unlike other living species, humans need socialization within their culture for survival. Bridal showers are one of the socialization events that help a woman settle down into her marital duties.

Marriage also known as matrimony or wedlock is defined as a social union between a man and a woman for purposes of creating kinship and off springs. Marriage can be recognized by state, an organization, religious authority, tribal group, local community or peers. It is viewed as a contract (Duran, 1997).

Civil marriage is a legal concept of marriage as a governmental institution irrespective of religious affiliation, in accordance with marriage laws of the jurisdiction. It is an institution where interpersonal relationships usually intimate and sexual are acknowledged (Duran,1997). Many cultures allow polygamous marriages, though Christian based cultures limit this marriage to one man and one woman. Some countries have legalized same sex marriages. Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance (2006) states that in some conservative cultures, marriage is

recommended or compulsory before pursuing any sexual activity. Marriage has been used to create alliances in the past, it was believed that the more alliances that were formed, the safer the family was. Unlike today where love is considered as an important factor for one to be married, marriages were formed for practical reasons such as, getting off springs, forming alliances, legal reasons, social, libidinal, economic, spiritual and religious reasons.

For one to get into this important institution and play his/her roles right, preparation should have been made prior. According to Emile Durkheims functionalist theory, each part of society is functional in establishing the stability the whole society (Blumer, 1950). Bridal showers help a woman identify the roles she is supposed to take up as a married woman to avoid conflict in family and society at large hence acquiring social order and harmony. Many communities have their own way of training children as they get to puberty and finally turn into adults on the important roles the society requires them to play. In the African communities, for example Makonde and Sukuma of Tanzania, Kipsigis, Digo and Kisii of Kenya, Ndembu of Zambia etc had initiation ceremonies that marked a rite of passage where adolescents were turned into adults who can marry and build a home (Mbunda, 1991). During these initiation ceremonies, a community's values and customs were passed and the initiates were educated on their marital responsibilities and upholding the future of the community.

Nowadays, there are various channels that are used to coach and prepare the couple before they take that important step. One of them is premarital counseling. This is done by organizations and churches where the couple is taken through various steps to check compatibility, family background, conflict resolution, parenting, sex, managing finances and prepare on adapting to each other and expectations on husband-wife roles (Edmondson, 2011). This is important because one

gets an idea of what to expect after they get married and how to generally go about things. Another important socialization event that helps in this preparation is bridal showers/bachelorette parties.

Bachelorette party is defined by Wikipedia (2011) as a party held for a woman who is about to be married as a farewell event. It is usually held a week or two before the wedding day. It has different names in different parts of the world for example, hen party or hen night in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, bachelorette party in the United States, it is also referred to as a stagette in Canada (Barber,2004). It may also be referred to as a girls' night out or kitchen tea, South Africa in particular. In Kenya it is commonly known as a bridal shower. Not only do these parties include advice for the bride, they also comprise of having fun, games, sex education, documentaries and many other activities. Men also have a form of the pre wedding party known as a bachelor party. Boyer (2007) notes that bachelor parties especially in the US often entail the mass consumption of alcohol, hiring a stripper and general rowdiness toward which the bride might not have a positive reaction (especially since the bride is typically not among the invitees). Increasingly, bachelor parties have come to symbolize the last time when the groom is free of the influence of his new wife.

The bachelorette party practice came after the great sexual revolution where women fought for gender equality and their right to express themselves freely in 1960 (Heale, 2001). It was borrowed from bachelor's party, a dinner given by the bridegroom to his friends shortly before his wedding. Whereas the purpose of bachelors party is for the groom to bid farewell to his

single status, the purpose of a bachelorette party is to equip the bride with all the necessary materials and knowledge to become a good wife.

Bachelorette parties have become a major hit in Kenya, especially Nairobi, for women who are about to get married. It has also become a business venture for some consultants and sexologists who collect fees for them to impart their specialized knowledge in the man-woman relationship (Muthoni, 2009).

In the history of many communities in Kenya, this tradition was common under different names and variations. The socializing role used to be performed by older female relatives, who used to guide young girls in puberty on the basics of ensuring a happy husband and home. Nowadays the role has changed to sexologists who include men, friends of the same age group, church marriage councilors and pastors. There is need to know if bridal showers accomplish the socializing role for women in Nairobi today and also look at the attributes of the people who participate in this event in these modern times.

The purpose of this study is to look at bachelorette parties as a socializing event for women into their marital responsibilities. In particular the study traces the origin and changes that have occurred to this practice, how they are understood and practiced, their significance and importance, the attributes of people engaging in bridals showers and why its popularity is increasing among the young educated women in Nairobi.

1.2 Problem Statement

Bachelorette parties/bridal showers are increasingly gaining currency among brides to be (Julie, 2012). This event has also become highly commercialized in the country. Traditions are dying every day as people embrace modernity and technology, what is making this tradition become famous and trendy instead of dying like the rest. Very little scholarly literature exists on this topic despite its growing popularity in Kenya. Many debates have come up in the local media in Kenya including local Radio stations, such as Classic 105 early last year, with people trying to understand this phenomenon.

The research investigated if there were traditional forms of bridals showers in the history of various communities, how they were conducted and how different they were from the contemporary bridal showers that exist today. It also looked at the necessity of bridal showers with so many available channels of information like self help groups and internet. The research also looked at the importance and significance of bridal showers in society and how they achieve it. The research identified the people involved in these events, what motivated them and the perception women had towards bridal showers. It also sought to find out where and when bridal showers happen.

This is a concept that is well understood in major parts of the world but no academic material exists in Kenya to explain this phenomenon. The aim of the research was to develop understanding of the role, importance and the factors influencing emergence and popularity of bachelorette parties/bridal showers, especially among the young educated women who aspire to get married in Nairobi. It also wanted to open up the topic to further interrogation by other scholars and build existing knowledge on bridal showers.

1.3 The Objectives of the study

1.3.1 Research Questions

The study will endeavor to answer the following research questions:

- i. What are the origins of bridal showers and how they have evolved?
- ii. How are Bridal showers experienced and practiced in Kenya today?
- iii. What is the significance and importance of bridal shower as a socializing agent in marital responsibilities for women in Kenya?
- iv. What are the factors behind the growing popularity of Bachelorette parties/bridal showers amongst the young educated women in Nairobi?
- v. What are the attributes of the people who engage in bridal showers?

1.3.2 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study include.

- i. To trace the origin of the concept of bridal shower and its evolution.
- ii. To investigate how bridal showers are understood and experienced in Kenya today.
- iii. To establish the significance and importance of bridal shower parties as a socializing agent in marital responsibilities for educated women in Kenya.
- iv. To understand the factors influencing the growing popularity of Bachelorette parties/bridal showers amongst the young educated women in Nairobi.
- v. To explore the attributes of the people who engage in this practice of bridal showers

1.4 Justification and Rationale.

Bachelorette's parties are becoming a common practice among women. This has elicited interest, concern and debate by researchers, media and other stakeholders who seek to understand this phenomenon. Pleck (2000) a sociologist says it is a very important rite of passage for any bride because it is a form of counseling and orientation that helps a new bride settle comfortably in her matrimonial home. The sessions are led by knowledgeable or experienced people who have an idea of what the bride needs to know before living with her husband. Older married women are assumed to be better equipped with the necessary information that the bride needs for her transition. As Mbiti (1969) acknowledges, family is the most basic component of society, it is very important that it should be started well, so that the rest of the organizations will follow suit. The aim of this study is to therefore add knowledge, build existing secondary information and expose findings for further interrogation by scholars in order to increase and broaden the literature available in this field.

1.5 Scope and Limitation.

Due the specific nature of this topic, seeing that it targets educated women only and specifically those who have participated in bridal showers, the sample size was small and not much literature had been documented in Kenya about bridal showers hence, this limited the scope.

The project focused on women who have attained education from secondary school onwards to give feedback on their experiences in bridal showers.

Key informants can sometimes be unavailable to answer questions because of their busy schedules therefore the researcher planned to include 4 people who deal with bridal showers on a

day-to-day basis like counselors, sexologists, church ministers and wedding and bridal shower planners. This was so as to get rich information from these sources.

Due to limitations in finances and time and also bridal showers being relatively personal affairs based on invites only. The researcher planned to attend four of them so as to include the participatory observation in the data collection methods.

The research being conducted for academic purposes with limitations on time and money, the researcher decided to take 9 months in total to cater for literature review, coming up with methodology, data collection and analysis.

The researcher chose Nairobi city as the sampling ground because of the urban setting and no communication barriers existed.

Snowball method approach was used where research participants referred other potential candidates so as to reach a sample that is otherwise difficult to reach.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Background

Socialization theory has been stated by White (1977) as the lifelong process of inheriting and disseminating norms, customs and ideologies, providing an individual with the skills and habits necessary for participating within their own society. Socialization is thus the means by which social and cultural continuity is attained. Therefore as a child grows, they learn all things through socialization which can be natural, primary or secondary. Bridal showers follow the principles of socialization theory.

According to UNICEF (2007), girls are asked not to be demanding, to be forgiving, accommodating and behave like ladies. These gender roles and expectations have larger ramifications. In many parts of the world girls face discrimination in the care they receive in terms of access to nutrition and health care leading them to believe they deserve to be treated lesser and differently than boys. Henslin (1999) as he defines gender socialization in the socialization theory states that an important part of socialization is learning of culturally defined gender roles. Learning of behavior and attitudes considered appropriate for a certain sex. Bridal showers are one of the socializing agents that facilitate and ensures a woman knows her expected roles in marriage.

Gilligan (1977) agrees when she claimed that boys have a justice perspective meaning that they rely on formal rules to define right and wrong. Girls, on the other hand, have a care and responsibility perspective where personal relationships are considered when judging a situation. Gilligan also studied the effect of gender on self-esteem. She claimed that society's socialization of females is the reason why girls' self-esteem diminishes as they grow older. Girls struggle to

regain their personal strength when moving through adolescence as they have fewer female teachers and most authority figures are men.

In the socialization theory, we have different types and in this study we will be focusing on secondary socialization, gender socialization, group socialization and planned socialization.

Secondary socialization theory has been defined as the process of learning what is the appropriate behavior as a member of a smaller group within the larger society (Schaeffer, 2009). Basically, it is the behavioral patterns reinforced by socializing agents of society. Secondary socialization takes place outside the home. It is where children and adults learn how to act in a way that is appropriate for the situations they are in. This could be school for children and marriage for adults.

Gender socialization theory has been defined as learning of culturally defined gender roles (Henslin, 1999). Gender socialization refers to the learning of behavior and attitudes considered appropriate for a given sex. This could also refer to the process of girls being taught by older women what is expected of them when they get married.

Group socialization has been defined as the theory that an individual's peer groups, rather than parental figures, influences his or her personality and behavior in adulthood (Harris, 1995). Peer groups have stronger correlations with personality development than parental figures do due to the time spent together.

Planned socialization happens when other people take actions designed to teach or train others

Marriage is a very important rite of passage in the whole world. This is because it provides continuity of a people through child bearing. This being the case, every community had its own way of socializing and grooming the supposed people (boys and girls after puberty) to take up that role (Mbunda, 1991).

“In Africa, marriage is the focus of existence. It is the point where all members of a given community meet the departed, the living and those yet to be born. All dimensions meet here and the whole drama of history repeated, renewed and revitalized. Marriage is a drama in which everyone must participate and he who doesn't, in it is a curse to the community. He is a rebel and a law-breaker; he is not only abnormal but also under human.” (Mbiti, 1969)

Nyambura (1980) also agrees with Mbiti and states that to marry was to play a part in perpetuating the circle of life. Traditionally in most African communities like Makonde and Nyamwezi, Mbunda (1991) notes that adolescents were not given any information on sexual matters, with discussion of these issues being considered taboo unlike today where most have been put in school curriculums. Such instruction as was given was traditionally left to a child's parents and relatives, and often this was put off until just before a child's marriage or during initiation ceremonies and rites of passage following through planned socialization. Mbunda (1991) continually observes that all what was known on sexuality was obtained from friends and this information was of doubtful value especially during the period following puberty when curiosity on sexual matters was the most acute. This suggests that in African communities, the practice of handing sexual information to young people was delayed until right before marriage.

2.2 Origin of the Term 'Bridal Shower' in Europe

Montemurro (2006) notes that bridal shower is a custom that came about in the 16th and 17th century in Netherlands when a girl from a poor family could not afford dowry or when a father

disapproved of his daughter's marriage and refused to provide dowry for the couple. The villagers and friends assembled to provide the bride with a variety of household items for her new home. Dowry was the money or possessions a bride took to her husband in marriage so as to start a new home.

"A story is told of a Dutch girl who fell in love with a Dutch miller. The miller was poor because he used to give his money to people who needed it more. Because of his generosity, he forgot to keep some money for himself. When the girl informed her father that she wanted to get married to the miller, the father objected to that union. Since the villagers loved and approved this marriage, they all decided to bring something of value to the couple to help them start their home. This eventually won over the father and hence it became a practice." (Lowry, 2012)

On the contrary in African communities like Luo, Kikuyu and Luhya, dowry was considered as a token of appreciation given to the girls' parents by the groom's family.

Montemurro (2006) agrees that bridal showers were meant to strengthen the ties between the bride and her friends, provide support and help her prepare for her marriage through group socialization. Many varying customs, social groups and practices have developed in bridal showers in different parts of the world but the basic format has been relatively unchanged. The term 'shower' originated in the 1890's when a bride's family and friends put small gifts in a parasols that were opened over the brides head, hence showering her with gifts.

According to Montemurro (2006), the bridal shower ritual socializes women into hyper-feminized traditional wife role with its emphasis on the bride as a family cook, home maker and sexual partner. Pleck (2000) echoes this dynamic in pointing out that traditional bridal shower gifts were for the bedroom or kitchen though Montemurro sees this as homage paid to the bride's mother and grandmother to show how the bride-to-be will behave in her marriage.

“Women often attend bridal showers out of ‘duty’. Interestingly, many women find them boring, socially awkward, or otherwise uncomfortable.” (Pleck, 2000)

Pleck describes bridal shower attendance as an obligation for some women. This remains true today, as some women attend bridal showers out of duty and not because they like them. Denise (2010) describes a ritual celebrating the imminent change of status of a fiancée, the so-called marriage shower, such as it was performed between the two world wars within the French-speaking middle-class society of Montreal. Presents given on that occasion served to convey several messages. They expressed women's agreement on various respects, such as the bride's decision to get married, her choice to play her housewife's role, as well as women's solidarity. This goes hand in hand with group socialization theory which states that an individuals' peer group influences their personality or behavior into adulthood (Harris, 1995). Moreover, presents had an identity function by revealing the middle-class way of life.

“Traditionally the hosting of the bridal shower fell on one or more of the bride's friends. It was considered rude and greedy for any of the family members to host it because it included asking for gifts.” (Hughes, 2004)

Hughes highlights one of the reasons why it was proper for the friends to host the bridal shower. Martin (1999) observes that the guests were chosen from among the bride's personal friends, family and well wishers. Men were usually not invited. The number of guests and their relationship to the bride varies widely depending on culture. Some could use large halls where friends and acquaintances are also invited where else others prefer small intimate parties with close friends and family. This shows why the custom of maid of honor hosting the party still holds even now in Kenya and who often attends the bridal shower

2.3 Traditional Sex Education in Different Parts of the World.

Among other discussions, sex education is one of the major topics handled in bridal showers today. Traditionally in Africa, many communities like the Ndembu in Zambia, Makonde of Tanzania and the Nandi in Kenya used to give sex education to the girls just before marriage. This has also been adopted in some bridal showers as women mention a few things on sex to a bride before marriage as this is one of the roles she is supposed to fulfill.

According to Stewart (1997), prior to the twentieth century, sex education was haphazard in Europe and America because most people lived in the country side and the best young people could do is observe animal behavior and this provided them with at least a measure of reproductive education. Girls were expected to remain chaste until their wedding day and pressure only mounted on the eve of the matrimony whereby the mothers rushed to inform their daughters on sexuality and reproduction. Men on the other hand could be taken by their older relatives to brothels to be initiated on the mysteries of sex. He continues to observe that in the 1830s, pamphlets were made by health reformists and ministries in US and England to inform the young men on the importance of controlling sexual urges until they could be freely expressed in marriage. This literature never included women because it was considered that women were in the care of their parents when young, and their husbands when old. It was only until later when literature was made in France for bourgeois mothers that emphasized on women teaching their daughters to remain chaste and to teach them on sexuality and reproduction after matrimony. This was the first introduction of gender socialization when it came to sexuality.

In China on the other hand, sex education was systematic and comprehensive. According to Xi (2011), it included visual aids which were paintings of 8-10 crude erotic pictures on wood blocks

showing different ways of having sex known as dowry paintings. Before the wedding, the bride's parents would often buy one or two sets of dowry paintings and put them inside the dowry chest. The daughter brought the dowry paintings to her husband's house and spread them on the bed on the wedding night. The newly-married couple would have sex according to the paintings. There were also ancient books about sex, but they were not very popular. Before a wedding, the wet nurse, midwife and her sisters might teach the bride. Sometimes older sisters would sing folk songs outside the bride's window hinting about sex. There were many playful phrases in folk songs which revealed things about sex. (Xi, 2011). From Xi, we notice that sex was not a very comfortable topic to be discussed in China. Information about spicing up the bedroom life was left to the girl's parents who packed the dowry painting so that it may be used as a guiding device by the daughter. Rarely did midwives and older sisters chip in to inform the bride about her role in marriage and this was done via playful songs.

