

**THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
GIRLS' EDUCATION IN WESTERN KENYA: THE CASE OF BUTERE GIRLS HIGH  
SCHOOL, 1957 – 2007**

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**DECLARATION**

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

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## **DEDICATION**

To my loving parents; Rev Canon Enoch Namulanda and Mrs Consolata Awino Namulanda.

*Their children rise up and call them blessed.....*

*(Proverbs 31:28)*

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.B.S.F.	–	African Biotechnology Stakeholders Forum
A.C.K.	–	Anglican Church of Kenya
A.M.R.E.F.	–	African Medical and Research Foundation
B.G.H.S.	–	Butere Girls High School
B.O.G.	–	Board of Governors
C.B.S.	–	Chief of the Order of the Burning Spear
C.G.I.A.R.	–	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
C.M.S.	–	Church Missionary Society
C.O.G.	–	Church Of God
E.B.S.	–	Elder of the Burning Spear
F.A.M.	–	Friends African Mission
I.C.I.P.E.	–	International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology
K.A.C.C.	–	Kenya Anti - Corruption Commission
K.A.U.	–	Kenya African Union
K.C.S.E.	–	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
K.I.P.I.	–	Kenya Industrial Property Institute
K.I.P.O.	–	Kenya Industrial Property Office
L.N.C.	–	Local Native Council
M.H.F.	–	Mill Hill Fathers
M.H.M.	–	Mill Hill Mission
N.A.C.C.	–	National Aids Control Council
T.S.C.	–	Teachers Service Commission
U.N.	–	United Nations

U.N.E.P.	–	United Nations Environment Programme
U.N.E.S.C.O.	-	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
U.N.I.C.E.F.	–	United Nations children’s Fund
U.N.P.F/C.S.T.A.A.	–	United Nations Population Fund Country Support Team Addis Ababa
U.S.A.	–	United States of America
V.I.D.A.	–	Voluntary Agencies Development Assistance
W.H.O.	–	World Health Organization
W.I.P.O.	–	World Intellectual Property Organization

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study discussed the contribution of the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) in the development of girls' education in Western Kenya. This has been done by documenting the history of Butere Girls High School from 1957 to 2007. The study is based on an analysis of both primary and secondary data. It is a contribution to the study of history of education, specifically the study of Christian missions and development of education in this country.

The study begins by discussing the origin of the C.M.S and its early evangelical and educational activities in Western Kenya. Although the C.M.S work in East Africa started off at the coast in 1844, its spread to Western Kenya was not directly from the coast but via Uganda. Since they used education mainly as a tool for evangelism, they focused on formal education through the school. Their first school to be established in the region was Maseno in 1906. It was described as a Christian base from which the gospel was to be carried far and wide into the surrounding country. From Maseno, the C.M.S moved to Butere in 1912.

Establishment of education for girls in Western Kenya, just like in the rest of the country lagged behind that of boys. When Butere Girls (primary school) was started in 1916, the aim of the C.M.S was not to educate women for employment, but to prepare them for marriage. The purpose of Butere therefore was to train women who would be married to the village Christian elite.

The period after 1945 however saw major changes in education in Kenya as influenced by among other things the effect of the Second World War and the Ten-Year development Plan. The elite of the early inter-war period began challenging missionaries to offer education which would enable social and economic advance. This demand for higher education for girls together with

the implementation of the Beecher Report, among other factors saw the development of Butere Girls to a secondary school in 1957.

After its establishment, Butere developed into a highly performing school and became valued by the community and the entire country. In 1957, it was ranked as the second best protestant girls' high school in the country, after Alliance Girls. Event though, the school faced a number of challenges especially after 1980 mainly concerning infrastructure, management and discipline which stifled its development. As a result, it lost its prestigious position when its performance started dropping in the 1980s. Despite these challenges, the study shows that the school has had a lot of influence to the community especially in educational and socio economic fields.

The study concludes that, the Church Missionary Society made a significant contribution in the development of girls' education in Western Kenya. It demonstrates the importance of education for leadership and empowerment of women.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 THE BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY, PURPOSE AND PROBLEM

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

The development of western education in Africa has been bound up inevitably with missionary work. The earliest contact with western education is attributed to the Portuguese who first came as explorers and settled along the West and East African coasts (Sifuna and Otiende, 1994). Augustinian Friars from Portugal worked at the coast for a short period in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1557, they established a monastery at Mombasa, and about the same time, began work at Faza and Lamu. The Friars confined themselves at the coast where Portuguese administrative influence had been established. Although these missionaries did not remain to take up sustained evangelical work, they however are said to have made sporadic contacts with the local population among whom they are said to have converted six hundred people by 1599. After the departure of the Portuguese, the teachings of the friars died out (Sifuna and Otiende, 1994).

The second wave of Christian missionary activity was that of Ludwig Krapf and Johann Rebmann who arrived at the Kenyan coast in 1844 and 1846 respectively. These two were sent by the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S). The C.M.S, a missionary wing of the Anglican Church, was founded in 1799 following the evangelical revival in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Odwako, 1975).

Krapf and Rebmann moved from Mombasa a predominantly Muslim town and established their first station at Rabai in 1846 among the Mijikenda. It was here where they began the task of setting up a school for rehabilitating the former slave children and provision of industrial

education with a purpose of enabling them to be self-reliant (Anderson, 1970). This followed their rescue by British war ships in the Indian Ocean, after which they were taken to Mombasa.

The abolition of slave trade had far reaching effects on missionary activities. Captured usually from the interior tribes, the freed slaves had somehow to be educated to survive in the alien conditions of the coast. On the other hand if left alone they could be recaptured and turned to slaves. The problem of slaves therefore did much to attract missionaries and the British Government's involvement in missionary enterprise. This led to the establishment of the freed slaves' station at Frere town near Mombasa in 1846. It was a kind of school. By the late 1880s, the school had over 300 pupils. The curriculum emphasized reading, writing and arithmetic(3Rs) and the teaching of English and Kiswahili. Vocational subjects were also taught. Students attended classes in the mornings and did some cultivation in the afternoon hours (Sheffield, 1973).

These early missionary activities were mainly centred along the coastal region. This was due to lack of proper systems of communication and insecurity presented by some hostile communities. This situation however changed with the establishment of the colonial rule in 1895 and the building of the Kenya – Uganda Railway (1895 - 1901). With this, missionary activity spread to the interior (Sifuna, 1994).From Rabai, and the coast in general, the C.M.S. radiated into several parts of Kenya. Western Kenya which was administratively until 1902 part of Uganda was also part of the Uganda Diocese until 1920 when the work of the Uganda Diocese in the area was transferred to Kenya; Diocese of Mombasa.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Annual Report of CMS for Africa and the East,1955/1956

The C.M.S began work at Vihiga in 1905 only to shift to Maseno in 1906 following a mutual agreement with the Friends African Mission (F.A.M.)who had begun work among the Maragoli in 1902 (Osogo, 1994).With Maseno as its base, the C.M.S. moved to Butere in 1912 and established a mission station there. As its second station in the region Butere was chosen, among other reasons, because of the advent of the railway and the perceived threat of Islam (Lohrentz, 1977).At this time, the extension of the Uganda Railway from Kisumu to Mumias was under consideration. The C.M.S. however could not establish a station at Mumias, the preferred choice, because the Catholic Mill Hill Fathers (M.H.F.) had already opened a station there in 1904. They were thus obliged to look elsewhere in compliance with the government policy of requiring a distance of at least ten miles between stations of different societies (Richards 1956, Lohrentz 1977).Buterewas therefore chosen. It was pioneered by Archdeacon Walter Chadwick who started his missionary work in Uganda. In April 1916, Walter Chadwick was joined by his sister Jane Chadwick to begin work among the women and girls in Western Kenya. This laid the foundation of girls' education in the region.