In India, Esat (2003) notes, folk music was used by women to educate a girl on what was expected of her as a woman on her first monthly period. Women used to gather and give the girl rich foods and clothes worn by unmarried women as they sung bawdy songs with instructions of womanhood and her expected marital duties.

“The Indian society was male dominated and sexual freedom was granted to the male whilst a woman was condemned and labeled loose if she lost her virginity before her matrimony. A woman's virginity was tied to her family's honor.”
(Esat,2003)

Esat continues to depict whose role it was to prepare a young girl and help her transition into a wife and motherhood duties. Gender socialization was done through bawdy songs when a young Indian girl was introduced to sexuality and expected roles immediately she got to puberty.

Amadiume (2011) notes how the Ndembu women in Zambia taught girls in puberty about sexuality and how to please men through inserting phallic objects as a demonstration. This proves that sex was not only a physical affair of organs meeting but a form of art that much had to be put into to get a perfect result which was satisfying and pleasing a man.

According to Mbunda (1991), in Tanzania, planned socialization was done for girls in puberty where they were trained by their mothers, older sisters, aunties, grandmothers and other older women. They learned about their maturing bodies, the importance of cleanliness, marriage and its privilege, their duties to their future husbands, their children, their own families, and their husbands' families. They learnt about childbirth and its attendant conditions and equally important, how to please their husbands sexually and be respected by their neighbours. Among these was the duty to live harmoniously with other wives as most African cultures believed in polygamy. Boys on the other hand were taught by male elders on the responsibilities of a husband and the head of a household. They were taught how to care for their wives and children and to visit each wife regularly for their sexual satisfaction. Both girls and boys were prohibited from experimenting with intercourse until married which was culminated with a beautiful ceremony. Mbunda captures what is commonly discussed in bridal showers, by who and why it was important; to create harmonious relationship in families and community because if one knew their roles then no conflict would arise unnecessarily.

Some tribes in Tanzania like the Makonde and Sukuma had initiation ceremonies that allowed seclusion of both girls and boys for sex instruction and future gender roles guides. Mbunda (1991) shows how the Makonde of Tanzania secluded the girls for longer periods of even nine months as they were taught the ways of adulthood and sexuality. They did not circumcise the girls. He continues to note how Sukuma of Tanzania, discouraged girls from having premarital sex because it fetched lower dowries. They however, had mating games played during evening dances known as *chagulagamayu*, where if a girl chooses a boy and it's mutual, the boy would run after her and if he caught her he would pull her into the bush and make love to her and was considered thereafter as her boyfriend. This shows that it was important for girls and boys to be oriented and taught about their transition into adulthood.

2.4 Evolution of bridal showers.

This section will show how bridal showers have evolved looking at their history, advice, valued sexual purity and chastity, role of advising and duration.

2.4.1 Brief History

Initially as seen in Europe, Montemurro (2006), bridal shower started as a means of helping a young man who was liked by the community around him to get enough house wares to settle down for the father-in-law had refused to approve his union to his daughter because the generous miller was poor. The practice then developed to putting gifts in a parasol so that a bride can pass under and get showered with these gifts brought by women to start her new home. According to Kipkorir (1973), girls in Marakwet used to be secluded for long periods of time (2-3years) to teach them on wifely duties, sexual expectations and being good mothers. Traditionally in Africa, most communities used to bring gifts to the bride as they bade her goodbye (Kenyatta,

1965) which entailed ornaments, kitchen wares and food. This practice of giving gifts has continued in bridal showers today and the gifts range from kitchen ware, bathroom products to the bedroom wares. According to one of the KI who is a 35 year old male sexologist, these gifts have evolved to include sex accessories like dildos, Kegel exercise balls, flavoured lubricants e.t.c. which are supposed to spice up a couple's sex life.

2.4.2 Advice

A need was seen for the bourgeoiswomen to advice their daughters after their wedlock through planned socialization, about sex and reproduction since no form of sex education existed then. In the African setting, Mbunda (1991) notes that most communities like the Digo, Nandi and Kipsigis had an initiation ceremony during puberty where socially permissible sexual practices were taught by the older generation to the initiates. In some parts the girls and boys were separated at some point and each group taken for seclusion to be taught about the community's customs and beliefs which included the expected gender and sexual roles of each group. For gender socialization to be effective, the two sexes needed to be separated especially if the talks were about sex roles required.

During wedding ceremonies, girls from the age set and group used to come and stay with the bride for a while as they bid her goodbye. Advice was offered to the bride-to-be by a young married woman from the groom's family (Imanyara 1992) on housekeeping, childbearing and rearing, keeping the husband sexually satisfied and social etiquette.

However today, the woman has evolved in addition to her traditional gender roles. This includes having a job, growing career wise, furthering her education, making and managing her financial investments and expressing her sexual freedom and awareness. Therefore advice has also evolved to cater for today's professional woman. In the traditional society, women often relied on marriage and childbearing as avenues for gaining social status, respect and power in the household as well as in the community arena. Consequently, early marriage and childbearing were highly valued in many traditional societies (Caldwell and Caldwell, 1987). However, with the advent of education, women who are educated are respected and enjoy high social status, whether married or not, in the modern Kenyan society. In Kenya today, women's education is viewed as a crucial human capital investment and an avenue to salaried employment, independence, decision-making and enhanced social status. Thus the educated women no longer see marriage and childbearing as viable avenues to social status and economic independence (Ikamari, 2005).

From a group discussion, women cited that so many areas of a woman's life need to be advised on in bridal showers like balancing between being a career woman, a good mother, a perfect home maker, a supportive wife, family planning and handling finances and in-laws in marriage.

2.4.3 Sexual purity and chastity

According to Wikipedia (2012), premarital sex which is defined as sex between people who are not married, was frowned upon in the older centuries sexual purity being advocated for before marriage. According to Goldbeer (2004), in the English-speaking part of Christendom, sex before marriage became a taboo from the implementation of the Hardwicke Marriage Act in 1753.

Othieno (1968), also shows that traditionally amongst the Luo, the girl after being captured used to go with other girls whose sole purpose was to spend time with the bride and bring to the village a report if the girl was a virgin or not. If she was a virgin, honour would be bestowed upon her parents. In most communities in Kenya, sexual purity was highly regarded and it was a taboo for a girl to be found pregnant or not a virgin on her wedding night.

In the recent years, pre marital sex is not considered as a wrong thing. It is even expected as people say '*they have to taste the milk before buying the cow*'. Due to this notion, some bachelorette parties do not consider it necessary to teach about sex especially if the couple had been living together prior to the wedding. There is much sexual freedom today unlike in the past where sexual chastity was valued and expected to be kept till marriage. In some liberal parties, male strippers are invited to bridal showers and can sometimes end up having last sexual encounter with the bride-to-be before marriage.

Some religious books like the Bible and Quran on the other hand condemns sex before marriage. Therefore during religious based bridal showers, brides are assumed to be sexually pure hence a few things on sex are talked about to help her know what to do after marriage. That is why these parties slightly differ in different social circles, religions and cultures.

2.4.4 Role of advising

In the past, the role of educating women on their wifely duties and gender roles was solely left to older married female relatives. Othieno (1968) shows that girls in the Luo community used to

sleep in an old woman's hut who was their grandmother and past child bearing age to be given lessons on sex and motherhood.

Today, these advisors range from counsellors, pastors, newly married women, wedding planners and male sexologists, who could be younger and not married neither are they related to the bride. Women from the group discussion insisted on the importance of having a well informed individual to offer advice since there is a likely chance of people invited to be biased and also misinform the bride and sometimes exaggerating some things:

2.4.5 Duration

Traditionally in the African culture, the bride's farewell used to last for days. Kenyatta (1965) noted that the age set used to stay with the bride for eight days in which the bride was not supposed to work. Fish (1995), notes that the duration among the Kipsigis lasted for two or more years in seclusion. This has changed today due to the additional roles women have acquired in society which keep them busy and thus are not able to take a lot of days off to bid farewell to their friends or be trained on gender and sexual roles expected. This makes bridal showers last for a few hours at most a day. According to the data collected 91% of the women are professionals who have tight working schedules which cannot allow them to take a long time off work as they bid the bride goodbye.

Marriage is a new phase in everyone's life who is hoping to partake of it. Therefore, guidance from people who have gone ahead is very important in helping one adapt easily to this new form of living. Sex is also not just a physical act; it has so much around it that needs to be understood

for people to live in harmony. Having a guiding hand about it is very helpful and this is one important role that bridal shower accomplishes for women.

2.5 Traditional forms of bridal showers in Kenya

In the African setting, some cultures like the Luo and Kikuyu believed in abduction of the bride. Kenyatta (1965) records that if a young man liked a certain girl, he would pay the dowry which was considered as a small token of appreciation to the girl's family, then set a secret date with his male friends when he will capture the girl without anyone's knowledge. It used to be an emotional occasion where the girl would scream and throw tantrums in mock despair of getting married. The girl's friends and family would pretend to come to her rescue and men from the different camps would mock fights as they sang in jubilation. After the bride is settled in her new home, girls of her age group brought her presents and sat with her for a few days as they bid each other goodbye. Most bridal shower parties have adopted the habit of bringing gifts to the bride as they bid her farewell from such traditional ceremonies (Martin, 1999). The significance of this occasion in Kikuyu community is seen as the opportunity for the bride to bid farewell to her friends and age set as she moves on to another chapter of her life which is marriage. The sitting with the bride for days is however not possible today in bridal showers because of the busy schedule today's woman has in society.

In the Luo community according to Wilson (1961), the capture of the bride which was called *meko* used to happen at the first cock crow. Othieno (1968) notes that girls used to sleep in an old woman's hut, who was a grandmother or past the childbearing age known as *siwidhe*. The old woman gave the girls lessons on sex and motherhood. Girls visiting men and sleeping in their huts (*simba*) was a common practice known as *teroabudha* or *wuowo* which translated means

take me to rest, sexual relations were prohibited. Wilson records that the *siwidhe* used to be bribed with a gift to allow the capture of the girl by the grooms men. The bride was supposed to scream and struggle in a customary way. The brothers of the bride were supposed to put up a fight with sticks though no one was injured or hurt in this encounters. After the bride was captured, a group of young girls followed after the bride. They spend the night with the bride, groom and men from the grooms family and would have a night full of youthful flirtations as they bid the bride farewell and go back the next day to bring news to her village if she was a virgin or not. In this excerpt, Othieno (1961) and Wilson (1968) brings about the aspect of friends bidding farewell to the bride and how traditions and gender roles were passed to young adults before marriage which is not possible today because of the formal education.

In the Meru community, Imanyara (1992) observes that after a girl is circumcised and healed, she is wed.

“The reason for the haste was that so long as the girl remained unmarried but circumcised, no man of the village was allowed to have sexual relations with his wife until the girl was married. To have done so, it was believed, would have spoiled the life and marriage of the new couple” (Finke, 2007)

On the day of her marriage, the bride is escorted back to her house by a young virgin, bridegroom, master of ceremony known as the *banana roaster* and a young married woman from the groom’s family (Imanyara, 1992). The duty of this married woman was to take care of the bride, pass on clan taboos and disciplines, advice her on matters relating to womanhood and how to conduct herself when dealing with her husband. Imanyara in his text demonstrates the importance of another experienced woman guiding the young newly-wed into the expected roles of a wife, as is done in bridal showers by married women today.

Bridal bliss Kenya (2011) observes that in Kenya today and many parts of the world, the bridal shower planning falls squarely on the shoulders of the maid of honor. It is assumed that the maid of honor is the bride's best friend who knows much about her, hence planning it will be easier for her with assistance from a few other friends of the bride. Bridal bliss Kenya continues to state that gone are the bridal shower rules of following proper etiquette and protocol. Today's showers are all about amusements designed to fit the bride's personality. Anything from a wild bachelorette soiree to casual coed barbeque is acceptable. Websites, blogs and different companies have come up with ideas to spice up the event. These include themes that can be used in the bridal shower party.

Ituriu (2010) comes up with a couple of bridal shower themes that could be used. For example, Jack and Jill theme is described as where the groom and his friends can join the party later after their own stag party. Jack and Jill parties are a casual affair held in the afternoon or during a barbecue. Spa bridal showers are where the bride and guests are treated to a day of pampering at a local spa or if the cost is out-of-reach, an at-home spa bridal shower can be considered. A stack of white towels, a hired massage therapist, and manicure and pedicure supplies does the trick. Round the clock shower is where the guests are given a time of day and they will come with a gift that will reflect what the couple will be doing at a particular time during the day. Room of the house shower is when a guest is given a certain room of the house and they get a gift that will appropriately fit into that room. Memories shower are held when the guest brings a memento to represent a special or funny experience shared with the bride. These are just a few themes that can be adopted for the shower. Ituriu shows the different ways that a bride can get to enjoy

herself in the last days of her singlehood and the type of gifts that can be brought for her on her bridal shower party.

Many women love attending bridal showers (Binche, 2009). They get an excuse to dress up and forget their busy routine schedules. The girl child has been empowered and some of them have succeeded in the professional world where they hold executive positions and very tight schedules with little time and avenue to unwind. Bridal showers give these women an opportunity to let the serious, professional front down for a while and just become a normal woman who can enjoy a time with her long lost friends without any inhibition and hang out with the girls off a formal setting. It is also a great opportunity for women to interact and get diverse views and experiences on marriage and different issues affecting women.

Sex in African customary setting is a taboo topic and one is not supposed to talk about it openly and with just anyone (Gatenjwa, 1988). Wilson (1961) also agrees when he states that Luos and other Kenyan tribes had the custom of circumlocution when discussing subjects which involve sex and other matters of this nature. In the bridal shower sessions, sex is one of the important topics discussed. Women who are married tend to give their experiences and also advice on how to make it better and spicy in the bedroom. Techniques and blunders women make during sex are shared and uninhibited indulgence on sex and marriage talk is discussed. Amadiume (2007), notes that in Zambia phallic objects are used as demonstration to girls as they are taught lessons on sexuality and pleasing a man. This also happens today in some bridal shower where a sex auntie (who is usually an older woman past child bearing age) comes with phallic objects to demonstrate how pleasure can be maximized for both parties in marriage.

Bridal showers are a time to give gifts to the bride (Martins, 1999). Depending on the bride's personality and character, her friend take this chance to bring her naughty gifts, accessories and toys she can use to spice up her marriage. These gifts can range from lingerie, negligee, sexy inner wears, adult toys and costumes etc. other important household gifts are given and its fun watching the expression on the brides face as she opens each gift. Games are played during this session and no one is exempted. It is important for one to let loose and enjoy the fun activities.

2.6 History of marriage preparation in Kenyan ethnicities

Many communities in Kenya had their own ways of gearing up the young people on becoming adults and family people. This section will look at how the Nilotes and Bantus of Kenya used to do it.

Who are the Nilotes?

The Nilotes in Kenya have been divided into three groups, the River-lake Nilotes who are the Luo from the Nyanza province, the highland nilotes who are made up of the Pokot and Kalenjin and the plain nilotes who are made up of the Samburu, Maasai and Turkana Finke (2000)

2.6.1 Among the Luos

Luo occupy the Nyanza and Western province of Kenya and are known as the river-lake nilotes.

“Sex education was highly valued rite of passage for children among the Luo people. Over the years, the families have undergone major shifts which have influenced the traditional structures that cushioned the processes of providing sex education thus creating a gap in the sex education to the adolescents. It was the responsibility of the grandparents to pass this knowledge to the young adults and were viewed as sex educators and models of behavior as adolescents grew up. Though different from cutting and removal of foreskin, the Luo had their own methods of observing ritual circumcision. It involved the cutting of the connective tissue joining the foreskin and the male organ at the back. There has also been a misconception that the removal of

the lower teeth was the equivalent of circumcision among the Southern Luo. This is wrong since even among the Kipsigis, Teso, Masai, etc., the removal of the teeth did not replace ritual circumcision among them. The importance of these initiation rites was that the youth was now accepted into adulthood and it bridged youths into marriage and parenthood.” (Olayo, 2012)

Olayo (2012) shows that there were certain requirements to be met before sexual education was offered to the young adults and this was through circumcision. This is because the rite of passage proved that the person was mature enough now to handle important issues of society. Sex education is biologically taught in school and children rarely have the opportunity to hear it from their grandparents as it used to be in the past. Informal education used to make it possible because communities lived together in homesteads and after a long day it was expected of the children to sit down beside a fire as they listened to folklores and riddles entailing the community’s customs and norms from their grandparents. Today most people have moved to the urban areas due to different reasons and circumstances and rarely go to visit their grandparents until school holidays and during ceremonies and celebration. Hence the role of grandparents modeling for and teaching the adolescents is diluted. Some bridal showers still have the idea of older women guiding the new bride into her marital duties.