The initial missionary education for girls in Western Kenya however was merely an extension of boys' education. It was to provide empowerment to the African men as opposed to the women and girls to whom it was being offered. Missionaries were mainly concerned with training girls who would later on marry the mission boys. Therefore the main aim of C.M.S. in setting up Butere Girls School in 1916 was to have such work established among the Luyia women and girls. It is worth noting here that formal education for girls by European missionaries was only seriously considered in Western Kenya, after mission boys exerted pressure on their need for marriage partners. In 1913, Yona Orao, one of the senior mission boys at Maseno School had raised the issue with Miss Edith Hill, a visiting missionary from Uganda. He said;

You English people are doing a wrong thing. You are educating and leading us to Christ but you are doing nothing for our girls. In all that mass of huts there is not one Christian girl whom I can marry. Are we to be only half Christian? What will our children be like? (Richards, 1956:25)

In 1924, the colonial administrators' policy on education was influenced by the recommendation of the Phelps-Stokes Commission. The commission was mandated to survey educational programmes and needs and the extent to which they were being met. Among other things the commission considered the education of women and girls as an integral part of the education system (Oldham, 1927).

In 1949, the colonial administration appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Archdeacon Leonard Beecher, "to inquire into the Scope, Content and Methods of African Education". The Beecher report recommended that it was fundamental that boys' and girls' education be placed side by side and principles applied with equal force to both (Beecher Report, 1949). The report also, observed that the few secondary schools at the time were not enough to cope with the increased numbers of primary school leavers. In addressing the problem, the committee recommended the establishment of an additional sixteen secondary schools by 1957 (Beecher Report, 1949). Butere Girls High School, the subject of this study, was among these schools. Others proposed for girls boarding schools in western region were; Ng'iya, Kaimosi, Bunyore, Rang'ala and Eregi.

Butere was started due to the fact that the African Girls High School, Kikuyu (currently the Alliance Girls High School), started in 1948, was unable to satisfactorily meet the demands of Western Kenya. Apart from this, in the early part of 1950s there was political unrest in the country. This unrest was brought about by the state of emergency in the country and was



particularly in the Central Province where this school is situated. As a result, parents in Western Kenya were not very enthusiastic to send their daughters to this troubled area (Odwako, 1975).

Consequently, Butere Girls High School, started in 1957, became the first girls' secondary school in the area. It developed into an important centre for women education in Western Kenya. It is in this context that Butere Girls High School is an important subject of study. Its role in giving the early girls in Western Kenya formal education is of critical importance.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The education of women in Kenya has always been a subject worthy critical investigation. Since history gives insight into the present and future, C.M.S' education for girls in colonial and postcolonial Western Kenya is an important subject which deserves a serious investigation. Although a number of studies have already been carried out on C.M.S, none of them has focused on the mission's establishment of a girls' secondary school. As a result, the engagement of girls in Western Kenya with mission education has received very little focus. The historical development of Butere Girls High School in this region has also not been documented; despite its being the first girls' C.M.S. secondary school in Western Kenya. After its establishment, this school became an excellent institution, the second ranked African Girls High school in early 1957. Its role in transforming the lives of girls and women in the country deserves documentation.

This study set out to investigate the role of C.M.S. in the establishment and development of girls' education in Western Kenya. This has been done by focusing on the establishment and development of Butere Girls High School from 1957 to 2007. Efforts have also been made to

show the impact of this school on the educational aspirations of the local community and the entire country.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to examine the role of the Church Missionary Society in the development of girls' education in Western Kenya.

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. Examine the role of the Church Missionary Society in the establishment and development of Butere Girls High School.
2. Trace the historical development of Butere Girls High School from 1957 to 2007.
3. Analyse the influence of the school on the educational aspirations of girls and women in Western Kenya.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

To realize the above objectives, the study set out to answer the following research questions:

1. What role did the Church Missionary Society play in the establishment and development of Butere Girls High School?
2. What factors led to the establishment of Butere Girls High School?
3. How did Butere Girls High School develop from 1957 to 2007?
4. How did the establishment of Butere Girls High School influence educational aspirations of the local community and contribute to the development of girls' education in Western Kenya?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The study on the establishment and development of girls' education is very important. Today as we grapple with the role of education in empowering women, history gives insight into the present and shapes the future. The study of the educational activities of the C.M.S. is vital because this mission group was one of the most influential missions that not only evangelized but also established many educational institutions in Western Kenya in general.

This study, apart from giving due recognition to the C.M.S, an organization which has contributed a lot to the development of education in this country, has also come up with findings which have added new knowledge to the development of history of education in Kenya.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study analysed the role of the C.M.S in the development of girls' education in Western Kenya. However, not all C.M.S mission girls' schools were studied as it basically focused on the historical development of Butere Girls High School as a case study for this investigation. The study mainly concerned itself with the C.M.S' educational activities in Western Kenya especially the events leading to the establishment and development of Butere Girls High School. The findings of this study may not apply to the educational activities of C.M.S in other parts of the country.

The year 1957 was taken as ideal to begin this study because this is the year when Butere Girls High School was started. This was in response to the increased demand for more secondary education for girls. Butere Girls High School became the first girls' secondary school established by the C.M.S. in Western Kenya. On the other hand, 2007 was deemed the appropriate year to terminate the study. This is because it is this year when the school held her Golden Jubilee

celebrations. Secondly, this enabled the researcher ample time to give a detailed account of Butere Girls School and its contribution to the community and the nation as a whole.

### **1.7 Limitations**

This study relied heavily on opinions of people who witnessed some of the activities of the C.M.S missionaries, such as priests, head teachers, teachers, administrators and old students. Opinions of people while reporting on events however tend to differ depending on varied factors that shape such opinions. To reduce the effects of these limitations on the results of the study; the researcher used a large sample of informants that corroborated conflicting viewpoints and opinions.

### **1.8 Operational Definitions**

**Evangelization** has been used to refer to the process of persuading Africans to accept the new faith and the white man's belief system.

**Missionary** is used to refer to European Christians who claimed to have the burden of educating and spreading the Good news to Africans.

**Secondary school** in this study has been used to refer to the second level of formal education which comes after primary school, is offered in four years and which then leads to higher education.

### **1.9 Organization of the Project**

This project was organized in eight chapters. Chapter one introduced the study and included the background, statement of the problem, significance and scope of the study. Chapter two reviewed

related literature, while chapter three dealt with the methodology used in the study. Chapter four analysed the C.M.S. origins and early activities in Butere. Chapter five dealt with the establishment and development of Butere School from 1916 to 1957 while chapter six dealt with the Girls School from 1957 to 2007. Chapter seven then analysed the influence of Butere Girls High School to the local community. Finally, chapter eight gave the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study after which suggestions for further research was made.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, literature which is related to this study was analysed and discussed. Many studies have been carried out on Christian missions and education in Africa. A few of these works, deemed most relevant to the topic of study, have been reviewed so as to inform and clarify the study. The literature reviewed focuses on: the development of Western education in Africa, the development of Western education in Kenya, the C.M.S. and education in Western Kenya, education for girls and Butere School and its influence to the community.

#### **2.2 The Development of Western Education in Africa**

The history of Western education in many African countries is basically interwoven with the history of the Christian missions. It is the missionaries who pioneered western education. They took schools as the most effective avenues towards introducing Africans to the new faith.

In documenting the emergence of the African elite in Nigeria during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ajayi (1965) shows clearly how Christian missionaries used the church and the school to bring social changes in Africa. The school introduced to the African new forms of literacy as a means of civilizing them. This according to Ajayi was done through the establishment of boarding schools on mission stations to isolate the African converts from the rest.

Ayandele (1966) contends that in deviating from its evangelical origins and purposes, missionary education came to be embraced by the Africans as a means of being enlightened on their

positions in the colonial period. The impact of the missions on the wider society came to be felt when mission educated Africans became notable nationalists.

Scanlon (1966) however argues that Christian missionaries in Africa tailored education and administered it to serve their own colonial ends. Mutua (1975) contends that early European explorers, missionaries and traders all expressed similar opinions in varying degrees on the characteristics of African people and used this in defining the method and restricting the extent of education that the Africans received.

Kipkorir (1969) argues that missions prepared a better educated African Christian leadership to serve both Europeans and Africans. A similar view is held by Ochwada (2007) who argues that the encounter of Africans with the European colonialists and Christian evangelists at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century opened new frontiers of social relations which brought fundamental changes in the African social relations.