2.6.2 Among the Maasai

Rosenberg (2010) observes that the Maasai permitted a great deal of sexual freedom from childhood. After the age of seven years, girls and boys were allowed to sleep together and sex play. This continued on until after marriage. The girls would go to make love and spend the nights in the *Morans* huts. One was supposed to have a special friend who was a boy to engage in these activities, they could introduce them to their parents and friends but not necessarily marry them because it was their fathers’ sole responsibility to choose the groom for them. After

marriage though, the wife was not supposed to easily and openly have these affairs. They could only do it in secrecy. Husbands also shared their wives with their guests. But this was solely the wife's decision to make. If she did not want to oblige she was not forced to. This shows that sex education was considered a part of life long journey that needed to be practiced as often by the Maasais. In some bridal showers today, much importance in talking about sex is not observed especially if the bride has been living with her husband prior hence they capitalize their event on gifts, games, feasting and some include bacchanalian activities and strippers for entertainment.

2.6.3. Among the Kalenjin

Girls after initiation spent as long as two or more years in seclusion in a hut which they had built before the ceremony as they were fed on rich foods and tutored in the arts of being good wives and mothers. They spent this time sewing leather, making ornaments and beads (Fish& Fish,1995). Due to the limited time women have in bridal showers which is not enough to teach crafts, the bride is given self help books on cooking, sewing and tailoring as these are duties known to be the responsibility of a wife and mother in the house. They also give ornaments and cosmetics which the bride will use to make herself more appealing to her husband as the Kalenjins used their ornaments and beads to do.

2.6.4. Among the Marakwet

As the boys and girls grew up, they were instructed by their parents not to break the social norms and not to get pregnant before initiation or out of wedlock. Sex was not a taboo but was treated with respect. In each village, the elders gathered regularly in one or more places usually under a tree or by the fire, news and views on sex exchanged, stories told and problems discussed. This

was an essential part of both the boys and the girls education and out of it came the saying 'The son is brother to the father and the daughter sister to the mother.' (Kipkorir, 1973)

During bridal showers, some participants use this opportunity to ask questions and air issues they are facing so as to ask for help and exchange ideas. It is not done seated by the fire like the Marakwet used to do, but the idea of a person seeking clarifications on matters of life and sex is still valid and valued in bridal showers today.

2.6.5 Among the Nandi

Snell (1954) observed that in Nandi the girls were circumcised in the middle or later teens at the beginning of the rain season so that there would be plenty of food to feed them. The girls would then spend two to three years in strict seclusion which lasted until two weeks before marriage where the girl slept in a cubicle in her mother's hut. Instructions on wifely duties and rules of conduct was offered by an elderly woman (*korgetab tum*) and secrecy bound the girls during this occasion. Spinsterhood was unthinkable except in cases of imbeciles or the sexually malformed who were cared for by their parents or some member of their kindred group. Marriages were conducted in order of seniority among the girls in the family unless a younger girl escaped and went through circumcision without her parent's consent or when a girl fell pregnant. According to Snell, girls who had borne children out of wedlock and before circumcision were never allowed to be married as a first wife and fathers strictly discouraged their sons in marrying such as the first wives. Young warriors and uninitiated girls from about the age of puberty no longer slept in their parents huts but had a common dormitory called *sigroina*. Sexual intimacy took place between couples in *sigroina* but general rules concerning forbidden relationships applied.

The girls were expected to return home at dawn and to be moderate in their love affairs. Under no circumstance was it allowed for an initiated girl to sleep in a *sigroina* or have sexual intercourse between circumcision and marriage.

It is clear that the Nilotes used to have an age marking ceremony which was initiation and it was after that, that the initiates were taught about sex and other activities required in a home, we see from all of them that traditions were passed by older relatives who were mostly grandparents and during the seclusion time. They were also taught other activities like sewing leather and making beads to help them in their future lives.

Who are the Bantus?

Bantus in Kenya account for two-thirds of Kenya's population (Finke, 2000-2003). There are three clusters of Bantus in Kenya, Those near the coast and plains of Kenya (Pokomo, Taita, Makonde, Taveta and the Mijikenda), The central highland bantu of around Mt Kenya (Chuka, Embu, Mbeere, Kamba, Kikuyu, Meru and other related tribes) and those in the North of the Lake Victoria Basin (Gusii, Kuria and various of Luhya sections)

2.6.6 Among the Luhyas

In the Luhya Community of the Western part of Kenya, sexual education was offered through songs during initiation and wedding ceremonies. According to Machayo (1991), songs were used to point out abnormal behavior and to warn initiates not to be like the people spoken about in those songs. In the weddings, songs were sung to affirm morality like if a girl was found to be a virgin on her wedding night her praises were sang and other girls told to emulate her. Perverted

sexual tendencies were also condemned like unfaithfulness, laziness and refusing to perform sexual obligations, bestiality e.t.c this depicts how sexual education was first imparted to the community including children and the boundaries that were not supposed to be crossed in sexuality. Bridal showers rarely use songs to offer advice on sexual matters like it used to happen in the Luhya community, unless the friends are just doing it to tease and jest the bride. Neither is the whole community involved in advising the bride to be on sexual matters today.

2.6.7 Among the Digo and Duruma

In Kwale district among the Digo and Duruma, both girls and boys underwent circumcision and education imparted was included responsibility for the home for boys while the girls were taught good house wifely. This is an aspect that has been lost almost completely in the contemporary formal education. Girls at the age of fifteen years were taught by their mothers and other elderly women the importance of being good wives and mothers in their married lives. As children grew up among the Duruma, the knowledge gained was applied on the basis of sex roles. Girls were taught to make necklaces from beads, pottery, carpentry, cultivation of land, fetching water and firewood, cooking, cleaning the house and taking care of the young ones. A girl's sex education was taught by the elderly women informally and there was high regard for a woman found to be a virgin on her wedding day (Government of Kenya, 1987). Older married women continue to advice women in bridal showers though the speakers have increased to include counselors, sexologist, family therapist, who can be of either sexes and not yet married. Chastity on the other hand is not as valued as it used to be traditionally as young people get involved in come-we-stay unions despite condemnation from various religious organizations (Mbuvi, 2013). The

constitution of Kenya has now accepted come-we-stay as a form of marriage especially after 6 months of being together.

2.6.8. Among the Gikuyus

The Gikuyu's of the central part of Kenya had a compulsory initiation ceremony for both the girl and the boy known *asirua* (circumcision). They used to be circumcised whereby the sheath in a boy's penis is removed and some parts of the clitoris are removed from the girl. This was an important rite of passage because bearing that pain signified moving from being a child to a young adult who is ready to be married. No man or woman would accept to marry or be married by an uncircumcised person because it was considered an omen in the community. It is during this important time in the initiates' lives that sex education, customs and gender roles was discussed. Kuria (1988), in studying circumcision songs said that it was through songs and dances that permissible sexual relations were conveyed, for example no sex with relatives, a woman who has recently given birth, animals, menstruating women and prostitutes.. It was believed that a woman was to be given three years after birth before having sex with her again because that meant family planning and also adequate food and attention for the new born.

That is one reason why polygamy was allowed in the African setting so that as one wife recovers from child birth, the rest can be taking care of the man needs. Some of these discussions like family planning, hygiene and bedroom etiquette are included in bridal showers today though not through songs. Everyone participated in these initiation songs including children showing that sex education among the kikuyu started at a very young age. Kuria continues to observe that circumcision songs acted as a sexual catharsis for the community because of the sexual words

used in them and also the mode of celebration and dancing. It was considered as letting off steam to avoid sexual deviances and pervasions in the community. During the seclusion healing of the initiates, that's when finer details were shared by the care givers. Like the positions permissible, holding back ejaculation to satisfy a woman, when to engage in sex (this was during the night when the children were fast asleep) and which forums to talk about their sexual exploits.

Cagnolo (1933) observes that a Kikuyu woman understood her position perfectly well and claimed no more than was due to her by common custom. Being patient and resigned, even satisfied in conditions that would appear oppressive to most western societies. This brings out what was permitted in the kikuyu community, when it was permitted and whose role it was to educate the initiates about sexual matters. Finer details of sex are also freely discussed in some bridal showers as women try to give the bride as much information as they can on the expected intimate connections after marriage.

Mbunda (1991) observes that every society had its way of governing sexual behavior. This is because sex could have very harmful or very useful results. Each society had a way of making it interesting like wearing beads and ornamental things during a wedding ceremony, circumcision and pulling of the clitoris to make sex more interesting, wearing perfumes, massages and fondling to make sex delightful. Sex enjoyment had to be supported by a certain framework: marriage which when gone against used to bring about deviance and violation of social order like homosexuality, bestiality, child abuse, rape and incest. The desire to reproduce is deep-seated, and sex is the mechanism that makes it possible. Any act of sex between a man and a woman may result in his becoming the father of her child, in her becoming the mother of his child. And

“fatherhood” and “motherhood” were not simply biological facts in traditional communities; the words stood for a whole complex set of interdependent relationships, roles, duties, and rights.

Fertility alone could not make a man a “good” father—he had to have the skills necessary to provide his family with food, shelter, and clothing. Nor could a woman be a “good” mother just by giving birth—she had to know how to cook, care for her children, and keep her house clean and orderly. The community made sure young potential parents understood early on the connection between sexual activities and these responsibilities, and the parents were expected to train them in the skills appropriate to their roles in the community’s economy (Mbunda, 1991).

One of the social events that cater for this communication of sexual activities and responsibilities expected of wives and mothers is bridal showers.

2.7 Theoretical Framework.

2.7.1 Social Learning theory

Social learning has been defined by Lefrancois (2006) as all learning that occurs as a result of social interaction. It is knowledge of what is socially acceptable and it is done through a lengthy process of socialization.

This was a theory that was developed by Albert Bandura in the 1977(Lefrancois, 2006).

Bandura states that much of our learning involves models. It is done through observation or imitation of models. For example the way a small girl sees her mother taking care of her younger siblings and she role-plays that while playing with other children.

Bandura’s theory of observational learning describes three possible effects of observing models: we learn new behavior as a result of seeing others engage in these behaviors, deviant behaviors

can be encouraged or discouraged as a function of what we observe to be consequences of such behavior, seeing models engage in highly rewarding behavior can elicit similar, but not identical, behavior from the observer (Lefrancois, 2006). For Bandura, motivational factors and a broad network of social influences determine if, when, and where gender knowledge is expressed. He also stated that social learning occurred in four steps (Bandura, 1977). Attention, in order for a person to learn something they need to pay attention. Retention, human need to remember the behavior for them to learn and later reproduce the same behavior. Reproduction, one has to organize behavior in accordance to models behavior and finally the observer has to be motivated to do so. This is true because in bridal showers women discuss what has worked for them in marriage while others are listening (Attention) and they go try to see if it will work in their lives (retention), they try to conduct bridal showers for younger women to learn from them (reproduction) after the young women observe how useful it is to have information on marital responsibilities, they attend bridal showers (motivation).

A bridal shower is a place where a bride is oriented into their marital responsibilities and gender roles. Socialization has been defined as the process in which desirable or moral outcomes in the opinion of a said society is achieved (White, 1977). It is a lifelong process of inheriting and disseminating norms, customs and ideologies providing an individual with the skills and habits necessary for participating within their own society. The means by which social and cultural continuity are attained (Claunsen, 1968).

There are various types of socialization. Primary socialization has been said to be when a child learns the attitudes, values and actions appropriate to individuals as members of a particular culture. Secondary socialization refers to the process of learning appropriate behavior as a

member of a smaller group within a larger society (Schaeffer, 2009). Re-socialization is the process of discarding former behavior patterns and reflexes, accepting new ones as part of transition in one's life (Macionis & Gerber, 2011). Group socialization is whereby an individual's peer group rather than parental figures influences their personality or behavior (Harris, 1995). Gender socialization theory by Henslin (1999) is defined as the learning of culturally defined gender roles. Planned socialization is whereby other people take actions designed to teach or train others (Claunsen, 1968).

Marital responsibilities and gender roles are impacted to women through various types of socialization processes. One of them that used to occur traditionally and now is planned socialization. This is where knowledgeable and experienced people like older women, newly-weds, pastors, counselors and sexologist set aside time to come and talk to a bride-to-be and other women on marital responsibilities and duties required of a married woman. Traditionally in African communities it used to occur after initiation where girls were taught by their grandmothers or older female relatives like the Kalenjin of Kenya what was expected of them (Fish and Fish, 1995). Among other things, they were taught how to make pottery ornaments and houses so that they may conduct their wifely duties effectively. They were also taught on hygiene and sex obligations expected of them in marriage (Snell, 1994).

Gender socialization used to occur traditionally in Africa, Government of Kenya (1987), when girls were taught how to cook, fetch firewood, look after their younger siblings and cleaning the house and compounds. They were taught behaviors and attitudes considered appropriate for their

given sex. This is also done in bridal showers when the bride is advised on taking care of her husband, preparing his food and keeping the house clean and tidy.

Group socialization normally happens in bridal showers when peers and friends come to bid and celebrate their friend's changing status. The bride is given advice by her friends and colleagues on what to expect and do in her new home.

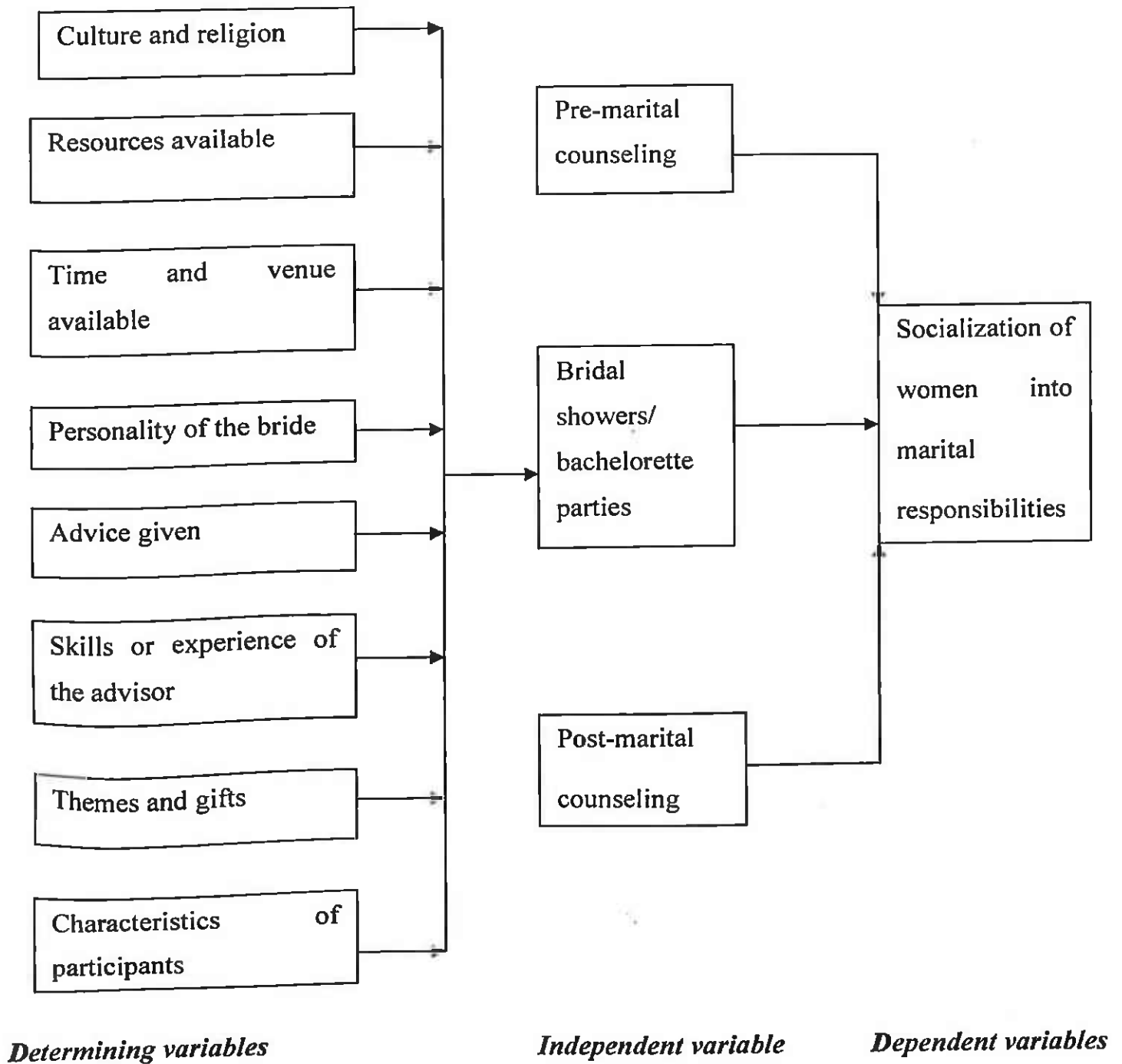
2.7.2 Symbolic Interactionism

This was a theory developed by George Herbert Mead and Charles Horton Cooley that argued that people respond to the social understanding of realities. Most symbolic interactionists believed that physical realities exist by an individual's social definitions and these do develop in part or relation to something real (Blumer, 1969). They believed that behavior therefore is not developed by instincts but rather by reflective, socially understood meanings of both the internal and external incentives that are currently presented (Meltzer et al. 1975). Many women love attending bridal showers. This is because it is socially understood to be helpful in assisting a woman settle down well in her marital home. According to symbolic interactionist, Blumer (1969) there are three basic premises of the perspective. Humans act towards things on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to those things which arise out of the social interaction with society. These meanings are handled in and modified through an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things they encounter. This is true when it comes to bridal showers because many women place an important label to them because of the benefits they acquire from them like fun filled interaction with friends in the party, the useful information they get from interaction with other women and people who have specialized knowledge in this field, the need

to be there for their friends as they transition from one status to another and some to serve an obligation from their friends. It is also socially accepted that women come together to agree on the bride's decision to become a wife and a parent paying homage to her mother and grandmother. This is shown when the friends bring her gifts that are associated to the new role she is taking up as a sexual partner, here she is given accessories and bedroom gifts, a cook here she is given kitchen accessories and cook books etc. Therefore bridal showers have been socially accepted to be of help in advising the bride and helping her with information to make her settle comfortably in her new role.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 Shows the cause-effect relationship



This conceptual framework portrays the cause-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variable. Socialization of women into marital responsibilities has been seen to be a very important process in every woman's life because it ensures harmony and balance in marriage and society. Socialization of women into marital responsibilities is the dependent variable that is the result of three independent variables namely; pre-marital counseling which is done for couples by organizations and counselors before they get married, bridal showers which are organized and conducted by women for a bride before her marriage and post-marital counseling which is conducted by organizations and counselors for couples who have already wedded to help them settle comfortably in matrimony.

The study has focused on bridal showers as a means of socializing women into their gender roles and marital responsibilities. For a bridal shower to occur there are intervening variables that are considered so as to make the event successful and friendly to all the participants. These include: resources and funds available for the event, culture and religion of the participants, time and venue available, characteristics of the participant (age, level of education, professions etc), personality of the bride (the aim of the event is to communicate love and honor to the bride), theme of the party and gifts brought for the bride, advice given and the skills or experience of the advisor (are they professionals or have vast experience in this field). These are some of the variables that make a bridal shower differ from another.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

3.0 Introduction

This chapter captures the research methods used to collect data and how it was analyzed it. It starts by explaining the design to be used, study site, sample population and data collection methods that were used which include: literature review, in-depth interviews with key informants, focus group discussions and finally participant observation

3.1 Research Design

Mixed methods approach was used in this study where both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were employed. This is because the research needed to gather an in-depth understanding of bridal showers as a human behavior and the reasons that govern this event and also develop and employ mathematical models in the explanation and understanding of this phenomenon. The samples taken were small. Snowball sampling and purposive approach was used in data collection.

3.2 Study Site

The study about bachelorette's party took place in Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. This is because it was the most fertile ground for data gathering and the practice is growing in popularity in this part of the country as it spreads to the other parts and towns. There are people who have specialized in this particular field in the CBD, for example, wedding planners, sexologists and sex aunties who charge a fee to come and speak to the women and the bride on matters pertaining to marriage and the social importance of sex. There are very many expos held in the city for goods and materials that are bought as gifts for brides in these parties. The city being a

cosmopolitan, the researcher was able to get different views from a wide variety. Most people speak English and Kiswahili, hence no language barrier existed in data collection.

3.3 Sample Population

A survey was conducted on 80 respondents who had at least attended a bridal shower party purposively selected. Sampling has been defined as selection of a subset of individuals from within a population to yield some knowledge about the whole population, especially for the purposes of making predictions. The researcher approached a firm based in Nairobi that is well known for offering bridal showers and wedding planning services and got referrals from there for a few clients who would not mind giving feedback from there referrals were given. The researcher also posted an advert in a women only website that invited anyone who has ever attended a bridal shower to participate and five women responded positively. Ten knowledgeable students also responded to the questionnaires and from all those sources, snowball sampling was used to gather more data where the researcher asked the respondents to refer at least two more people who they know have ever attended a bridal shower. The sample used for this research was made up of women from the age of 18 years who had been involved in bachelorette parties at one point in their lives. This was because 18 is the legal age of consent in Kenya.

The questionnaires were sent through email and some hand delivered. The respondents were asked to refer at least two other people who could be contacted to fill in the questionnaires. They were reminded about replying through mail, phone calls and texts. This whole process took two months. The sample was purposively determined and then snowball method of sampling was used and referrals from those who had attended bridal showers followed up.

3.4 Data Collection Methods.

Several research techniques were used combining survey, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and participatory observation to study bridal showers. Data from qualitative and quantitative research methods were triangulated so that the quality may be enriched and complement each other as each method had its own limitations.

3.4.1 Literature Review

The first phase focused on content analysis through literature review. This exercise comprised of reviewing newspapers articles, diaries, documentaries, internet searches, magazines, books, and any other document that had information on Bachelorette parties. This provided valuable historical and cultural insights that made the researcher have a central aspect of social interaction in bachelorette parties. This made sure that the information researched on bachelorette parties was not duplicated and the knowledge gap that was missing was filled and opened up so that other researchers may be able to expand this study.

3.4.2 In-Depth Interviews with Key Informants.

Key informants are people with specialized knowledge or experience that will contribute to this study. They are people who deal with bridal showers on a day to day basis and they have a wealth of knowledge that can contribute to this research.

A total of four key informants were interviewed. A 35 year old male sexologist, a 33 year old wedding and bridal showers planner, 32 year old married church minister and a 40 year old counselor.

Due to people being very busy to plan their own weddings, many tend to contract wedding planners who have really developed due to the high demand of weddings. One was targeted as an informant. Sexologists are people who have academically specialized in helping married people spice up their sexual encounters and better their bedroom life. They are mostly invited as speakers in bridal showers to advise the bride. The researcher conducted a phone interview with a 35 year old male sexologist who was too busy to meet face to face due to his travelling schedule. The researcher interviewed a 40 year old family counselor who offers her services even in bridal showers and a married church minister who volunteers to talk to women about marriage.

The advantage of this method of data collection is that with key informants, the researcher got sensitive and confidential information that could not be suitably shared in an open group. With in-depth interviews, the researcher easily clarified points since they were face to face with the interviewee hence getting rich, useful responses. The researcher used unstructured or open ended interview guide that brought out all the facts in the study and kept the informants from veering off the topic. This method was not sufficient enough to capture all the data required due to its time consuming nature and sometimes interviews being rejected or procrastinated. The researcher entered into the other phase of data collection with focus group discussions to align all this views.

Some of the questions answered here were, challenges faced in this field, qualifications required for people who offer advice, expectations of the attendants, charges if any and what keeps the informants interested in this field of study.

3.4.3 Focus Group Discussions

In this study the researcher held 3 focus groups. The first was conducted in a house in Kangemi, with 11 participants immediately after a bridal shower so that the researcher could get fresh feedback. The second was conducted along Ngong road, with 7 participants during a mat making project for women. The last was conducted in Nyayo Estate, with 7 participants. FGDs are instrument of dealing with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behavior. The researcher was the moderator as the group interviewed was made of 6-10 women who had attended a bridal shower. Each of the women were free to comment and elaborate as the moderator guided the discussion and brought up the information they were looking for. This discussion was recorded through notes with the group's permission.

The FGD's was expected to generate a debate that brought out rich discussions and divergent views through varied opinions and different perspectives. Questions covered here were, the importance of having a bridal shower, the type of things expected to be covered in these parties, who are supposed to attend such occasions, effect of this parties on women at large and the impact on behavior. Becker (1958) argues volunteered statements are more credible than those elicited by an interviewer particularly when done in the context of a private and artificial interview. This gave memories, experiences, new insights and ideas due to the cascading effect, therefore rich data was gathered from this type of research. It was not easy to form FGD as anticipated but the three formed were asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes towards the concept of bridal showers.

3.4.4 Participant Observation.

Participant Observation is where the researcher gains intensive involvement with people in their natural environment. The researcher attended four bridal showers to observe the behavior against a check list and participated in the practices. The check list answered questions like the theme of the party, the sessions involved in the party, the topics discussed, location of the bridal shower, the kind of people attending the party, kind of leisure activities and entertainment offered.

Becker (1957) argues, things may be reported in an interview through such distorted lens and the interviewer have no way of knowing what is fact and what is distortion of this kind, participatory observation makes it possible to check such points. Due to the limited time and skills required to participate in this type of research, the number targeted for attendance was four. The challenges faced in this method of data collection was that most parties were very personal and only people known to the bride were invited and others were very expensive and funds available was limited.

The researcher constantly compared the accounts obtained with description from other sources: FGD, KI and literature review. This method helped in taking account of non verbalized factors which were critical in understanding this phenomenon. Data collected was captured through notes. This covered the fourth phase.

3.5 Data Analysis.

This is the process of cleaning and organizing data in an effort to highlight useful information. *For qualitative data*, it was collected, sorted, coded and categorized into different themes, which helped in interpreting attitudes, feelings and behavior from the data collected from different sources. With Quantitative data, the researcher started with inspecting and correcting data that

has been erroneously recorded. Then confirmed that the method used to collect the data was successful in bringing out what was intended in the initial objective. Data was then accurately described and respondents' characteristics highlighted for better analysis through tabulation. Frequencies and percentages were calculated and the figures were presented in forms of tables, pie charts and bar charts. Finally the data analysis was documented and preferable actions was taken after checking its reliability and reproducible for generalization.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents data on how bridal showers are experienced in Kenya, the importance and significance of bridal showers, why it is growing in popularity and the attributes of the participants. This information is presented in forms of tables, percentages, pie charts, bar charts and thematic issues.

Quantitative data was collected from a total sample of 80 respondents using standard questionnaires. Additional qualitative data was obtained from Four Key informants interviewed who included a church minister, a Counselor, a sexologist and a wedding planner. Three focus group discussions were also conducted and the researcher attended four bridal showers where additional information was obtained through participant observation method.

4.1 Site Description

The study about bachelorette's party took place in Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. This is because it was the most fertile ground for data gathering and the practice is growing in popularity in this part of the country as it spreads to the other parts and towns. The city being a cosmopolitan, the researcher was able to get different views from a wide variety. Most people speak English and Kiswahili, hence no language barrier existed in data collection.

4.2 Sample Characteristics

4.2.1 Age of the Respondents

A majority of the respondents were between the ages of 26-33 who made up 86% of the total sample. Other respondents were from the age of 18-25 who formed 13% of the sample and 1% was aged 34-41 as represented in the Table 1 below.

Table 4.1: Age of Respondent

Age	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
18-25	10	12.5
26-33	69	86.25
34-41	1	1.25
Total	80	100.0

From the sample description above, majority (86%) of the respondents fall under the 26-33 years brackets. Ikamari (2005) observes that formal education may affect the timing of marriage in various ways. The highly educated spend many years in school and college receiving instruction and knowledge. In Kenya today, one requires at least sixteen years to complete University education at the first-degree level. When enrolled in school or college it is not desirable nor is it feasible for students to marry as it is disruptive and generally young people lack the financial resources and the prospect of a stable income that would be ideal for marriage and forming a family. Therefore school enrolment is an impediment to early marriage (Ikamari, 2005).

According to one of the Key Informants, a 32 year old married Christian lady

“Women in Kenya have been empowered and encouraged to take part in education and they go up to tertiary level. So unlike in the past where many

women used to get married very early in life, they are delaying marriage to first finish school making the average marrying age to rise to 21 years”.

Therefore this being the case, as women prepare for their changing marital status, they invite their friends and colleagues of the same age group who are newlywed or are still single waiting to get married to partake in these celebrations. Imanyara (1992) notes that in the Meru community, once a girl was circumcised and healed, she was wed. This implies that girls used to marry in their early teenage years. Today, female genital mutilation is illegal in Kenya and most communities have let go of this practice. Many communities in Kenya like Maasai, Turkana, Samburu, Meru, Kikuyu, Luhya and Kisii had circumcision ceremonies which used to occur during puberty after which the girls used to get married. School attendance has removed the girls from the domestic environment and offers literacy and exposure to new ideas and value systems that may compete with the traditional customs, values and beliefs that promote early marriage (Westoff, 1992,)

4.2.2 Marital Status

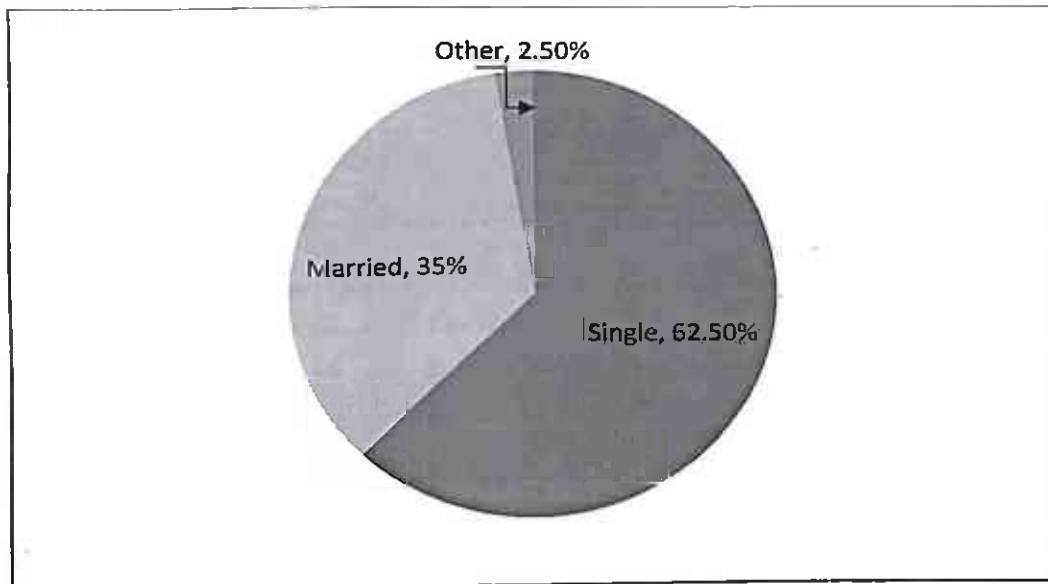
According to the sample collected, 62.5% were single women, 35% were married and 2.5% were made up of women who were engaged. The single women seem to form a large percentage of the respondents (62.5%). This shows that single women are eager to learn about marriage before they get there. A 26 year old participant from the focus group said that:

“Women who are looking forward to getting married arm themselves with information by reading widely on the readily available self help books on marriage”.

As women read widely on marriage, they also attend bridal showers to listen and learn from people who are experienced in marriage as they offer advice and information that they regard important. This is what socialization theory calls gender socialization, a process where the women learn about the culturally defined roles of a woman. Some go to seek help by comparing notes to see where they are going wrong in their marriage life while others are there to offer advice to the new bride-to-be. As Ikamari (2005) has mentioned, women take long in school as they pursue career and professional progression and it is not feasible for them to get married due to the school demands. Hence women are now getting married later in life in comparison to the older days when formal education was not available and a woman's status quo was only improved by marriage and child bearing. This could explain why the single women formed a larger percentage of the respondents.

Imanyara (1992) notes that in Meru community the bride used to be escorted by a married woman from the groom's family whose sole purpose was to take care of the bride, pass on clan taboos and disciplines, advice her on matters relating to womanhood and how to conduct herself when dealing with her husband. This is called planned socialization theory where other people take actions designed to train or teach people. This could explain the role played by the married women, who formed 35% of the respondents, apart from being there to support their friends and to have fun. Today, counselors, sexologists and married women have taken up that guiding role.

Fig4.1: Marital Status of Respondents



4.2.3 Level of education

Majority of the respondents (94%) interviewed were either degree or diploma holders most having gone to colleges and universities. Of the respondents 2.5% got to secondary school and 4% of them hold a post graduate degree. Majority of the respondents (78%), interviewed have gone up to tertiary school. In the traditional society, women often relied on marriage and childbearing as avenues for gaining social status, respect and power in the household as well as in the community arena. Consequently, early marriage and childbearing were highly valued in many traditional societies (Caldwell and Caldwell, 1987). However, with the advent of education, women who are educated are respected and enjoy high social status, whether married or not, in the modern Kenyan society. In Kenya today, women's education is viewed as a crucial human capital investment and an avenue to salaried employment, independence, decision-making and enhanced social status. Thus the educated women no longer see marriage and childbearing as viable avenues to social status and economic independence (Ikamari, 2005).