Sifuna (1990) traces the origins of western education in Africa, a process that started with the coming of the Portuguese in 1498. He however shows that education started only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Europeans and American missionary groups targeting ex-slaves saw education as an effective tool for transforming them. Sifuna identifies Christian missionaries as people who played a leading role in introducing Africans to western education, through actively establishing schools.

It is noted that several studies have been carried out on the contribution of various missionary groups to the development of western education in Africa. These studies have shown that the impact of the missions on the wider society came to be felt when mission educated Africans became notable nationalists. However not much has been done to analyse the impact of this

education to the women. This study intends to show how mission educated girls became agents of social change.

### **2.3 The Development of Western Education in Kenya**

In analysing the evolution of formal education in Kenya, Osogo (1971) discusses how formal education was introduced in Kenya by missionaries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and how they established in 1846 the first mission school at Rabai near Mombasa. Bogonko (1992) on the development of western education in Kenya has explored the missionary occupation and their subsequent building of churches and schools.

Connolly (1975) studied the American Missionary Protestant groups in Kenya between the years 1923 and 1946. The work analyses the divergence of theological views and how they affected educational work of the Church of God Mission among others in Kenya. The study contends that much of the education in the church of God mission was on industrial and vocational teaching to produce African men and women who could improve the conditions in their villages.

Kipkorir (1969) while tracing the history of Alliance High School contends that missionary activities led to the emergence of an elite group of people who have served Kenyans in different capacities. He argues that the first modern elites were to be found in the church rather than the state. Osogo (1970) on the other hand looks at the Holy Ghost Fathers towards the development of secondary education in Kenya by documenting the history of Kabaa-Man'gu, the first catholic secondary school in the country.

Wasike (1999) has documented the contribution of the Friends Africa Mission (FAM) to the development of education in Western Kenya. His study looks in detail at the establishment of the Friends School Kamusinga (1950-1985) and indicates that it is not the missionary who only



influenced the kind of education that they offered but that other factors also came into play. The study goes ahead to reveal that serious educational disparities among the northern Friends and the political activities of Dini Ya Msambwa (DYM), forced the colonial government to relocate the Friends Secondary School from Kaimosi to Kamusinga in 1957.

Most of the studies carried out on the development of western education in Kenya have shown the role played by Christian missionaries in the development of education in this country. However, not much has been documented on the role played by the C.M.S. to the development of girls' education in Western Kenya.

#### **2.4 The Church Missionary Society and Education in Western Kenya**

Lohrentz, (1977) examined the pattern of educational developments in North Nyanza. The study points out that those areas that were evangelized by the C.M.S. advanced faster in terms of African education than those of the Mill Hill Mission (M.H.M.) and Church of God (C.O.G) due to their differences in theological beliefs since though evangelism was the primary objective of these three groups, it is the C.M.S. that were right from the beginning keen to use education to achieve that goal.

Karani (1974) and Odwako (1975) both studied the role played by the C.M.S. in the development of education in Western Kenya. Karani documents the establishment of Maseno School and the contribution that it made to the local community around Maseno and beyond. She also brings to light the fact that C.M.S. had both an evangelical and industrial approach to education at the Maseno centre. The study also gives background information to the setting up of the school within its present locality. Odwako on the other hand looks at the institutions that were established by the C.M.S. in the region. He mentions primary schools, secondary schools and

teacher training institutions. He identifies teacher education as one of the areas where C.M.S. put a lot of emphasis.

From the literature reviewed in this section, it is noted that although studies have been carried out to show the contribution of the C.M.S. to education in Western Kenya, none has focused on the development of girls' education. Even though Butere is mentioned in these studies, its historical account is yet to be documented.

## **2.5 Education for Girls**

Ng'eno (1973) in his study on Educational and Political Development in Postcolonial Kenya states that girls' education in Kenya lagged behind that of boys because of its imagined effect on established traditions. He cites the aspects of traditionality as; the secondary role prescribed for women in the decision making process within the family and the community, and the view that women are important to a family for economic considerations primarily. This is the view held by the Phelps-Stokes commission which states that it was due to the negative influence of the tribes that girls' education lagged behind that of boys.

A similar view is held by Greaves (1973) and Smith (1973) who argue that education of girls lagged behind that of boys because the attendance of girls at school was for a long time resisted by parents. Greaves however adds that girls' education in Western Kenya also lagged behind because the government and the missions neglected it.

There is a general consensus that the focus of the missions was to train men as bread winners and house-hold heads, while girls were trained as marriage partners (Musisi, 1992; Kanogo, 1993, 2005). Most scholars argue that this was due to the influence of the ideology of domestication.

Onyango (2006) on her analysis of Luo women's negotiation of mission education extends this argument when she states that this was so because the missionaries did not recognize African cultures.

Odwako (1975) on the other hand in his study on the C.M.S. work in Western Kenya, notes that the C.M.S. more than the government had strong feelings that if the women had to give the children a suitable background for challenges ahead, then they (women) ought to be adequately aware of these challenges. This is why the C.M.S. considered it unwise to postpone any longer the education of women in Western Kenya. Odwako faults the Kenyan government for being rather too late in involving itself in the education of girls in Western Kenya. The government's earliest attempt to show interest or concern for girls' education in the region was in the mid-1950s when such interest was directed to Butere Girls, a school whose foundation had been laid in 1916 by the C.M.S.

Some studies have shown that girls' education lagged behind that of boys because of its imagined effect on established traditions while other literature has shown that it was due to the influence of the ideology of domestication. However, very little has been done to show how girls' education was established and even developed in Western Kenya.

## **2.6 Butere School and its Influence on the Community**

Available studies on Butere and related topics have shown that the C.M.S. pioneered the education of girls in this region. For example; Richards (1956) has documented the beginnings of Butere Girls Primary School from 1916 to 1940. She describes the establishment of this school outlining the strategies and efforts of the C.M.S. in planting the school. She goes ahead to mention some of the setbacks to the growth of the school at that time. These included the effects

of the First World War as young men left Butere and women had to work on the land, so leaving the school depleted, attack of diseases like malaria, dysentery as well as smallpox which led to heavy mortality rates, famine and natural calamities. She also mentions the school curriculum which emphasized on reading, writing and scripture with sewing classes.

Omulokoli (2011) emphasizes the role of Elizabeth Chadwick, a C.M.S. missionary, in setting up Butere Girls Primary School. He describes Butere as having been the second best ranked African Girls High School in Kenya in early 1957 and that for many years its alumni distinguished themselves by consistently reaching the highest levels in their chosen careers. He goes ahead to highlight that even by the standards of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, those who learnt at Butere Girls High School were adjudged to be the most advanced girls in the whole of Western Kenya at that time.

The two studies which have mentioned work at Butere Girls have mainly focused on the pioneering of education of girls at the school during the early years between 1916 and 1940. The establishment of the Girls High School and the development of girls' education thereafter remain undocumented.

## **2.7 Summary of Reviewed Literature**

In this chapter, literature related to this study has been reviewed. Out of this, it has been noted that many studies have been done to show the contributions of various Christian missionaries to the development of education in Africa and in Kenya. Few studies have also been carried out to show the development of girls' education in Kenya. However, in view of the research objectives, not much has been achieved in the vital details that are required to get a clear picture of the topic understudy. Much has been studied about the C.M.S. missionary group that first set up the

institution under focus but little has been done either show its contribution to girls education or to give the historical background and development of this school. A strong case therefore has been established on the need for this study on the role the C.M.S. has played to the development of girls' education in Western Kenya. This study set out to fill this gap by documenting a historical account of Butere Girls High School from 1957 to 2007.

## **2.8 Theoretical Framework**

The study was guided by the modernization theory which originated in the 1950s. It is a theory used to explain the process of modernization within societies. The theory attempts to identify the social variables that contribute to the social progress and development of societies while stressing not only the process of change but also the responses to it (Fagerlind and Saha, 1983). It also looks at internal dynamics while referring to social and cultural structures and the adaptation of new technologies.

Western education in the context of this theory is viewed as development which depended primarily on the importation of political and social changes believed to come about as a result of modernization. This theory is relevant to the study in that it explains the coming of missionaries and the process of evangelization which led to literacy and the growth of schools. Missionaries used education as a tool for evangelization a process that led to establishment of schools.