This has encouraged women to pursue education to very high levels as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 4.2: Level of Education

Level of education of respondent	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Secondary	2	2.5
College/University	75	93.75
Other	3	3.75
TOTAL	80	100

The world is becoming a global village mostly due to the media connectivity people are enjoying (McLuhan, 1996). Nairobi being a cosmopolitan, most people of different tribes are brought together by many interests one of them being education. This being the case, people interact in school and form friendships with people from different parts of the world. Therefore in an attempt to include them comfortably and fully in their pre-wedding preparations, they modernize the event and adopt various versions of bridal showers. This is also known as group socialization in the socialization theory where peers influence behavior in adulthood (Harris, 1995)

4.2.4 Main Occupations

Majority of the respondents forming 91% of the sample interviewed were professionals ranging from doctors, bankers, financial analyst, counselors, lawyer, secretaries, engineers etc. There was 3.7% house wives, 5% business women and an intern who was working at a church. There was a 2.5% of respondents who did not specify their professions.

Table 4.3: Respondents Profession

Profession	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
HR and Administration	25	31.25
Entrepreneurs	4	5
Finance and Accounting	21	26.25
Marketing and Research	8	10
Science and Medicine	4	5
Engineering	2	2.5
Lawyers and Advocates	4	5
Housewives	3	3.75
Pastors and Associates	7	8.75
Unspecified profession	2	2.5
Total	80	100

With some traditions like the girl's place being in the kitchen and taking care of children and FGM to prepare a girl for marriage being discouraged (WHO, 2013), the girl child was encouraged to go to school and learn. And as Caldwell (1987) and Ikamari (2005) would argue, today women's education is viewed as a crucial human capital investment and an avenue to salaried employment, independence, decision-making and enhanced social status. Education exposed her to professional courses which led to the girl child taking up positions in the professional world. That is why from the data collected, majority of the respondents seem to have a profession.

4.2.5 Religion

Most of the respondents (98%) were Christians. This could be attributed to the fact that majority of Kenyans (80%) subscribe to the Christian religion. According to the 2009 Population & Housing Census results, Christians have been stated to be 83% of the Kenyan population.

4.3 How Bridal Showers are Understood and Experienced in Kenya

This section discusses the experiences people go through in bridal showers more specifically looking at awareness and organization of bridal showers.

4.3.1 Awareness

We examined how well bridal showers are known and how often they occur focusing on who the respondents learnt about the bridal showers from, at what age they attended the first bridal shower and how many other bridal showers they have subsequently attended as well as the reasons for doing so.

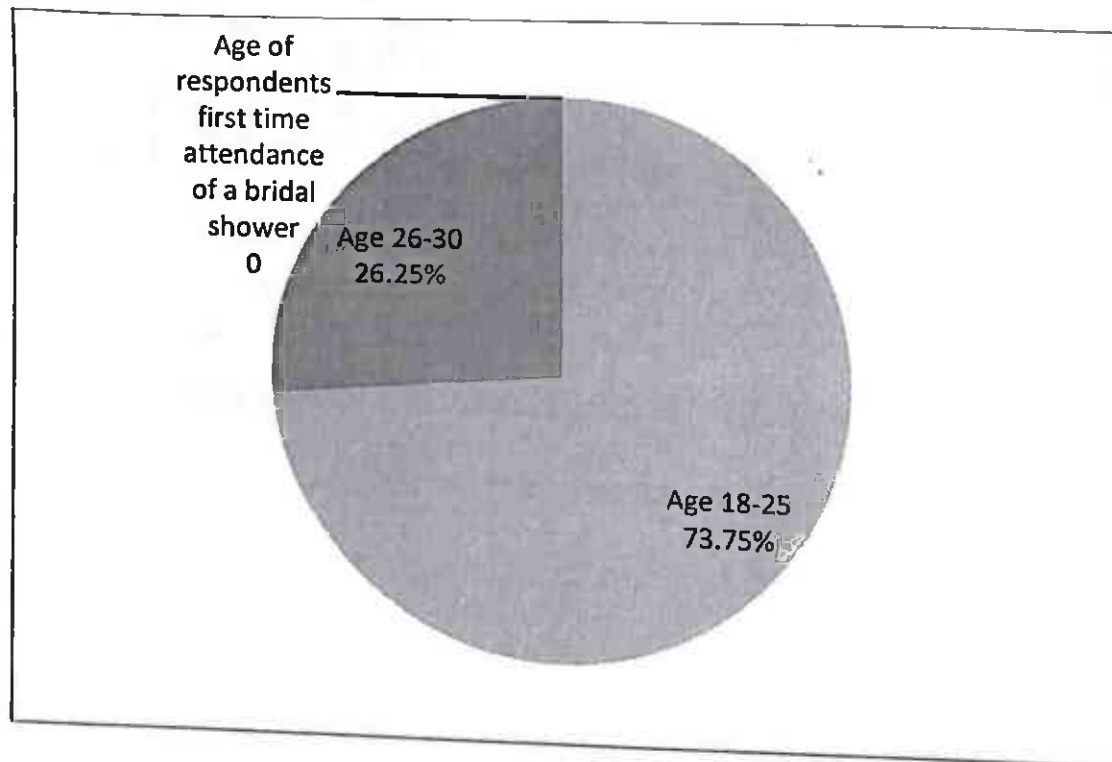
4.3.1.1 Learning of Bridal Showers

All the respondents interviewed had attended a bridal shower as this was the requirement for one to answer a questionnaire. From the survey conducted, 81% of the respondents said they learnt about bridal showers from their friends, 6 % said they learnt about bridal showers from their family, 7% admitted to have learnt about bridal showers from their colleagues and the rest (6%) said they knew it from the media. These results suggests that bridal showers are known in many circles, at work for those who learnt about it from colleagues, in families for those who learnt about it from families and in social circles for those who learnt about it from friends who form the majority. Therefore bridal shower is a well celebrated event and popular especially among the young learned professional women in Nairobi.

4.3.1.2 Age of First Bridal Shower Attendance

Majority of the respondents (73.75%) seemed to have attended their first bridal shower between the ages of 18-25. The rest who were 26.25% attended their first bridal shower at the age of 26-33. The legal age of marriage in Kenya according to the constitution is 18 years. This shows how eager women are to prepare for their future in marriage and how soon they seek such counsel and advice about marriage today. According to Fish & Fish (1995), girls in the Nandi community used to be taught about motherhood and sex roles immediately they were initiated during puberty because that was the marker of a woman ready for marriage following the gender socialization theory. Nowadays because of formal education, girls are no longer taught these lessons as they were done for traditionally. Eighteen years being the marker of age of consent in Kenya, it is no wonder why majority of the respondents (73.75%) attended their first bridal shower at the age of 18-25 years. This is because they seek counsel as they are now ready to get into marriage.

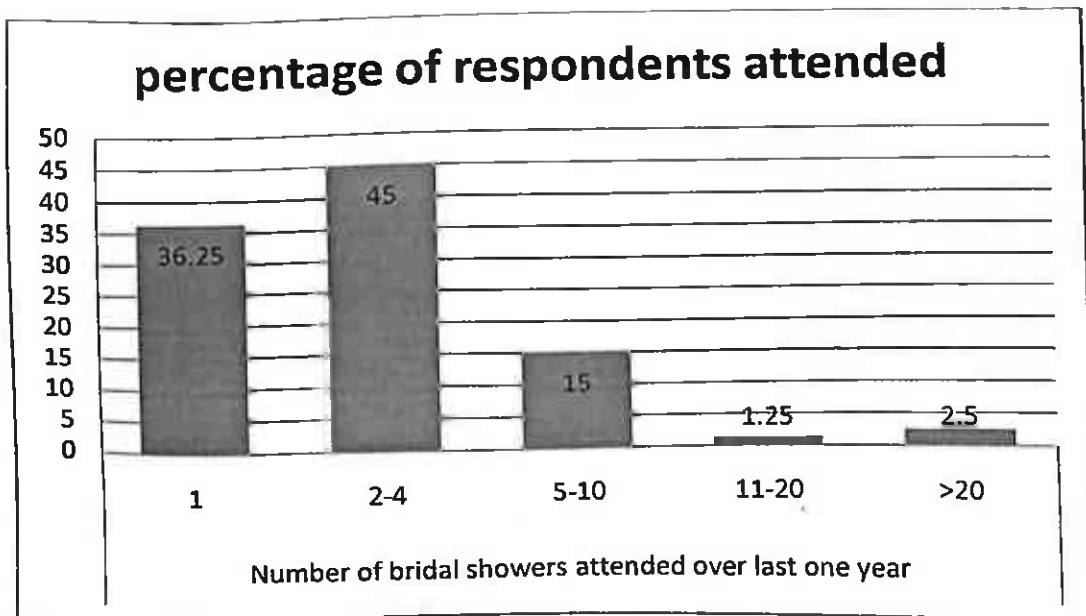
Fig 4.2: Age Respondents First Attended A Bridal Shower.



4.3.1.3 Number of Bridal Showers Attended

From the data collected, 45% of the respondents had attended 2-4 bridal showers within the last one year, 36.25% had attended 1 bridal shower some being their own. Out of the respondents 15% had attended 5-10 bridal showers and the rest had attended 10 or more bridal showers 2.5% having attended more than 20 bridal showers within the year. The number of bridal shower attended within a year was important because the respondents could remember and answer the question asked in the survey questionnaires from a recent memory and also to gauge how many bridal showers occur within a year.

Fig 4.3: Number of Bridal Showers Attended Within a Year.



More than 60% of the respondents had attended at least two bridal showers within the year suggesting that bridal showers are common. It also shows that the respondents attended the bridals showers for one reason or another, either for support, fun, obligation or meeting friends since more than 60% had attended it twice within the year.

4.3.2 Organization of Bridal Showers

This section is covering how bridal showers are organized in Kenya with variables like planning and hosting, venue, time and activities.

4.3.2.1 Planning and Hosting

From the respondents, most of the bridal showers attended were planned without the bride's knowledge. This secret party is arranged by her friends and the groom to honor the bride as she moves from one stage of her life to another. Traditionally especially from some cultures like Luo and Kikuyu the groom used to arrange for a secret capture date of the bride with his female relatives who were supposed to monitor the bride's movement and escort her as they bid her farewell. Though the purpose of keeping a bridal shower as a secret from the bride differs now, the concept is the same where a bride gets to be happy when she arrives and sees people she loves ready to bid her farewell and some usher her to her new life. It is also worth it to see the look on the bride's face when she enters and sees the truth (Callaway, 2012)

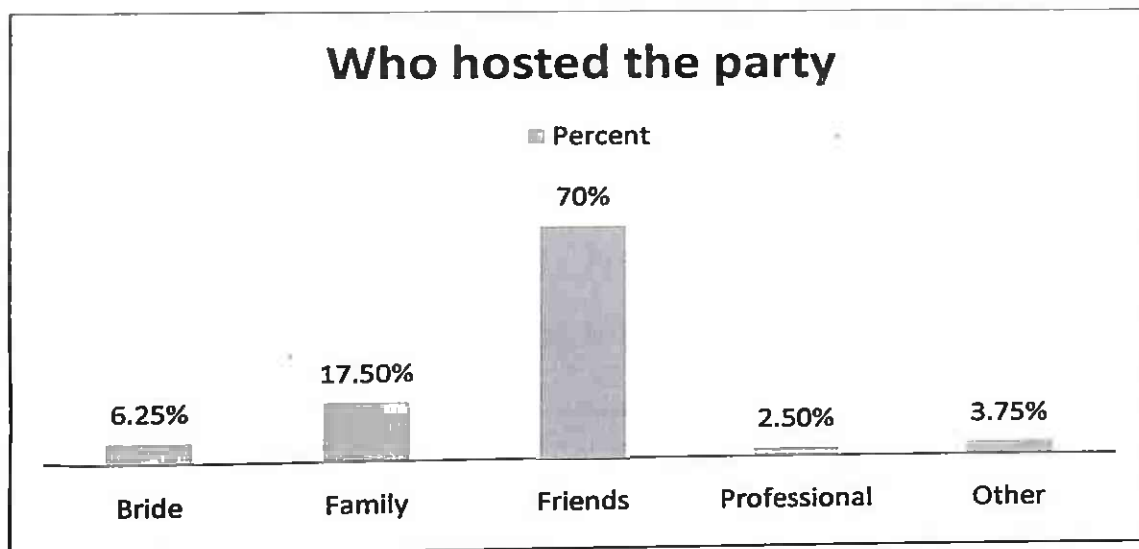
Many of the women interviewed (76%), seemed to have attended a friend's bridal shower as the last one, some for family members and a few for colleagues and workmates. They learnt about the last party attended from fellow friends who were making it a secret party for the bride, some from family and groom. How the respondents got to know about the bridal shower attended was important because it highlighted how the party was organized, by whom and how the invitations were sent out. From the data, we get to see in majority of the cases that friends are the ones who arrange the party and send out the invitations as they invite as many friends of the bride as possible. The bride rarely has any idea about the party

Table 4.4: How Respondent Knew about the Last Party Attended

How the respondent got to know about the party	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Family	10	12.5
Friends	61	76.25
Groom	2	2.5
Bride	3	3.75
Others	4	5
Total	80	100

Some of the respondents, three in total, learnt about the shower when they got to a party that was secretly organized for them. In some (17.5%), family hosted the party while others contracted professionals like wedding planners because of their vast knowledge on how to organize such parties. Some respondents (6.75%) said the bride herself hosted her own party. Wendy (2013) notes that the maid of honor is considered to be the brides close friend and tasked with the responsibility of knowing what the bride-to-be would like so that she may feel loved and appreciated. They are mostly married hence are supposed to offer the bride some marital advice before her big day. Imanyara (1992) recorded that in the Meru community there used to be a newlywed woman from the groom side who was supposed to stay with the bride as she informed her on the clan's customs and roles expected of her in her marriage. This planned socialization is important as the bride is trained in the ways of the people she is going to live with. There is a similar role today expected to be played by the maid of honor.

Fig 4.4: Bar Chart of Who Hosted the Bridal Shower Party.



Some families (17.50%) are very close knit and they feel the need to organize the bridal showers so that they may arm their loved ones with information they need as they start their own families. Some brides (6.25%) also find the need to organize a bridal shower so that they may invite all of their close friends and family to celebrate with them as they move from one stage of their lives to another. For some they just love having parties and this is one good excuse of hosting one.

4.3.2.2 Venue

Most of the parties from the data collected seemed to have happened in homes making up 88%. The houses chosen for the party are mostly the maid of honor's because she is assumed to know what the bride likes. Some of the bridal showers (11%) were held in hotels and clubs. From observation bridal showers are mostly held in a homely setting making it easy for women to relax and have fun in a comfortable private environment away from curious eyes. This also considers the sensitive nature of the discussions held and advice given on gender and sex roles to the women and the bride. In one home, all the friends with the exception of the house owner

were locked up in one of the bedrooms a few seconds before the bride arrived. When the bride showed up, the maid of honor sent her to keep her purse in the same bedroom the friends were hiding. When the bride opened the door, the friends shouted '*SURPRISE!*' and the look on the bride's face was a priceless mixture of shock and joy. After greeting everyone they all went to the sitting room and started having an excited conversation revolving around her upcoming wedding day as they ate. Games and icebreakers were played then afterwards advice was given to the bride by an older married woman on how to maintain a good home and become a submissive wife. Gifts were later given to the bride and each person explained the symbolism of the gift they had brought for the bride. The shower ended with women seeking clarification and asking questions to the advice giver and the rest of the women in general.

At one hotel, the friends and family booked a conference room where they ate as they waited for the bride-to-be. When she arrived, they shouted '*SURPRISE!*' both shocking and exciting the bride-to-be. The bride then greeted each one of them and sat down as married women talked to the bride about her expected marital duties and asked her if there was any clarification she desired. Fish & Fish (1995) record how a girl in the Kalenjin community used to stay in seclusion and sworn to secrecy after initiation in her mother's hut as information on motherhood and wifely duties were discussed. Homes create the same privacy for gender socialization discussions and queries. Mbunda (1991) notes how in Tanzania, the Makonde girls were excluded during puberty to be taught on motherhood and sexuality sometimes this lasting up to 9 months seclusion time.

This however is not possible today because of the busy working schedules women have. Hence everything is condensed and summarized for the bride in a few hours.

Those who held the parties in hotels considered a central position where people can meet and had rented private spaces like conference rooms to do this. This is because of the same reason of privacy because information shared is not meant for everyone's consumption. Those who choose clubs went to dance, drink and have fun with friends. Some invited male strippers as a way of giving the bride her last freedom pass at any other man because marriage is believed to be sacred covenant and faithfulness is expressly implied and expected.

4.3.2.3 Time

The time the party was held varied from afternoon to night, majority (53.8%) stating that the party started in the afternoon and ended in the evening or night depending on the activities that were scheduled. Some parties seemed to have gone on for longer and some respondents felt that time was not enough as they would have wanted. According to a 32 year old married KI:

“These parties are organized on a day when most people are available and in Kenya it is either on Saturday or Sunday. Most people work half a day on Saturday and have church services on Sunday mornings. This is one of the reasons why the party is mostly fixed in the afternoon”.

Mbunda (1991), states that girls from Makonde in Tanzania used to be secluded for a period of nine months to be taught about sexuality and the ways of adults. Snell (1954) also supports the seclusion time by noting that the Nandi community used to seclude the initiated girls for a period of 2-3 years as important customs on sexuality and motherhood are passed along. This however is not possible today because formal education takes a lot of time and after completion of studies

women start working with equally busy schedules. Hence the only time they can afford to allocate for bridal showers is a few hour in which advice is condensed and given to the bride..

A 33 year old wedding planner stated that:

“One of the challenges faced in planning for these events is that most of the people never keep time”.

This inconveniences her because when people ignore time, the important activities planned for the afternoon are rushed through and some are even cancelled. Hence it mostly starts later than intended and has to equally end late. Much cannot be accomplished in those few hours like it used to be done traditionally among the Nandis like teaching about making ornaments, pottery and other crafts. Hence the bride is sometimes given books to help her acquire these skills like cooking and knitting books.

Table 4.5: Time the Party was Held

Time of the party	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Afternoon	43	53.8
Evening	27	33.8
Night	10	12.5

4.3.2.4 Activities

From the sample collected, the parties had 15-25 people attending and the activities in the parties as observed by the researcher ranged from introductions where people got to know each other. Games which were made up of ice breakers. Eating and drinking the bounty that had been prepared by the host. Invited speakers talked to the group and sometimes married women share their different experiences and gave advice to the bride.

A 35 year old male sexologist stated that:

“When he is invited as a guest in bridal showers he focuses on the topics of relationship dynamics, human sexuality and finances. He recommends that a speaker at a bridal shower function should have at least a diploma or degree in the related field and should be a good researcher so as to update themselves and have knowledge on the changing trends in the social arena”.

This shows some of the important discussions held in bridal showers.

Government of Kenya (1987) record how the Digo and Duruma girls used to be taught skills on making necklaces and beads, cultivation, fetching wood and water and taking care of children as they grew up. These were the expected roles that were to be taken up when the girls got married. This is not possible in bridal showers today because of the limited time allocated to them. Skills cannot be imparted in such a short time hence the bride is sometimes given gifts of books that can teach her some of this skills.

Gifts are given to the bride and the attendants explain the significance of the gifts they brought. Amadiume (2007) observes that in Zambia phallic objects were used to demonstrate as girls were taught on sexuality. A few bridal showers had sex demonstration from sex aunties (older women past the child bearing age who come to teach on sex) and others had strippers to entertain the crowd. From the respondents, some sex aunties come with various phallic objects to educate women on how to maximize on pleasure in their sexual life.

4.4 Importance of Bridal Showers and Factors behind its Growing Popularity.

In this section we looked at the importance and popularity of bridal showers and the reasons why women attend these parties, the gifts, advice givers and finally topics discussed in bridal showers

4.4.1 Reasons for Attending Bridal Showers

One of the KI, a 33 year old wedding planner and Christian speaker at bridal showers stated:

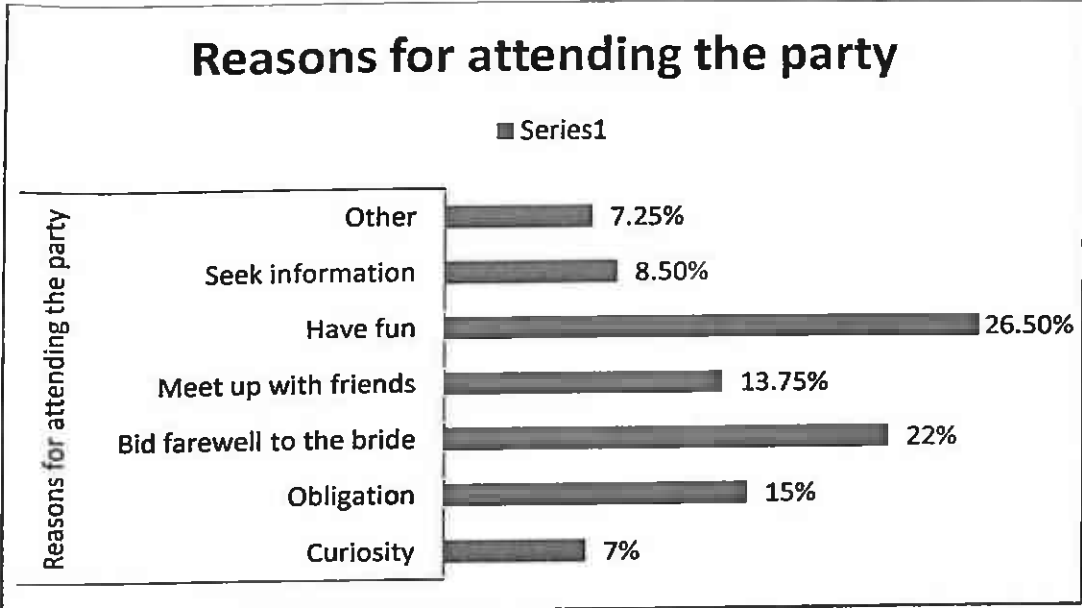
“most of the times, bridal showers are done as a formality where a party is organized just because it is expected of friends or family to throw a party for the one getting married and others for fun where importance is not placed on marital advice for the bride but entertainment and meeting people. But I wish they were taken more seriously. Done with the right perspective they would add value not only to the bride but also to everyone who participates”,

The KI highlights how important a tool, bridal showers can be especially when it comes to marital advice. As seen from the literature review, most communities in Kenya like the Digo, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin, Kikuyu e.t.c. were committed to gender socialization and saw the importance of educating their girls who were about to get married on the important roles they were going to take up in marriage.

From observation in this study, women take this opportunity to meet up, make new connections, reconnect with the long lost friends and also have a free environment to talk about life and sex without hindrance. The respondents had many reasons for attending the party. Some (5%) said they were curious to know what goes on in the so called bridal showers having attended none before. Others stated that they wanted to know more about sex and marriage especially from people who had gone ahead and also have their questions answered. Others (3%) stated they were interested in sharing their life experiences stating the realities of marriages. A few women (16%) stated that they had gone because it was out of obligation and just wanted to be there for the bride as a friend. Some respondents (27%) said they had gone to have as much fun and unwind away from their busy work schedules. Others (13.75%) went to meet up with friends whom they had not seen for a long while. The rest (22%) went to bid the bride goodbye as they

tease her and get information about their love story they did not know about. Kenyatta (1965) shows that the bride's age group came to sit and listen to her singing *kerero* songs as she recounted the numerous activities they had done together as the age set brought gifts to the bride. Today though, the bride does not have to sing such songs as she bids her friends farewell.

Fig 4.5: Reasons for Attending Bridal Shower.



4.4.2 Gifts

Traditionally in China, Xi (2011) says brides used to be given a gift of dowry painting by the girl's parents that had 8-10 crude erotic pictures to show them different ways of having sex. In Kenya from the respondents, brides are given some educational books and movies to help them spice up their sexual encounters. Traditionally in Africa only Zambia with Ndembu women came close to where the Chinese were by using phallic objects to demonstrate sexuality and how to maximize sexual pleasure.

Wilson (1961) notes how in the Luo community the bride used to be showered with food and ornaments as presents from her friends. It is clear that traditionally people liked to give gifts in such occasions for the enjoyment of the bride and groom and to wish them well in their new life ahead.

The gifts given to the brides today range from wines and chocolates for the couple's indulgence, sexy lingerie and inner wears to keep the husband eyes interested in the bride, shower gels to keep a clean and nice smelling body especially during honeymoon when sex is considered to be top priority, massage oils and bath salts for the couple to use in relaxation and intimacy, lubricants, condoms, vibrators and cuffs to make their sex lives interesting, towels and bathrobes, wall hangings and paintings to beautify their living room, utensils, kitchen-ware and spices for the bride to be making nice meals for her husband, scented candles to freshen their home, swimming costumes, sandals and beach *lessos* for the bride to use when they go near a water body, pillow cases and bed sheets for the couple to have enough to sleep on, beauty products and jewelry to keep the bride looking beautiful for her husband. Most guests carried snacks for the house with their gift to the bride to lessen the cost for the host providing refreshments. Montemurro (2000) agrees that most gifts given to the bride was mostly for the kitchen and the bedroom as homage to their mothers that they are going to be good wives.

4.4.3 Advice Givers

The role of giving advice traditionally was left to older female relatives. Othieno (1968) and Snell (1954) show how girls were secluded in Nandi and Luo communities to be advised and given lessons on sex and motherhood. This shows the importance of gender socialization where

women receive guidance from well informed people about sex, motherhood and house-keeping.

A woman interviewed in the FGD stated that:

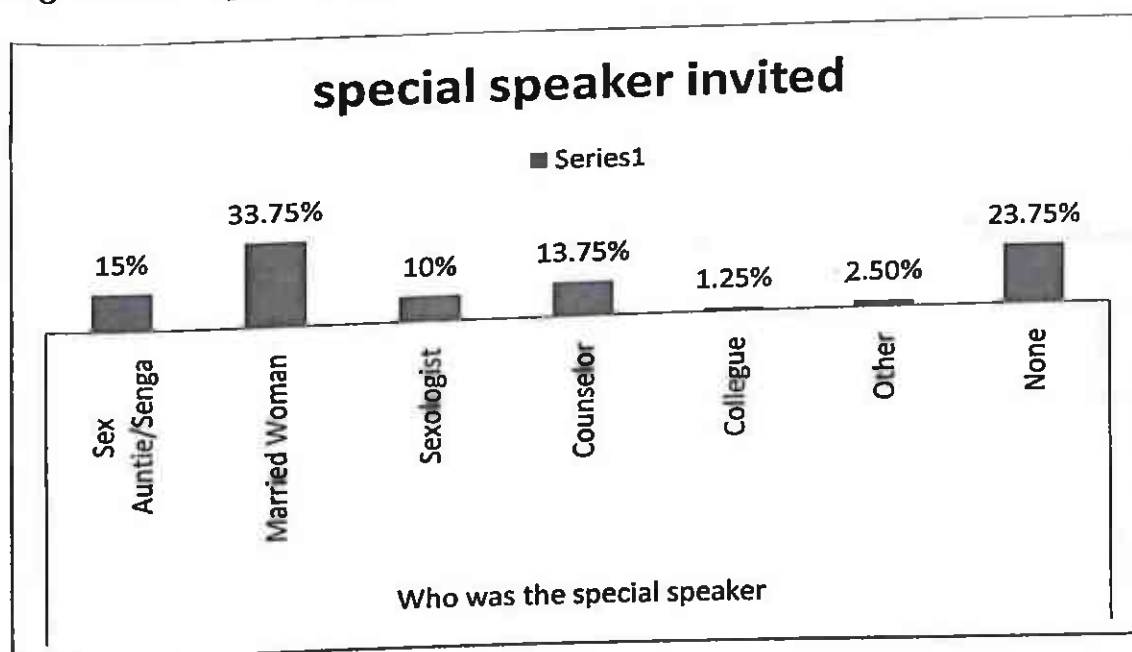
“It was very important to have the right people giving advice to the bride and her single friends because information can be easily twisted and false expectations created in the people’s minds”.

They suggested that a speaker should be objective, trained in the field of counseling especially family or any other related field. One of the KI, a 35 year old male sexologist said that:

“I hold practical workshops for ladies who attend bridal showers and interact with them so that everyone attending the session may leave with information relevant to them. The talks are not based on any religious or traditional background but mainly focus on human sexuality and relationships dynamics”.

This shows the importance of having the right information disseminated. From the respondents the parties attended had speakers as represented in the graph below

Fig 4.6: The Special Speaker Invited



Other special speakers that were mentioned by the respondents were the mothers to the best maid and ladies from the church and one respondent said a stripper who called himself a sex advisor spoke to one of the group. The 'none' group represents a situation where the group gathered and listened to each others' experiences especially from married women and others gave general advice to the bride.

4.4.4 Topics Discussed

Gender roles traditionally were passed by the older relatives to the respective sexes through planned socialization, (Mbunda, 1991). Girls were trained by their aunts, mothers and grandmothers on what was expected of them in the society and boys were trained by their fathers, uncles and grandfathers. It was the role of an old grandmother to teach girls about hygiene, being a proper wife and mother to her children (Othieno, 1968). This was to ensure harmonious living in a family and society. We then sought to examine the topics discussed today in bridal showers.

From the findings, the respondents said topics discussed included being a good wife, what to expect on the honeymoon especially if the brides were not sexually active before their wedding, conflict resolution within a marriage, handling in laws and finances in the home, spicing up the sexual life, how to handle children and lack of them in marriage, hygiene, good grooming and sexual expectations of different men, valuing a spouse and communication as an important tool in marriage, being submissive and holding your tongue as a wife, housekeeping and handling your emotions as a wife, working woman and the different temperaments in people, seducing the

husband and initiating sex, different sex styles, using sex toys and accessories, seeking counsel from the right people and the relationship with God.

From a group discussion, a 27 year old newly-wed woman stated that

“It is important to have the men included in bridal showers so that when advice is being given they can both be reading from the same script especially after marriage and to know what the other spouse expects from them”.

This highlighted the need for men to have a similar session of advice or consideration in integrating them in bridal showers.

4.5 Views on Bridal Showers

4.5.1 Opinions of the Party

Of the women interviewed, 90.75% thought the party was likeable, 8% did not like it and 1.25% was indifferent to the party.

“Women often attend bridal showers out of ‘duty’. Interestingly, many women find them boring, socially awkward, or otherwise uncomfortable.” (Pleck, 2000).

A percentage of the respondents (8%) might agree with Pleck.

Some of the reasons the women in the group discussion gave to why they like bridal showers is because of the educational value and vital information offered regarding sex and marriage especially from married women, the relaxed atmosphere that surrounds the party, the fulfillment of a need to be there for their friend on an important day of her life. One of the respondents, a brides- to-be stated:

“It provided an opportunity to be showered with gifts for the brides by her friends and love is expressed when friends come to bid farewell, the entertainment offered and games played are fun and the reconnection with long lost friends is invaluable”.

This show how much some brides appreciate bridal showers. This is because they feel valued and loved. Those who did not like bridal showers said it is because of the financial obligation that needs to be met because one has to buy a gift for the bride-to-be and also contribute to funding the party which could be very expensive depending on the number of activities expected to be engaged in. Others mentioned that some bridal showers get out hand with people drinking too much and misbehaving. For some, male exotic dancers being present posed a moral dilemma for them and they were not comfortable with the idea of naked men dancing in front of them. Some stated that some sex aunties (these are older women past the child bearing age who come to talk to women about gratifying sex techniques) revealed too much information which the respondents were not comfortable with or their demonstration were too graphic. Other's stated the prying nature some of these parties have on the bride's life is wrong and sometimes bad advice and very high and fake expectations can be made which could easily destroy a marriage. From a group discussion, women sited the importance of vetting the people who come to give talks in the bridal showers to make sure that information passed is sober and quality.

4.5.2 Disadvantages of Bridal Showers

When asked if there was any disadvantage of bridal showers, 51.25% said yes and 48.75% said no. The ministry assistant who works in church and was one of the KI stated that:

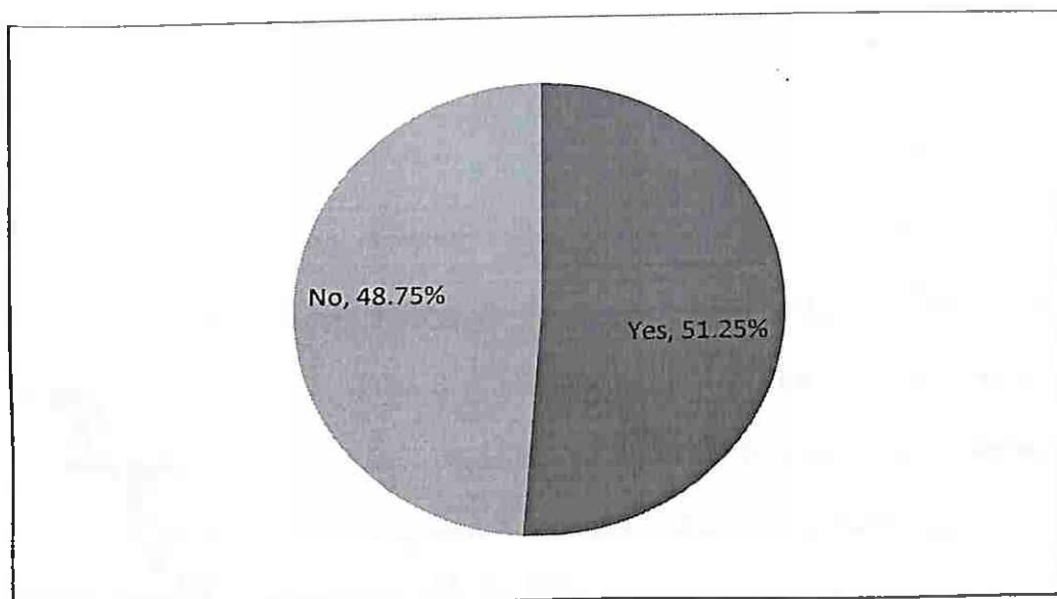
“one disadvantage of bridal showers were cases of when male exotic dancers are invited and the party gets out of hand as women take too much alcohol and start misbehaving some going to the extent of having sex with these dancers”.