Modernization theory however has been contested by scholars like Paulo Freire (1972) who argues that the theory conflated modernization with westernization. In this model, the modernization of a society required the destruction of the indigenous culture and its replacement by a more westernized one.

Though contested, the researcher felt that this theory was the most appropriate to base the study on. Modernization theorists see schools as critical social agents of change and modernity. Schools in this context therefore are expected to inculcate modern values and attitudes that make a society open to economic and technological advancement (Okwach and Abagi, 2005).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter procedures and strategies that were used in the study are described. The study set out to investigate the role of the Church Missionary Society in the development of girls' education in Western Kenya, with specific reference to the establishment and development of Butere Girls High School. To meet this objective, the past historical records were used for the reconstruction and documentation on the happenings and events of the problem under study.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

In this study, historical design was preferred because it deals with the systematic search for facts relating to research questions about the past. Through this, the researcher set out to achieve a better understanding of present institutions, practices and issues in education. Historical research is "the systematic and objective location, evolution and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusions concerning past events" (Sifuna 1995).

#### **3.3 Sources of Data**

The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary sources entail first-hand information collected from those who had some direct physical contact with the events under investigation for example eye witness reports and original documents like educational reports and minutes, official school records among others. Primary sources were mainly obtained from the archives. These include the Kenya National Archives, the C.M.S. Archives, the Diocese of Butere Library (Chadwick Library) Archives and the Butere Girls High School Library archives.

Interviews were employed after the primary search to obtain information deemed suitable to supplement the gaps in archival material and also to validate the documentary evidence from primary sources (Sifuna, 1995). There are categories of people who were interviewed in this regard. They include former and current church elders who were directly involved in the C.M.S. educational activities, former head teachers, teachers and students of Butere Girls High School and some significant leaders like retired chiefs who witnessed when some of the events took place.

In identifying key informants from the above categories, the researcher used purposeful sampling method. This means that the researcher consciously decided who to include in the sample. Those chosen were deemed to have information that was representative or typical of the entire population. Besides saving time, the sampling technique selected typical and useful cases only (Oso and Onen, 2008). In order to eliminate bias, the informants were not sought among the Anglican faith only but also across other religious faiths.

Secondary sources of data are those in which the person giving a description of a given event was not present when the event took place but has only received his/her description from another person who may not have necessarily observed the said event directly (Borg and Gall, 1983). The secondary sources for this study include published material such as textbooks, magazines and newspapers as well as electronically stored material on the internet.

Secondary sources are not only inaccurate sometimes but they also have a tendency of disputing some facts. Besides, the method by which the secondary data was collected is often unknown to the researcher (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). Due to this general weakness, the study has not



heavily relied on them. The secondary sources were used only as a way of bridging gaps in the various pieces of primary evidence and this was done after the collection of primary data.

### **3.4 Procedure for Data Collection**

After obtaining a permit from the National Council for Science and Technology, the researcher started by visiting the local archives to search for primary sources of data. These include the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi, The C.M.S. Archives in Nairobi, The University of Nairobi Archives, the Chadwick Library Archives in Butere and the Butere Girls Library Archives. The findings from these were recorded.

After the primary search was over, the researcher carried out interview sessions with some of the key informants to supplement the information extracted from the records. Interviews were ideal because they allowed the researcher to gain control of the kind of questioning and also obtained historical information (Sifuna, 1995). The interview procedure followed the interview schedules that were made in line with the objectives of the study.

### **3.5 Evaluation of Data**

The data collected was evaluated before being accepted as historical evidence for the study. In this regard, the data was exposed to internal and external criticism. External criticism aimed at evaluating the nature of the source to establish their originality while internal criticism was applied to establish the accuracy and worthiness of the information (Sifuna, 1995). External criticism took into account scrutiny of the authors' characteristics and their qualifications to establish their abilities as reporters of events under investigation. The conditions and factors

which influenced the production of these documents and the type of materials used in their production like paper and ink were also considered.

Internal criticism on the other hand aimed at ascertaining the truthfulness of the information contained in the documents. This was done by examining the competence of their authors as reporters of the said facts, their acquaintances with the facts and whether their reports were in agreement with other available information on the same topic by different people who also witnessed these events (Koul, 1984).

### **3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation**

After the data had been verified and validated, it was then accepted as historical evidence for the study. The evidence was then analysed qualitatively. This began by developing a coding system where certain topics covered by the evidence were identified. This helped in sorting out the evidence where respective materials addressing particular topics were physically separated and classified under the said topics. After this, the evidence was then interpreted in the light of the objectives of the problem under investigation. Out of this process, historical facts were established and the emerging trends together with any generalizations suggested by the data were determined (Sifuna 1995, Koul 1984).

The outcome of the analysis was then presented descriptively as research findings of the study. These were grouped into four chapters demarcated by certain periods clearly identified with the events that were being reported on. Based on these findings, conclusions and recommendations for further studies were made.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY: ITS ORIGINS AND EARLY ACTIVITIES IN WESTERN KENYA**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter traces the origins of the Church Missionary Society hereafter C.M.S. It examines the early activities of the society in Western Kenya between 1905 and 1912. The C.M.S is a group of missionaries which was founded in 1799 as a result of the evangelical revival in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The chapter traces how the society finally came to Africa at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It also traces the movement of the society to Kenya and from Rabai to Western Kenya. It then examines the evangelical and educational activities of the group in Western Kenya, which started soon after the arrival and settlement of the missionaries.

#### **4.2 The Origin of the Church Missionary Society**

The C.M.S was founded in 1799 by approximately two dozen people. Besides some sixteen clergy, William Wilberforce, John Venn, Henry Thornton and Thomas Scott were among those present (Odwako, 1975). The society was formed as a result of the evangelical revival in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, through the work of John Wesley and affected almost all Protestant churches in Europe and North America with a new zeal in religious matters which resulted in the foundation of various societies. These missionaries were inspired to go out to Africa to spread Christianity. Abolition of slave trade which was an issue at that time, motivated Christian missionaries to move out and eradicate the practice as well as spread the gospel to the 'heathen' Africans (Anderson, 1970' Sheffield, 1973).

In West Africa, Sierra Leone became a base for Christian evangelists to other parts of West Africa. These included major denominations of Anglicans, Methodists and Baptists. In Southern Africa, there were the German Moravians, the London Missionary Society, the British Methodists and the German Lutherans. In East Africa, there was the C.M.S and Catholic groups which included the White Fathers, the Lyons Society of African Missions and the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales (Sifuna and Otiende, 1994).

Formed out of this background, the C.M.S believed that it was the duty of every Christian to try to propagate the knowledge of the Bible to the “heathens”. It took it upon itself the responsibility of recruiting and sending out missionaries from the Church of England to work in Africa.

In West Africa, Sierra Leone became the centre for educational activities. The C.M.S got established there in 1804 and started setting up their own schools. Things however did not go very well with the society especially in its initial days. This was mainly due to three reasons. First, for a long time no young missionaries offered their service. Those who went to West Africa soon discovered that it was not easy to work there and succumbed to malaria (Odwako, 1975). Secondly, the society’s philanthropic affiliations revealed by the composition of its founders won it strong and determined opposition from those who were involved in slave trade. They accused it of interference with public property contrary to British laws. It was not until the abolition of slavery in 1807 for British subjects that this opposition lessened. Thirdly, right from the beginning, the society’s main source of finance was charity. In the early stages, this was not sufficient and the C.M.S complained that lack of finances hampered its efforts.

In spite of these initial difficulties, John Venn, the leader of C.M.S played an important role in guiding this nascent missionary society. He was a determined and hardworking man whose

frequent message to the young society was that in an undertaking like the one before it, certain principles were to be used as a guide. Some of these principles included the acceptance of God's leadership, dependence on God's spirit, starting on a small scale and always placing money in the second place (Oliver and Mathew, 1966). This call was rewarded since with the spirit contained in these principles, the C.M.S struggled on sending missionaries to Africa; first to the West and later to the East coast.