Some respondents said the disadvantages ranged from the financial obligation tied to these parties, others mentioned the commercialization of marriage and sex education because speakers like sexologists charge a fee to come and advice, others mentioned that if the right speaker is not

invited there could be misinformation and false expectations created for the bride after marriage, others said that some people invited to speak have same templates for marriage advice which is not valuable because individuals are different hence need for realistic views and speakers, the bride could change her mind on marriage after hearing scary stories from other peoples' marriage experience seeing that it is not what she wants out of a married life. One respondent who was a bride stated that:

“Attention given to the bride was too much for me to handle and some of the prying questions asked and games played can be annoying”.

Fig 4.7: Are There Any Disadvantages of Bridal Shower Response.



From the survey sample, 95% of the respondents said they support the idea of bridal showers and 90% said they would wish or would have wished to have a bridal shower because of the preparatory aspect it has on brides before marriage and many other perks that have been stated above.

4.5.3 Changes Desired in Bridal Showers

When asked if there was any kind of change the respondents would want incorporated in bridal showers, 43.8% of the respondents stated that there were a few changes that could be done to make bridal showers better. The rest (56.25%) were okay with how bridal showers were conducted.

Some of the changes suggested were that the groom should have a similar type of informative session or be invited to the bridal shower to listen to what women expect and look forward to in marriages. A respondent suggested that:

“ Male counselors should be invited in such events because the women give information from second hand experience and open mindedness should be used when it comes to topics of love and sex, realistic experiences to be given since marriage is not always a bed of roses”.

A Christian respondent cited that spiritual guidance should be included in the bridal showers and biblical perspective on marriages shared. Professional counselors should also be invited who specialize in family counseling. Another respondent stated family planning should be discussed in bridal showers, one of the respondents suggested that the bridal shower be a fun activity only without advice because marriages differ from each other. Two respondents claimed that time always seem to run out, so if bridal showers had more time added to them they would be happy.

A liberal respondent suggested:

“Male exotic dancers should be always available in the bridal showers for entertainment.”

One bride to be said that a wedding planner should be invited to advice on how to make the wedding day as stress free as possible. All the key informants agreed that the speaker invited to

speakers on these occasions should do a thorough research on issues affecting women especially in marriage and should at least have a course in counseling so that information may be delivered in the right way. Three women from the group discussions cited that:

“Some sex aunts who are invited to these occasions can sometimes get too graphical especially when demonstrating sexual techniques and this can easily gross people out. Therefore wisdom should be used to determine how much is too much”.

In conclusion, getting married is one of the most celebrated and revered transitions in a woman's life. Therefore, many rituals and events exist to prepare a woman to become a wife. Bridal shower is one of those that is most steeped in tradition. It may be viewed as an event in which women friends and family members must participate either as a form of bidding farewell or orienting a woman to her new wifely duties.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the study that was conducted.

Included in this summary are a review of the study results, conclusions and discussion.

Recommendations for further research and possible studies conclude this chapter.

5.2 Summary and Conclusion

The study achieved its objectives as follows.

5.2.1 Evolution of Bridal Showers

As seen from the literature review Montemurro (2006) states, bridal showers started as a way of helping a loved young Dutch miller get a wife and settle down by the community bringing him house wares. Then it evolved to bourgeois mothers being made for pamphlets in the 1830's to educate their daughters on sexuality and reproduction on their wedding night, Stewart (1997). Then Pleck (2000) observed that women graduated to putting gifts in a parasol and the bride had to pass under and get showered with gifts hence the term bridal showers.

Traditionally in Kenya among the Kikuyus, Kenyatta(1965), brides used to be escorted by their age sets and girl friends of the age groups and given ornaments, kitchen ware and a few other gifts as she went on to her married life after being advised on sexuality and motherhood during her initiation ceremony. Othieno (1968) shows how Luo girls used to sleep with their grandmothers so that they may be taught on ways of motherhood and sex before they got married. Fish & Fish (1995) highlights how the Kalenjins used to be gender socialized for a

period of 2-3 years in seclusion, GOK (1987) agrees by showing how the Digo and Duruma were taught on good wifely and other skills. In Tanzania the girls were taught by any older female relative on hygiene, marriage and its privileges, motherhood and duties to their future husbands.

All these examples indicate how important it was for women to be taught on sexuality and motherhood at some point in their life before marriage through planned socialization. This is what bridal showers attempt to do for women today. Ituriu (2010) has shown how women have come up with different themes for these parties to make them more interesting. Unlike in the past where only older female relatives used to take the role of advising a young bride on her future gender roles and marital responsibilities, the duty has fallen on many other additional people like sexologists, newly-wed women, counselors, pastors and sex aunties.

Due to the sexual revolution in 1960, women have become free to express their sexual needs and some are not shy to involve in bacchanalian parties as they term this as the last free pass they are going to get before they are tied in matrimony.

From all of these examples we see how bridal showers have grown and changed over a long period of time. For example advice in bridal showers are nowadays offered by anyone ranging from pastors, newly-wed women, male counselors and sexologist unlike in the past where such roles were left for older women relatives who used to guide young girls on their marital responsibilities. The duration of these events has also changed over time, for example among the Kalenjin (Fish & Fish, 1995) mention it used to take a period of 2-3 years in seclusion. This is not possible due to formal education and professional demands that are required of the women

today. Hence this event has been squeezed to take hours instead of the years it used to last. As seen from the literature review, most communities and religious groups valued and required sexual purity before marriage. Today, sexual purity is not a must before marriage and there are no ways put to enforce that. In the Luo community, the bride was escorted by her age-set group of girls so that they may bring the news back to her village and parents if the girl was a virgin. If she was it brought honour to the parents. These are the mechanisms that had been put to ensure sexual chastity was observed among the Luo. They no longer exist as many people enjoy the come-we-stay relationships.

5.2.2 How Bridal Showers are Experienced and Practiced in Kenya Today.

Evidence has shown that much has changed around bridal showers due to varying customs, social groups and practices but the basic format has remained over time in that matrimonial gifts and advice are given to the bride and her friends come to bid her farewell during this occasion.

The groom and maid of honor come together with a couple of the bride's close friend to plan and execute bridal showers. The groom's role most of the time is to bring the bride to the party without her knowledge.

The party is mostly organized in homely settings (88% of the data collected) because of the privacy and type of discussions held in these events. When the bride-to-be comes in and they surprise her, they start eating and playing ice breaking games as people get to know each other. The bride is put in the centre and sometimes asked questions after which advice is offered to her mostly by married women. If a special speaker was invited, fig 4.6 (page 69) shows that sometimes speakers are invited, this is the opportunity they are given to address the bride and

offer her advice. The bride is then offered gifts that are symbolic of the new roles she will be undertaking as a wife which range from kitchenware to help her cook and present good food to her husband, bathroom products to maintain cleanliness and hygiene, clothes, accessories, cosmetics and decoration to make sure the bride is at her best every time to please her husband. In some parties the person giving the gift is asked to say why they brought that specific gift and how to use it. Nowadays the parties can be arranged in many themes and gifts are brought in line with the themes chosen. After this a cake is cut and guests are free to leave at pleasure as people ask questions and interact some more and sometimes more entertainment is offered. The setting of the party can slightly change or be customized according to the bride's culture, social class and religion.

5.2.3 Significance and Importance of Bridal Showers.

It is very important for one to be guided when getting into new territory by some people who have been there before. This is done to help the person settle in well and know what to do when posed with questions. This statement also applies when one is getting into marriage. There are so many new things that one encounters when they get married. If one knew what to expect prior, then the journey becomes easier and enjoyable. Gender socialization is one of the roles bridal showers play very well. They guide a new bride on matrimonial responsibilities expected of her and advised on the new roles that are going to be added to the ones she already has. It was discovered from the findings that apart from married women, there are many authorities that a bride-to-be can listen to and be helped when settling into her new life. They include; older experienced women, sexologist, pastors, counselors, sex aunties and newly-wed women.

Fig 4.5 (on page 64) portrays some of the reasons why people attend bridal showers. To have fun away from demanding schedules, to meet friends, to give and receive advice, to show unity and love by gathering to bid the bride farewell. Bridal showers also act as a place where long lost friends come to reconnect and catch up as they discuss matters affecting them as women without reserve. It also helps single women who aspire to get married to get information needed to be good home makers and wives to their future husbands.

From the findings, bridal showers provide the opportunity for the bride-to-be to receive generous gifts from her friends that will help her accomplish her marital responsibilities which range from kitchen ware, bathroom products, bedroom and living room ornaments and accessories which helps the bride to perform her expected roles as a wife like cooking, cleaning and maintaining a sexually satisfied husband in her marriage.

Therefore, bridal showers do not only benefit the bride-to-be, but also the women who come for them due to the information shared, fun activity engaged in and the cathartic effect they have on everyone as it is an open environment where people are free to talk and hear each other's views.

5.2.4 Factors behind the Growing Popularity of Bridal Showers

From Table 4.3 (page 54), we see that more than 85% of the women who are involved in bridal showers are professionals. Meaning they have busy working schedules to maintain and have few opportunities to sit back and relax as they interact with friends and other women. Bridal showers offer this opportunity whereby women sit and talk about issues affecting them. Sex is not a very common topic in many circles and bridal showers provide an opportunity where sex talk can be

discussed and laughed about as women interact and offer advice to the bride-to-be and sometimes special speakers like sexologists and sex aunties are invited and uncommon knowledge is shared about sexuality in these forums.

Bridal showers also offer women with the time to bid their friends who are getting married farewell as well as meet up with long lost one making it like a friends gathering because common friends of the brides are invited.

Apart from learning, women get to play ice breaking games which are fun and relaxing as they offer entertainment for these women and they get to shower the bride with gifts which at times can be naughty and interesting

5.2.5 Attributes of the People Involved in Bridal Showers

Table 4.1 (on page 49) show that 69% of the respondents who attended bridal showers are from the age range of 26-33 years old while 13% are aged 18-25 and the rest 34-41 years old. The marital status of majority (62%) of the respondents is single. These shows how eager single women are to prepare themselves emotionally and information-wise for their future roles as wives and mothers through group socialization. It also shows how the marrying age has risen from the past where women used to get married very early in life so that they can improve their social status through marriage and child bearing. Today education and professions are providing that opportunity for improving an individuals' social status therefore women are in no hurry to get married and get children. Most of the respondents 94% as table 4.2 (on page 53) shows have gone through tertiary education and 85% are professionals in different fields. This shows that

women who participate in these parties are learned and work in different professional fields. Traditionally, formal education was non-existent hence a girl's sole purpose in life was to get initiated, get married and provide many children for her husband. These roles have since changed as formal education was introduced and other priorities rose from it. Majority of the respondents were Christians forming 98% of the respondents.

5.3 Recommendation

5.3.1 Policy Making

Based on the findings of this study that was to examine the importance and significance of bridal showers in socializing young women to assume into their marital roles today, it is clear that stake holders have different perception regarding the overall quality of the whole occasion. In order to address these differences, it is recommended that speakers and advisors in bridal showers have a policy that provides a common forum depending on the cultural and religious affiliations, where feedback can be given to them directly so that they may know what issues women would want dwelled on in such occasions and what other things they can improve on.

Traditionally, older people in the community used to take seriously the role of molding children into well respected adults through informal ways of education. They used to pass the customs through stories and taboos and inform the children about the dangers and punishments that awaited the disobedient people. When the children got to puberty, they were advised on the gender roles required of them in marriages and how to live harmoniously with each other. This no longer happens due to formal education and sometimes parents being too busy to spend time with their children and be role models or direction pointers. Seeing how important a role it is

preparing children and young people on their gender roles, policy makers should come up with a way of making sure that not only are children taught about their gender differences in school but also about their gender responsibilities as they grow up. Policy makers should come up with a way (like an institute) to make sure that when a child gets to puberty, they undergo a training on their expected gender and sexual roles in adolescence, marriage and parenthood. This could possibly discourage under age marriages as teenagers feel they are not appropriately equipped for marriage before the age of 18.

5.3.2 Programmatic Integrations

Programs should also be established by NGOs and religious groups based on the cultural background to make sure that before young people get married they are well guided by older people who have gone through or are specialized in marriage on the roles expected of them in marriage and family, seeing that formal education has taken over the time of what used to be the informal way of socializing young people before wedlock. This could improve morality as correct relations are emphasized on, maintenance of the family as a unit and ensuring harmonious relationships in society at large.

More importantly there should be post marital counseling where the newly-wed bride can get more information because sometimes in bridal showers the bride is given too much information which sometimes she is not able to process it all due to the time factor and experience. Hence post marital counseling should be able to take care of these and also handle other questions that arise for the new bride as she now experiences marriage first hand.

5.3.3 Further Research Studies

Additional studies could address several issues that emerged in this study. The respondents in this study were from the urban area of Nairobi, it would be important to determine whether women in other parts of the country share the same or different perceptions as reported by their colleagues in this study.

It would also be important to conduct a study that examines if men have an equally educational forum where their gender roles are passed and sexuality discussed in an open and informative manner.

From this study's response, it has stood out that learned, professional women are the ones who mostly hold these bridal showers. A study should be conducted specifically for the unlearned, non professional woman, to see if they have a similar event and if not, for it to be introduced because it is important for every woman as the study indicated.

Finally, a study could be conducted on other forums where men and women are socialized into their respective gender roles in society before marriage and how effective they are to the society at large.

5.4 Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate a positive perception by women regarding bridal showers 91% saying they liked it and would have loved to have one made for them. These parties socialize a bride to her assume her matrimonial duties by giving advice and gifts that are going to help her achieve her marital responsibilities as a wife. The respondents, while acknowledging some

unsatisfactory conditions, they reported that bridal showers are a very important socializing event in any woman's life. They teach a woman how to relate with the husband, what is expected of her, cleanliness and hygiene, how to handle finances in marriage, children and in-laws and bettering her sexuality in the bedroom. Women interviewed indicated that in overall they are proud and happy about the quality and purposes bridal showers serve in the community. They reported that many women who have gone through bridal showers prior to their weddings are better equipped and comfortable in adjusting to marriage. The respondents said they have information to improve and better equip bridal showers so that they may serve the upcoming brides in a better and efficient way. This helps in vetting the speakers to these occasions, providing entertainment that is best suited for everyone in the event, cultural or religious based advice and better time management.

In conclusion, I think bridal showers are a very important rite of passage for every woman despite their culture, religion or background. This is because of the informative nature it has on equipping a young woman's journey into marriage and motherhood. It also has a unifying effect on women and offers a good way to have cathartic release.

REFERENCES

- Adèr , H., Mellenbergh, G., & Hand, D. (2008). Advising on research methods: a consultant's companion. Huizen: Johannes van Kessel Publishing.
- Amadiume, I. (2007) Sexuality, African Religio-Cultural Traditions and modernity: expanding the lens. Department of Religion, 6036, Thorton hall, Hannover NH03755, USA,
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. General Learning Press.
- Barber, Katherine, ed. (2004). *Canadian Oxford dictionary* (2 ed.). Oxford [Oxfordshire]: Oxford University Press
- Becker, H. (1958) "Problem of interference and proof in participant Observation," *American Sociology review*, 23 pg652-659
- Billingham, M. (2007) Sociological Perspectives p.336. In Stretch, B. and Whitehouse, M. (eds.) (2007) *Health and Social Care Book 1*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Blumer, H. (1950) *American Journal of sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago press.
- Blumer, H. (1969) *Symbolic Interactionism; Perspective and Method*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall
- Bodgan, R & Taylor, S. (1975) *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods*. New York: John Wiley and sons.
- Cagnolo, I., (1933) *The Agikuyu, their customs traditions and folklore*. Nairobi: Wisdom Graphics.
- Caldwell, J. C. and Pat Caldwell, (1987). The Cultural context of high fertility in Sub-
- Carley, K. (1990). "Content Analysis." In Asher, R. (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*. Edinburgh: Pergamon Press.
- Cochran, W.(1977). *Sampling Techniques* (Third ed.). Wiley.
- Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications. Inc
- Duran, B. (1997). Defining Marriage and Legitimacy. *current anthropology* 38(2):237-254
- Edmondson, R (2011). Seven issues to address in premarital counseling. www.ronedmondson.com/2011
- Esat, F.(2003). *Social Construction of Sexual Knowledge: Exploring the narratives of South African youth of Indian Descent in the context of HIV Aids*, Rhodes University Thesis.
- Fetterman, D. (1989). *Ethnography: Step by Step*. Applied Social Research Methods Series, Vol. 17. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Fish, B.& Fish, G. (1995) *The Kalenjin heritage: Traditional, religious and social practices*.Pg 96. Nairobi: Kenwide Media
- Gatenjwa N. (1988). *Education function of Gikuyu rites of passage: A case study of circumcision songs and dances*. Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi
- Gilligan, C. (1977). *In a different voice: women's conceptions of self and of morality*. Harvard Educational Review.Pp.481-517.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Goldbeer, R.(2004) "Courtship and sexual freedom in eighteenth century America". *OAH Magazine of History July pg 9*.Maghis.Oxfordjournals.org
- Goldenberg,S .(2002) "Evaluation Criterion," *Thinking Methodologically*, p99
- Government of Kenya (1987) *Kwale District Social Cultural profile*.*Ministry of planning and National Development & Institute of African Studies*.Nairobi: University of Nairobi
- Government of Kenya (1987). *Kenya socio-cultural profiles report*. KwaleDistrict: a joint research and training project of the Ministry of Planning and National Development, and the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi
- Guba, E., & Lincoln, Y. (1981).*Effective Evaluation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- H BOMB magazine vol 5
- Harris, J. (1995). *Where is the child's environment? A group socialization theory of development* .*Psychological Review*, 102(3), pp. 458-489
- Heale, M. (2001). *The Sixties in America: History. Politics and Protest*. Edinburg: University Press
- Huberman, M. & Miles, M. (1994) *Data Management and Analysis Methods*.
- Hughes, K. (2004)*Anti-Bride Etiquette Guide: The rules- and how to bend them*. San Francisco. Chronicles Books
- Ikamari, L. (2005)*The effect of education on the timing of marriage in Kenya*. Rostock:Germany.www.demographic-research.org/Volumes/Vol12/1
- Imanyara, A.M. (1992) *Restatement of Bantu Origin and Meru history*. Longman Kenya
- K'aoko D. (1986) *Luo Circumcision Rites*.
http://kenyastockholm.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/luocircumcisionrites_03.pdf
- Kenyatta J. (1965) *Facing Mount Kenya: The traditional life of the Gikuyu* .Fetterman,

- Kipkorir, B.(1973) *The Marakwet of Kenya: A preliminary study*. Pg 63. Nairobi: East Africa Literature Bureau
- Lefrancois, G (2006). *Theories of Human Learning: What the old woman said*. University of Alberta: Thomson Learning Academic Resource centre
- Lincoln, Y., &Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. (1995). *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, 3rd Ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Machayo, J.(1991) *The ambiguous nature of freedom in the Luhya ritual ceremony song texts*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi
- Macionis, J., &Gerber, L (2011). *Sociology*. Toronto: Pearson Canada
- Martin, J. (1999). *Miss Manners on Weddings*. New York: Crown Publishers. pp. 65, 125.
- Martin, J. (2002). *Miss Manners' Guide to Rearing Perfect Children*. New York: Fireside Books
- Mbiti S. (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy*. London: Heinmann
- Mbunda, D. (1991), *Traditional Sex education in Tanzania*.The Margaret Sanger Center
- McLuhan, E (1996). *The source of the term 'global village'* McLuhan studies retrieved 2012-08-10
- Meltzer B, Petras J. & Reynolds L. (1975). *Symbolic Interactionism: Genesis, Varieties, and Criticism*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Montemurro B. (2002), *Abington: Symbolic interaction*,volume25.number1 pg 67-92, Journals division, 2000 Center st,Ste 303 Berkeley
- Montemurro,B. (2006),*Origin of Bridal showers and bachelorette parties*. Something old, Something bold. Rutgers: University Press.pp21-22
- Muthoni, M. (2009) *Sexologists irrelevant in Kenya*; Standard Digital News, Nov 21, 2009
- Nachmias, C. &Nachmias, D. (2008).*Research methods in the Social Sciences: Seventh Edition* New York, NY: Worth Publishers
- Nyambura G. (1980) *Dissertation: Customary and African Christian marriages in Kenya today*.
- Olayo R. (2012) *Traditional approaches to Sexual Health in enhancing adolescent health: a new approach to public Health*. Great Lakes University of Kisumu
- Omidhe, S. (1952) *The Luo girl from Infancy to marriage*. Nairobi: Macmillan and Co Ltd
- Oparanya, W. (2010) *2009 Population and Housing Census results*. Nairobi: Kenya Census 2009.
- Ormrod, J.E. (1999). *Human learning (3rd ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall

- Othieno, N. (1968) Luo Social systems with specific analysis of marriage rituals. Equitorial publishers limited. P15
- Otnes, C,&Pleck E. (2003) The engagement Complex. Cinderella dreams: The allure of the lavish wedding. University of California press.pp72-73
- Patton, M. (1990).*Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, 2nd Ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.Planned Parenthood of New York City, Inc.USA
- Pleck, E. (2000) Celebrating the Family: Ethnicity, Consumer culture and family Rituals. Cambridge: Harvard University Press,. p213
- Ritzer,G. and Goodman, D. (2004). *Sociological Theory: Sixth Edition*. Columbus, OH: McGraw Hill.
- Rosenberg A. (2010) The changing Sexual Practices of the Maasai women of EngareSero.
- Rotherman, M., &Phinney, J. (1987). Children's ethnic socialization: Pluralism and development (pp. 10-28). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Saharan Africa.*Population and Development Review*, 13(3): 409-437.
- Schaeffer, D. (2009). Social and personality development. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Schalock, H., Schalock, M., &Girad, G. (In press). Teacher work sample methodology, as used at Western Oregon State College. In J. Millman, Ed., *Assuring Accountability? Using Gains in Student Learning to Evaluate Teachers and Schools*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin.
- Snell, G. (1954) Nandi Customary law. London: Macmillan& Co ltd.
- Stewart, M. (1997) "'Science is Always Chaste': Sex Education and Sexual Initiation in France, 1880s–1930s." *Journal of Contemporary History* 32: 381–395.
- Westoff, C. (1992). Age at Marriage, Age at first Birth and Fertility in Africa.
- White, G. (1977) Socialization. London: Longman
- WHO (2012)adolescent pregnancy. WHO media center
- WHO (2013), Female genital mutilation.WHO media centre.
- Wilson, G., (1961) Luo Customary Laws and Marriage laws. Nairobi: Government printer.
- World Bank Technical Paper # 169*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank

Internet Sources.

- Biche (2009) Chick about town; Living and lifestyle in East Africa. *Ramblings about Bridal shower* <http://chickabouttown.com/2009/07/09/ramblings-about-bridal-showers>
- Bridal bliss Kenya (2011) Bridal shower tips: Creating a beautiful Bridal shower. <http://bridalblisskenya.com/433/bridal-shower-tips-2>
- Callaway, N.(2012) Throwing a great bridal shower. Accessed on 10/6/2013
- Courtney, D. (2012) Overview of Indian Folk Music. Accessed on 13/08/2012 [http://chandranantha.com/articles/indian music/folk music.html](http://chandranantha.com/articles/indian%20music/folk%20music.html)
- Finke, J. (2007) Meru People. Accessed on 4/6/2013. <http://weddings.about.com/od/theweddingparty/a/showerbasics.htm>
<http://www.bluegecko.org/kenya/tribes/meru/lifestages.htm>
<http://www.infotrackea.co.ke/articles>
- Ituriu, M (2010) Bridal Shower themes. <http://www.weddingskenya.com/articles/bridal-shower-themes-trendy-to-avant-garde>
- Julie (2012) lessons from a bridal shower. Standard Digital. [http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/?articleID=2000068270&story_title=Magazines: %20Lessons%20from%20a%20bridal%20shower](http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/?articleID=2000068270&story_title=Magazines:%20Lessons%20from%20a%20bridal%20shower)
- Lowry, M (2012) History of bridal showers. www.margilowry.com/history-of-bridal-showers
- Mbuvi, M.(2013) Come we stay relations. Infotrack East Africa Articles accessed on 3/6/2013
- Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance (2006-12-31). "Human sexuality and gender topics: Subjects of major concern to many faith groups". Religioustolerance.org. Retrieved 2007-02-04.
- Premarital sex. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Premarital_sex
- Wendy, P. (2013), Maid of honour: Her duties in detail. Wedding.theknot.com
Wikipedia accessed on 09/02/2012. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bachelorette_party.
- Xi, S. (2011) Historical Changes in Chinese women, Chinese Traditional Culture; Sex Education. <http://www.womenofchina.cn/html/womenofchina/report/136198-1.htm>.
<http://www.sino-impression.com/Culture2009113163549.html>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Date:

Questionnaire No:

Introduction

Good morning/Evening,

My name is Naomi Njonjo, a Masters Student at the University of Nairobi taking a course in Sociology. I am doing a research on how women are socialized today into their gender roles before marriage, specifically focusing on Bridal showers. Your response will go very far in helping to establish whether Bridal showers are helpful in their role of introducing a woman to her future roles. I assure you that your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

The questionnaire will take about 20min.

Are you willing to participate?

- Yes.....(continue with the interview)
- No.....(Terminate the interview)

I will start with personal information. Kindly fill in the questions below.

Respondents Profile

Tick where appropriate

1. Name (Very optional).....

2. Age

- 1. 18-25
- 2. 26-35
- 3. 36-50
- 4. 50+

3. Marital Status

- 1. Single
- 2. Married
- 3. Divorced
- 4. Widowed

5. Other (Specify).....

4. What is your highest level of education?

- 1. None
- 2. Primary
- 3. Secondary
- 4. College/University
- 5. Other (Specify).....

5. Main occupation?

- 1. Student
- 2. Housewife
- 3. Professional (Specify).....
- 4. Businesswoman (Specify).....
- 5. Other (Specify).....

6. Religion?

- 1. Christian
- 2. Muslim
- 3. Hindu
- 4. Atheist
- 5. Other (Specify).....

Awareness of bridal showers.

7a. Have you ever heard about bridal showers?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If yes,

7b. Describe what you understand a bridal Shower to be.

.....
.....

7c. How did you come to learn of it?

- 1. Colleagues
- 2. Friends
- 3. Family
- 4. Media (Specify).....
- 5. Other (Specify).....

8a. Have you ever attended a bridal shower?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If yes,

8b. At what age did you attend your first bridal shower party?

- 1. Under 18 years
- 2. 18-25
- 3. 26-30
- 4. Above 31 years

8c. How many bridal shower parties have you attended over the past one year?

- 1. 1
- 2. 2-4
- 3. 5-10
- 4. 10-20
- 5. above 20

8d. Whose party was it that you last attended?

- 1. Friend
- 2. Relative
- 3. Workmate
- 4. Acquaintance
- 5. Other (Specify).....

8e. From whom did you learn of the bridal shower party above?

- a. Family

- b. Friends
- c. Groom
- d. Bride
- e. Guests
- f. Others (Specify).....

8f. When did you attend the party above?

- 1. Within the last 3 Months
- 2. Within the last 6 months
- 3. Within the last one year
- 4. More than 1 year ago

8g. Do you like attending bridal shower parties?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

8h. What is the reason for the answer in 8g?

.....

.....

.....

Organization of the bridal shower.

9a. Where was the party that you last attended held?

- 1. House/Home
- 2. Hotel
- 3. Club
- 4. Other (specify).....

9b. Who hosted the last bridal shower party you attended?

- 1. Bride
- 2. Family
- 3. Friends
- 4. Professionals (specify).....
- 5. Other (Specify).....

9c. What was your reason for attending the bridal shower party above?

- 1. Curiosity
- 2. Obligation
- 3. To bid the bride farewell
- 4. To meet up with your friends
- 5. To have fun
- 6. To seek information (Specify).....
- 7. Other (Elaborate).....

9d. Who organized the party?

- 1. Bride
- 2. Groom
- 3. Family
- 4. Friends
- 5. Professionals(Specify)
- 6. Other (Specify).....

9e. Who funded the party?

- 1. Family
- 2. Friends
- 3. Groom
- 4. Bride
- 5. Guests
- 6. Others (Specify).....

9f. What time was the party?

- 1. Morning
- 2. Afternoon
- 3. Evening
- 4. Night

9g. Can you recall approximately how many people attended the party?.....

9h. What was the age group of the attendants?

- 1. 15-20
- 2. 21-25

- 3. 26-30
- 4. Above 30

Party Program

10a. Can you recall the activities that took place in that party?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If yes,.....

10b. What are some of the activities can you remember? List them in order of occurrence

.....

.....

.....

10c. Were you as guests expected to participate in any of these activities?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If yes,.....

10d. What specific activities did you personally participate in?

.....

.....

11a. Did the guests bring/give gifts?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

11b. Were the gifts opened publicly for all to see?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

11c. If yes, Kindly tick what type of gifts were brought on the list below

- Food Stuff (Specify).....
- Clothing (Specify).....
- Bedding (Specify).....
- Bathroom products (Specify).....
- Sex accessories (Specify).....
- Kitchen ware (specify).....
- House décor (specify).....
- Others (specify)

12a. Was there a key advisor (s) or special speaker(s) in the last bridal shower you attended?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

12b. If yes above, who was it?

- 1. Sex Auntie/Senga
- 2. Married woman
- 3. Sexologist
- 4. Counselor
- 5. Colleague
- 6. Other (specify).....

12c. Can you recall what the advisor generally talked about?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

12d. If yes, can you list for me the topics she covered?

.....

.....

.....

13a. Do you think it is important to have a bridal shower party?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

13b. If yes, why do you think so?

.....

.....

.....

14a. In your ethnic community traditionally, was there any occasion that served the same purpose Bridal showers serve today?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

14b. If yes, are there any similarities with bridal showers today?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Please state them

.....

.....

15a. Are there any benefits to holding bridal showers?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

15b. if yes, please state a few.

.....

.....

.....

15c. Are there any disadvantages of holding bridal showers?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

15d. If yes, list these disadvantages.

.....

.....

.....

16a. Do you support the idea of holding bridal shower parties?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

16b. If yes, why?

.....

.....

16c. If no, why?

.....

.....

17. Would you personally wish to have / have had a bridal shower party?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

18. What does your community and friends think about bridal showers?

.....

19a. Are there new things you would want incorporated in bridal shower parties in the future?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

19b. If yes, please state them.

.....

.....

Thank You for your patience and participation.

APPENDIX II: FGD QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions for the FGD

Introduction

Good morning/Evening,

My name is Naomi Njonjo, a Masters Student at the University of Nairobi undertaking Sociology in Counseling. I am doing a research on how women are socialized today into their gender roles before marriage, specifically focusing on Bridal showers. Your response will go very far in helping establish academically in Kenya whether Bridal showers are helpful in their role of introducing a woman to her future roles. I assure you that your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Date:.....

Number of attendees:.....

Location.....

1. What do you understand by the term Bridal shower?
2. When and why are bridal showers held?
3. Is this practice common? If so why?
4. Who is the best person suited to organize this event?
5. Who are the people that participate in bridal showers?
6. Why do people attend Bridal showers?
7. Are there any qualifying factors for any advisor/speaker who is invited to a bridal shower?
8. What are the important issues addressed in this events?
9. Do you think bridal showers are important for women today?

10. What are the advantages of holding this occasion?
11. What are the costs involved in this occasions and who caters for this costs?
12. What activities are best suited for such an occasion?
13. Traditionally, were there any occasions that served the same purpose bridal showers do today?
14. What are the similarities and differences between these traditional practices and bridal showers?
15. What problems are encountered when holding this event?
16. How do you suggest this problems be addressed?

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KEY INFORMANTS.

Date:

Paper No:

Introduction

Good morning/Evening,

My name is Naomi Njonjo, a Masters Student at the University of Nairobi undertaking Sociology in Counseling. I am doing a research on how women are socialized today into their gender roles before marriage, specifically focusing on Bridal showers. Your response will go very far in helping establish academically in Kenya if Bridal showers are helpful in their role of introducing a woman to her future roles. I assure you that your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Are you willing to participate?

- Yes.....(continue with the interview)
- No.....(Terminate the interview)

Kindly answer the following questions below.

1. What is the name of the organization you work for?
2. What position do you hold in that organization?.
3. How Long have you been organizing Bridal showers
4. Every Bridal shower party has its unique characteristics. How do you make this possible in your day to day operations?
5. What are the problems you face when preparing for this sessions?
6. How are you prepared to address all types of social classes in this bridal showers?
7. Do you charge for this events? if yes, what determines the charges you are going to apply?

8. Bridal shower Trainings are sessions that requires informed individuals. Is there a minimum education level required for one to be a trainer?
9. Apart from levels of education, what other measures qualifies a person to be a bride's Trainer?
10. How do you keep yourself up to date with the relevant techniques and knowledge on bridal showers?
11. Is there a certain number required to be in this functions as you train?
12. What are the factors in the wedding planning industry that affect this sessions
13. Is there a way for you to measure the success and effectiveness of a certain session? If yes, how do you go about it?
14. Are there any legal parameters that guide such sessions and training?
15. How do women in general perceive this event and your input towards it?

APPENDIX IV: OBSERVATION CHECK LIST

- 1. What time is the party?**
- 2. Where is the location/venue of the party?**
- 3. How many guests are in the party?**
- 4. What theme or type of party is it?**
- 5. Who is hosting the party?**
- 6. What was expected of the guests?**
- 7. What activity starts in this occasion?**
- 8. List how the program/sessions develop.**
- 9. What kinds of activities take place in the party?**
- 10. Who are the people is in charge of these activities?**
- 11. Is there a special speaker invited to address/advise the guests and the bride?**
- 12. What kind of discussion goes on in these parties.**
- 13. What kinds of gifts have been given to the bride?**
- 14. How have they been presented to the bride?**
- 15. Any other observations.**