In 1837, the C.M.S sent out Dr Krapf for missionary work in Africa. Krapf, a German born in 1810, was employed by the C.M.S in 1837 and sent to Ethiopia. On reaching Ethiopia, Dr Krapf while working with the Shoa came into contact with the Galla, a Hamitic, handsome, pastoral and nomadic race which in the 19<sup>th</sup> century lived in the southern part of Ethiopia and also extensively roamed many parts of Northern, North-Eastern and Eastern parts of modern Kenya (Oliver and Mathew, 1966). Impressed by the fact that the Galla had resisted Islam and were "unaffected by false religious principles", Krapf was immediately attracted by the idea of trying to convert them to Christianity. But the political and religious conditions in Ethiopia were neither conducive to the overall C.M.S's plan nor to that of Dr Krapf. This is because there was a threat of the Egyptian invasion; Islam had more converts; and the attitude of the established church, probably encouraged by the Catholics, was hostile to Protestantism (Odwako 1975). Under these circumstances, the C.M.S. had no alternative but to abandon its "reformatory" plans for Ethiopia.

In 1842, Krapf tried to go back to Shoa and then to the Galla people. When this attempt failed, the disappointed Krapf abandoned the idea of trying to reach the Galla through Ethiopia. Instead on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1843, he left for East Africa. This was because his attraction to the Galla was so strong that he wanted to reach them without any further delay. Holding a mistaken impression that the Galla occupied large parts of Africa, he had no doubt in his mind that he would as well

reach them from East Africa. “Give us the Gallas and Central Africa is ours” he wrote (Krapf, 1968, Quoted by Odwako, 1975).

With a letter of introduction from the Sultan of Zanzibar, Krapf moved first to Mombasa where he reached in May 1844. Later, Rebmann another German born in 1820 and also in the service of the C.M.S joined him. Krapf and Rebmann moved from Mombasa a predominantly Muslim town and established their first station at Rabai in 1846 among the Mijikenda. These people were not dominated by Islam and therefore were suitable material for missionary endeavours. This is where the first East Africa’s formal school started<sup>2</sup>. At Rabai, the two men firmly put the C.M.S. on its feet in East Africa.

#### **4.3 From Rabai to Western Kenya**

Krapf and Rebmann therefore as stated in the previous sub-topic became pioneers of the C.M.S. evangelical and educational work in East Africa, which started at Rabai. From here and the coast in general, the C.M.S radiated to most parts of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. From Rabai, the C.M.S. began stations among the Kikuyu at Kihuruko (1901), Weithaga (1903), Kahuhia, (1906), Mahiga (1908) and Embu (1910).

Although the C.M.S. work in East Africa started off at the coast in 1844, its spread to Western Kenya was not directly from the coast but via Uganda, where the C.M.S had settled in 1877. The explanation for this is that until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Western Kenya was simply part of the stretch of land which had to be crossed from the East African coast to Buganda which was a highly centralized kingdom with trade opportunities; also in international diplomacy Uganda was of strategic importance as the backdoor to Egypt (Oliver, 1952). This caravan route

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<sup>2</sup> Annual Reports of CMS for Africa and the Far East 1955/1956

was used by travellers, imperial agents and missionaries. It was during this travels that the C.M.S. missionaries who established a school at Maseno, then Butere came to know about Western Kenya. Gradually Western Kenya ceased to be a mere highway to Uganda and became in its own right an important area for missionary activity.

When the Rev. John Jamieson Willis accompanied by other missionaries left England in 1900 for the East African port of Mombasa their destination was Uganda. At Mombasa they got into a train and travelled in it as far as it could go before they determinedly continued their journey (to Entebbe) on foot and bicycles (Richards, 1956). They passed through the Kisumu and Maseno areas of Western Kenya. This afforded the group an opportunity to see more of Western Kenya and its people with the result that the knowledge and experience gained influenced the thinking of some members of the caravan. After a short stay in Uganda, J.J. Willis suggested to Bishop Alfred Tucker, Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa, in 1903 that a C.M.S. station be established in Western Kenya (Karani, 1974). Willis' request had come in at the right time for it was being realized by the C.M.S. that Western Kenya could no longer be ignored. Consequently, in the following year Bishop Tucker and J.J. Willis visited Kavirondo (as Western Kenya was then called) with a view of finding a suitable site for a mission station in the area. Such a site was found in Vihiga in Maragoli and Willis opted to start the work in Western Kenya (Richards, 1956; Karani, 1974).

The C.M.S. began work in Vihiga in 1905 only to shift to Maseno in 1906 following a mutual agreement between them and the Friends Africa Mission (F.A.M.) who had begun work among the Maragoli in 1902. The station was transferred to the F.A.M. at a cost of British £ 60 after the C.M.S. decided to establish Maseno as their new base (Karani, 1974). Negotiations towards the deal had started in 1904 regarding areas of mission activity. The C.M.S. thus settled in Maseno

in close contact with both Bantu and Nilotic speaking Kavirondo people (Richards, 1956). With Maseno as its base, the C.M.S moved to Butere in 1912 as a measure for further expansion.

#### **4.4 Establishment of Church Missionary Society's Work in Western Kenya**

Western Kenya which was administratively until 1902 part of Uganda was also part of the Uganda Diocese until 1920 when the work of the Uganda mission in the area was transferred to the Kenya mission.<sup>3</sup> On passing through Western Kenya on their way to Uganda, John Jamieson Willis and other missionaries had little doubt in their mind that it was a country rich in heathens and therefore a suitable ground for European missionary activity. Passing through Maseno area on a bicycle in 1900, J.J. Willis is said to have seen hordes of naked Africans who were astounded at the sight of a man sitting on two wheels and moving faster than one could run (Richards, 1956). While the Africans utter surprise exposed their ignorance, their being naked, which arouse sympathy from the missionaries was a confirmation of their moral laxity. As a matter of vocation, the C.M.S. had to work among these people.

However, probably the immediate reason which made the C.M.S. to occupy Western Kenya in 1905 was its fear of Muslim advance into Uganda. In 1904 the C.M.S. argued that Islam was slowly advancing towards Uganda through Sudan and that as the communications by river and road between Egypt and the Great Lakes improved the Islamic advance; it would be more rapid. At the time, Islam, a more pressing danger to its infant church in Uganda threatened from the East (Western Kenya). This is because with the railway, which had reached Kisumu in 1901, came the Swahilis who besides being largely Muslim had for long been accustomed to exercising a dominant influence over the tribes of East Africa. Christianity imposed moral restraints and as

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<sup>3</sup>Annual Reports of CMS for Africa and the far East, 1955/1956



result, the C.M.S. alleged that some Africans were quitting Christianity to join Islam where among other things they were allowed to take more than one wife.<sup>4</sup> This was a real, serious and immediate problem which had to be promptly counteracted by opening up Christian mission stations in Western Kenya. This was done in 1905 when the C.M.S. established its first mission station in the region. This first mission station was established at Maseno in 1905. From here, and led by J.J. Willis, the C.M.S. moved to Butere in 1912 as a measure for further expansion.

Most of the missionaries were positive about work in Western Kenya. They described Kavirondo as rich and fertile land, well watered with streams and rivers. Cattle were plentiful and the countryside thickly populated. Since missionaries preferred settlement in high agricultural areas, the C.M.S. quickly decided to establish work in this region. They also felt that though the people were backward compared to their neighbours in Uganda, they were friendlier. Chiefs and headmen had already developed liking for the white man's cotton clothes and other products of civilization.<sup>5</sup> Willis said that the people had traits which would make them good Christians.

The people of Kavirondo are very positive and independent. They have fixity of purpose and do not break an oath. They treat people with care. An enemy once conquered is given food. They do not go to war with women and children. They care and provide for their parents and the aged.<sup>6</sup>

J.J. Willis arrived in Kavirondo in 1905, and was later joined by Mr and Mrs Hugh Savile.

Together, they set up mission work which received tremendous response.

Sunday great crowds come into the service. The little church was crowded and the services had to be taken under the tree. Some came mounted on oxen and all dressed in dancing dress with paint and feathers!<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Proceedings of the CMS for Africa and the far East, 1904 – 1905

<sup>5</sup> 'Portal Reports' in Uganda Papers pp.371,1892 – 1899 RH Parliamentary Papers Colonial Africa 70

<sup>6</sup> J.J. Willis, 'Case for Kavirondo' in Uganda Papers, pp.39 – 44, 1906 CMS: G3/A7/1908/147

<sup>7</sup> Willis, 'Education Work in Maseno', 1908 CMS: G3/A7/1909/1/19

In 1907, Canon Pleydell joined Maseno Mission station to help with translation work. Pleydell had come to Uganda as a C.M.S. missionary in 1904. He took charge of the mission station when Archdeacon Willis became the Bishop of Uganda in 1912. Western Kenya at this time remained part of the Anglican Church in Uganda until it was transferred to the Diocese of Mombasa in 1920 in the Kenyan colony.

#### **4.5 Early Educational and Evangelical Activities of the Church Missionary Society in Western Kenya**

The prime motive of establishing a foreign educational institution at Maseno was to win the natives for Christ (Richards, 1956). The school was thus envisaged as a means towards achieving that end. The Maseno venture therefore demonstrates the educational approach in the whole task of missionary evangelization – a method which was widely used by many missions in Africa for purposes of converting the natives to Christianity (Oliver, 1952; Temu, 1972). A school was established at Maseno because it was expected to be the most effective medium in the propagation of the Christian faith to the community around.

The school curriculum in Kenya during the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century entirely depended on the aims and needs of the individual missionary groups. It was not until 1911, following the recommendations made by Prof. Nelson Frazer in 1909 on Education in the East Africa Protectorate that the government formerly decided to participate in the provision of African education. It did this by establishing the department of Education in 1911 with J.R. Orr as its first director (Sifuna and Otiende, 1994).

The C.M.S. had therefore developed a curriculum purposely aimed at meeting its own objective. Maseno School offered elementary education based on reading, writing and arithmetic (3Rs).

The first students of Maseno were Mathayo Onduso, Daniel Odindo, Andrea Owiti and Yona Orao, all sons of chiefs. It was hoped that these would spread Christian influence when they became chiefs. In the second year of its establishment however Maseno opened its doors to boys other than sons of chiefs. This came after realization that if it had limited itself to these few boys, it would have meant limited contacts and in turn limited ground of influence.

Maseno essentially became the centre for educational and evangelistic work. The students spent half of their time in school and the other half doing evangelism. They were sent in pairs to the villages around. The first boys formed a choir to sing in funerals and at festivals. They were admired by many young people, who in turn joined the school because they wanted to be like them. The first batch of the students was given the responsibility of founding churches in different parts of Western Kenya. The more progressive boys were employed as clerks and interpreters to the colonial officials. The missionaries believed that the main aim of the school was to witness to Christ.<sup>8</sup>

The aim of Maseno School was to provide an all-round training in body, mind and soul. Around 1908, industrial training was introduced in Maseno to enhance the development of mission work. This included carpentry, joinery, brick-laying, mechanics and printing. Maseno graduates like Alfayo Odongo used brick-laying and building skills to build schools and churches and to expand the territory of the church. Agriculture was also very prominent in the curriculum of the school. Through Agriculture lessons, missionaries taught new farming methods and also introduced new varieties of crops. All the students had demonstration farms, and whenever they went back home their farms attracted many people. These gave them opportunity for evangelism.

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<sup>8</sup>Pleydell, 'Annual Letter', 1918 CMS: G3/AL/1918

The school boys also helped old women in their farms as a means of inviting them to attend the Church services (Hay, 1976).

From 1920, Maseno started focusing on the training of teachers. It was linked up to several out-schools in the region. The out - schools were elementary and bush schools most of them founded as catechetical classes. These were the main centres of evangelism in the villages. The focus of Maseno School therefore was to train teachers for these out-schools. These would be God inspired teachers who had a good standing in the community.

The development of Maseno School was not without challenges. There were financial difficulties, shortage of staff, slow progress academically and others. In fact, progress in one direction was often accompanied by a lapse in another or some disturbing practice would come to light. One of the most striking challenges in the school in the early years was the 1908 strike. Boys refused to take part in manual labour and made demands for more reading and writing (Anderson, 1970). This happened as boys came to realize that the sorts of skills being offered were directed at preparation for routine subordinate positions. The crisis was resolved however, and the idea of manual work accepted.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has given a brief history of the C.M.S. and its early evangelical and educational activities in Western Kenya. Before this, a brief outline of the background of the religious society of the Anglicans has been made. It has been shown that the C.M.S. was a product of the evangelical revival in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Its founders believed that it was the duty of every Christian to try to propagate the knowledge of the Bible to the heathens. It is because of this that the C.M.S. took it upon itself the responsibility of recruiting and sending out

missionaries from the Church of England to work in Africa. The missionaries who planted the Anglican Church in Western Kenya were from this background.

The missionaries used education mainly as a tool for evangelism. They focused on formal education through the school. Their first school to be established in the region was Maseno School. It was described as a Christian base from which the gospel was to be carried far and wide into the surrounding country. The School offered elementary education based on the 3Rs. It also aimed at providing an all-round training of body, mind and soul. Industrial training and agriculture were also offered to enhance development of mission work.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.0 ESTABLISHMENT OF BUTERE MISSION AND EARLY EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

#### 5.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapters, this study has demonstrated the mission focus of Church Missionary Society. The major concern of C.M.S was evangelism whose main focus was on teaching basic literacy and vocational training. The aim of this approach was to enable Christian converts to acquire reading skills to be able to read scriptures.

This chapter traces the establishment of Butere Mission Station and girls' education by the C.M.S missionaries between 1912 and 1956. It traces the early evangelical and educational activities of the various groups such as missionaries and ex-mission boys who influenced the trend of education for girls in Butere during this period.

Education practice in Butere before 1945 was influenced by the educational philosophies and policies of the C.M.S missionaries. The main focus of missionary education for girls at this time was domesticity (Kanogo, 1993; Musisi, 1992; Onyango, 2006). However, this ideology was to be contested later by the very ex-mission boys who earlier on had influenced its establishment. The period after 1945 however saw major changes in the education for girls after the ex-mission boys began challenging missionaries to offer education which would enable social and economic advance. This called for empowerment of women both with literacy and other necessary skills.

## **5.2 Establishment of Butere Mission Station**

Butere lies about 47 kilometres to the North-West direction from Maseno. It is situated mainly among the Abamarama and borders the Abawanga sub tribes of the Luhyia community. It is also located just about 19 kilometres from Mumias which was the centre where many Europeans rested on their way to Uganda during the pre-colonial times.

As stated earlier, Butere was chosen as a second site of C.M.S. missionary activity in Western Kenya after Maseno. Before the C.M.S. movement to Butere, their work had been confined to Maseno, a centre which was dominated by the Luo tribe. This was partly as a result of an agreement made with the American Friends Mission in 1905 (Lohrentz, 1977).

However, Chief Mulama of the Nabongo Mumia family offered another site for a mission station. This chief, as described by Walter Chadwick in his letters about the establishment of the mission, had been anxious that his people should embrace Christianity.<sup>9</sup> This explains why himself and thirteen others were in the year 1913 admitted to the catechumenate. He was among the few at this time who learnt how to read and was to be baptized later in 1917.<sup>10</sup> So when in 1911, Chadwick arrived in this region to set up a mission station, Mulama was ready to help him get a site for building a church. He tried Mureko (Eshikulu) but found it unsuitable because the headmen there used to brew beer. Together with Chief Mulama and some of his servants, he followed the main Kisumu – Mumias road by then till they came to Butere area. On the spot, there was a big oak tree on which Chadwick climbed and pointed to a plain place where the present church ground lies. There, six knots were made on grass as a sign. So at Easter time, in 1912, Archdeacon Willis who was Bishop of Uganda and member of the executive committee of

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<sup>9</sup> Proceedings of CMS, 1913 – 1914, Kavirondo

<sup>10</sup> Proceedings of CMS, 1916 – 1917, Kavirondo

the Uganda C.M.S. sent the Rev. Walter Chadwick, Chaplain at Entebbe, and three Baganda evangelists to begin mission work among the Bantu in North Kavirondo.<sup>11</sup>

A Roman Catholic Mission was already established at Mumias itself and Archdeacon Chadwick picked on Butere as being the most suitable site outside the ten-mile radius then agreed upon by the various missions so that their work should not overlap (Lohrentz, 1977).

At first Chadwick lived in a tent while he built a reed hut to house his books and a few pieces of furniture. Later, the two roomed brick house which replaced the reed hut was used as a school room on weekdays and church on Sundays. This marked the onset of greater work that was to happen in this place later.

### **5.3 Initial Evangelical and Educational Activities**

Educational work at Butere was pioneered by Walter Chadwick. Prior to his involvement with Butere, Chadwick was sent from London for missionary work in Uganda on June 9, 1901. When Rev. John Jamieson Willis came to Kenya to open the first C.M.S. mission station in Western Kenya at Vihiga (in Maragoli) in February of 1905, Chadwick was posted to Entebbe, Uganda, to replace Willis as chaplain of the C.M.S. enterprise there. Chadwick was therefore working at Entebbe when he was formally appointed in July 1912 to go to Western Kenya to open C.M.S. work in the Luhyia hinterland. He was given the responsibility of opening a C.M.S. mission station at Butere. He was also made the head of all C.M.S. work in Western Kenya, replacing the Rt. Rev. J. J. Willis, who had vacated the position in early 1912.

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<sup>11</sup>Chadwick papers, Butere, March 5, 1916, CMSA, 227/50/5/2/1916



Chadwick began by collecting a class of boys and men. These would work in his garden until 9.00 a. m and then would be led over to the church to be taught and to listen to the Christian message (Richards, 1956). In this way, Chadwick established his first class at Butere. Among them were, Isaya Musiga and Barnaba Weche.

The missionaries' main motive for establishing an educational institution at Butere, just like elsewhere in Africa, was to win the natives for Christ. The idea behind the whole question of the educational approach in missionary work was succinctly put by H.R.A Philip, a medical missionary of the Church of Scotland in Kenya from 1911 to 1935, when he wrote that:

The word of God is so startlingly new and wonderful that the mind closed by ignorance must be opened to receive new ideas, and this cannot be done without education. Education is simply a process of opening the darkened mind to the light. All missionary work therefore is educational in one form or another (H.R.A. Philip, 1936 Quoted by Lohrentz, 1977).

In this quotation the original intention by missions, in establishing foreign educational institutions is fully elaborated. The institutions were therefore envisaged as a means to achieving that end. A school was established at Butere because it was expected to be the most effective medium in the propagation of the Christian faith in the community around. Therefore, learning and evangelical work were combined during these early years.

The curriculum at this level was simple; the boys were taught hymns, the Lord's Prayer and how to read and copy the Gospel. Those who quickly mastered how to read took it as a Christian duty to teach others. An interesting method of instruction is when the teacher and the learners would lie face downwards in a packed circle, each learner equipped with a grass stalk for the purpose of pointing out words or letters as instructed. The grass stalks would almost obscure the letters and as the teacher of the circle maintained his right to hold the book in a position convenient to himself, many of his pupils learnt to read at an unusual angle, and would for some time after tend

to hold a book at the angle familiar to them when learning. But in spite of the crudity of these early spontaneous applications of the “Each one teach one” principle, many quickly learned to read and took their turn in teaching others (Richards, 1956).

Since there were no Government grants to help on the work at that time, the Boys’ School had only money paid by the parents as school fees to help. As a result the school was closed after a short time in 1918. This happened partly because the C.M.S. had concentrated more on Maseno School which had more boys and was doing better than Butere. There was no male missionary at Butere at this time as Walter Chadwick was on leave. Archdeacon Owen even suggested that Butere staff (missionary and local) be moved to Maseno<sup>12</sup>. This however did not happen and those at Butere threw their weight into the Girls school. This they did also for the general advance of the C.M.S. work in Kenya, for it is at this time that the missionaries started feeling the importance of educating women for the advancement of their work in the country<sup>13</sup>.

Therefore, it was not until three years later in 1921 when Chief Mulama persuaded the Education Department to give a grant in aid.<sup>14</sup> Following this, an industrial boarding school was restarted. This was to be a Government aided school and the boys therefore had to be over twelve years of age even though, many of them were much older, some even being married men and fathers.<sup>15</sup> According to Paul Ochieng who was Chief Mulama’s labourer and later an evangelist in the church, conversion of people in the early days was encouraged by the chief who ordered the headmen to bring people to the school sometimes even by force (Chadwick Library Archives).

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<sup>12</sup> CMSA: G3 A5 1919-1924

<sup>13</sup> CMSA: G3 A5 1919 - 1924

<sup>14</sup> CMS Report 1921 – 1922, KNA: CMS/61/101 1922

<sup>15</sup> CMS Report 1921 – 1922, KNA: CMS/61/101 1922

Some of these people stayed on to become Christians, but some could not cope with the new way of life and therefore went back.

However, even with the grant in aid, the boys' school was still struggling since there was no male missionary at the school and the female ones were more concerned with the girls' school. Butere Boys and Maseno were amalgamated at Maseno in 1926. The buildings put up for the school were then used to run a normal school for the training of elementary teachers.

#### **5.4 The Girls School, 1916 – 1956**

The growth of education at Butere was inclined only to the boys up to the year 1916. As the clamour for boys' education grew with the years, there was total neglect by the missionaries of girls' education. Generally, there was a negative attitude towards girls' education in the country at this time. It is important to note also that another reason why girls' education lagged behind that of boys for many years was in the people themselves. Just like elsewhere in the country, people in Butere gave no support to the idea, seeing no reason why resources should be spent on teaching their daughters the white man's secrets.

However, as far back as 1913, the backwardness of the women and girls was troubling the Africans themselves, who then started demanding for girls' education. These demands came as a wake-up call to the missionaries who from then started devising ways of establishing a girls school. As a result, Miss Elizabeth Chadwick who was among the first women missionaries to Uganda was transferred from Mengo, Uganda to Butere in 1916 to work among the women and girls. She actually was sent to work under her younger brother, Walter Chadwick. However unusual this transfer may have been, its true importance lay in the tremendous positive impact it

had on the education of women at Butere. It is Miss Chadwick who pioneered the education of girls in this region.

The initial missionary education for girls in Western Kenya was merely an extension of boys' education. The missionaries were mainly concerned with training girls who would later own marry the mission boys. This was also reinforced by earlier sentiments in a Nairobi Conference by missionaries; "give girls such an education that they would become intelligent companions to their husbands".<sup>16</sup> It can thus be justifiably argued that the main aim of the C.M.S establishing Butere Girls in 1916 was to train girls for marriage.

This first ever school for girls which started off with a sewing class, gradually became a Bible class. Among this pioneer class for girls were Mapesa and Lydia Kitandi who later became a pupil teacher. As the school grew, more girls were admitted from the surrounding area. Progress however was slow. Some of the Luhya people did not want their daughters to go to school at this time because they felt that girls who went to school would not get married and bring wealth. It was also said that when girls went to school they would refuse to marry men chosen for them. This idea of not accepting arranged marriages was perceived as an alternative to prostitution, as most of the Luhya people closely related the idea of a working woman with prostitution. Most of the parents also perceived the education of girls as a loss, as they argued that the girls would eventually get married.<sup>17</sup>

The people also felt that the girls who went to school would be too radical, and would challenge both the authority of the elders and cultural practices. However, the African evangelists used their influence to promote teaching for girls. This kind of teaching emphasized literacy, they

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<sup>16</sup> Minutes of Lady Missionaries Conference in Nairobi in June 1909, KNA:MSS/07/1909

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Salome Wanyangu, Butere March 2015

were given reading skills to be able to read the Bible. Education originally took place in the catechetical classes, which later turned to normal classrooms. Girls who were converted to Christianity were also taught in girls dormitories, a common sleeping place developed for girls in the Christian villages. This was a common strategy used by missions in the continent to help those who had been converted escape the negative influences of their surroundings, and establish a Christian culture (Ayandele, 1966; Onyango, 2006). The Church buildings were used to impart the gospel and other kinds of knowledge during the week-days.

In the initial stages the school curriculum was simple and straightforward, and reading and writing dominated the timetable. In time, more classes were added: sewing, drawing, hymn-singing, drills, music, catechism, and Bible lessons. The curriculum also included training in sports and athletics (Chadwick Library Archives).



PLATE 1: Butere Girls Musical Drill, 1919

#### **5.4.1 Progress during the Inter-War Period, 1920 – 1944**

The establishment of girls' education at Butere was not without difficulties. Setbacks and interruptions were many and progress at times was impossible. In fact, the school faced with various challenges collapsed in 1925 and was restarted all over again in 1928 with the help of Miss. Pethybridge, another C.M.S. missionary who came to Butere in March 1928. In 1931, however, Miss. Appleby came to Butere and took over the Girls' School (Richards, 1956).

Some of the setbacks to the growth of the school at this time included the effects of the First World War. During the war young men who were drafted left Butere and therefore women had to work on the land. This left the school depleted. There was also attack of diseases like malaria, dysentery as well as smallpox which led to heavy mortality rates.

The end of the First World War however saw a good number of Africans start to demand for increased educational opportunities in Kenya. This came about after the realization by those who took part in the war that the power of the Whiteman lay more in his knowledge than anything else. Apart from this, interactions among Africans themselves provided a lot of learning opportunities. For instance, the Abaluyia who travelled to the coast either as soldiers or as carrier corps came into contact with the advanced culture which became instrumental in changing their perception to life. According to Miss. Chadwick, these people came back to Kavirondo with a lot of thirst for education which led her to state that;

During the campaign, they (Abaluyia) had been much laughed at by the more civilized coast boys both because their faces showed the old tribal marks or scars of the heathen days, and because they could not read ( Chadwick Letters, 1935 cited by Lonsdale, 1964).

There was therefore a spontaneous movement that sprang up when the men newly back from the war undertook to teach other members of their clans both male and female. "When the work in

the maize and millet fields was over for the day, they would collect the young men and girls of their clan under the shade of some big tree, and teach them.<sup>18</sup> This had a positive impact as more girls enrolled into the school to learn how to read and write.

Apart from this, there was another factor which led to increased enrolment. The increasing effects of colonialism; taxes, inflation and forced labour on the settler farms forced Africans to look for alternative ways of survival outside their tribal confines with the school proving to be a major avenue to new experiences (Sifuna and Otiende, 1994). This new perception was well reflected among the Abaluyia clans by the increased number of Africans who started to enrol in school at that time. As boys joined Maseno School, their sisters went to the nearby Butere Girls.

The effect of the war also led to high enrolment in that as more boys were drafted, girls had fewer people to cook and work for at home. They therefore enrolled in school. “They came in numbers to learn, especially on Sundays we often had more than 300 girls in Sunday school alone.”<sup>19</sup>This, as compared to earlier classes of between 112 and 115 girls. In Sunday school, girls were prepared for baptism classes. Apart from this, they also learnt basic literacy skills and hygiene.

Most of the Luhyia parents were also becoming more positive towards girls education. This was mainly due to the influence by Dr Aggrey of the Phelps-stokes Commission, who had visited Nyanza in 1923. The Phelps-Stokes commission which was sponsored by an American foundation was to assess the nature and quality of education of Negroes both in Africa and the United States of America (U.S.A.). The commission focused its attention on the needs and problems of African education. It stressed for education to emphasize character training, rural

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<sup>18</sup>Chadwick papers, Butere, May 5, 1935, CMSA, 227/50/5/2/1935

<sup>19</sup>Chadwick papers, Butere, May 5, 1935, CMSA, 227/50/5/2/1935

improvement, secondary education and cooperation among the Africans (Sifuna and Oanda, 2014). Dr Aggrey, an African from the Gold Coast on the team urged the people of Western Kenya that the only way towards achieving progress was through education. He said that “if you educate a man you educate an individual but if you educate a woman you educate the whole community” (Onyango, 2006).

The local leaders also played a major role in encouraging girl’s education. For instance, Chief Mulama emphasized the need for girls’ education. It was at this time when his young wife joined the baptism class at Butere Girls.<sup>20</sup> Africans also started pushing for the education of girls through the Local Native Councils (L.N.C). The L.N.C.s were established by the Education Ordinance of 1924 as new institutions of the local government with powers to tax levies for local purposes. With regard to education, the L.N.C members wanted better education with plenty of English taught so that paths would be opened towards secondary and higher education. They therefore called for more opportunities for girls’ education. They even agreed to include estimates in their budgets to fund the education of girls.<sup>21</sup>

Parents also changed from their conservative stand after seeing the fruits of education for girls. The girls who had gone to school were employed and built for their parents corrugated iron-sheet houses, which was a symbol of status and social mobility in the society. The girls also paid fees for their younger sisters and brothers. Some even paid taxes for their parents.

Butere Girls School was progressively developed into a boarding school in 1936. The concept of a boarding school had been initiated by Chief Mulama. “Mulama has been wishing for one (girls’

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<sup>20</sup> Moller, Annual Letter 1924 CMSA, AL/01924/Moller

<sup>21</sup> LNC Minutes 1928 KNA: PC/NZA 3/33/8/27



boarding school) for some time”.<sup>22</sup> Then the Luyia Christian parents and church elders felt that there was an urgent need for establishing a boarding school for Christian girls. This was to help them escape the negative influences of their surroundings, and establish a Christian culture:

Christian parents are keenly anxious that their daughters should rise above the naked animal like appearance of their neighbours and are continually begging us to provide a girls’ boarding school, while church councils weary us with reiteration of this need.<sup>23</sup>

A boarding school was in line with the general focus of missions on girls’ education. The missions held that, the main purpose of Christian education was to help build up Christian character. Boarding schools offered an opportunity for girls to live in a Christian atmosphere.<sup>24</sup> These sentiments were in line with the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission which had in 1924 reiterated the importance of boarding schools in non-Christian surroundings.

The girls’ boarding school was officially established in 1936. Half of the money used to construct the school was from the C.M.S while the government gave the other half. Three dormitories, a large common room, kitchen and a chapel were built. However, growth was slow in the boarding school due to the high fees charged for girls’ education. The boarders initially paid sixty shillings per year, while C.M.S paid the teachers and contributed towards the development of the school. Later, the government paid fifty shillings in grants-in-aid for each student and also paid the teachers. The girls paid forty shillings on top of the grants. By 1940, the school had about 120 pupils, some of whom were day-girls (Richards, 1956).

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<sup>22</sup> CMSA 167 F3/29 – Busolo N. Kavirondo

<sup>23</sup> Wright, Kavirondo Missionary Council, 1932

<sup>24</sup> Minutes of Lady Missionaries Conference in Tumu-Tumu, 1937 KNA: MSS/61/433 Education



PLATE 2: Butere Girls Boarding Primary School, 1937

#### **5.4.2 The Period after the War, 1945 – 1956**

In the period after 1945, there was a great change in policy, which affected the education practice at Butere. As a result of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945, the colonial government issued the first post-war education plan, *The Ten-Year Plan for the Development of African Education*. This aimed at providing 50% of the school-age population with a six-year primary course at the end of a ten-year period. It also aimed at expanding secondary schools to raise the number from 2 to 16 in ten years. In order to achieve such an expansion, it recommended the increase of local government expenditure from 100,000 pounds to 343,000 pounds, while the central government would contribute 800,000 pounds for the capital costs, mostly buildings (Department of Education, 1948).

The ten-Year plan however was not well received by African leaders. The Kenya African Union (K.A.U) for instance was unhappy with the plan since it made no provisions for higher education. Among other problems of the education system at that time, it was noted that the rate of participation of girls in education in the entire country was very low. It was estimated that girls' enrolment fell from 30% of the total enrolment in the first year to less than 7% in the fourth grade (Sifuna and Oanda, 2014). In Western Kenya, Africans started challenging missionaries to offer education which would enable social and economic advance. This called for empowerment of women both with literacy and other necessary skills.

One major problem experienced in the school system at this time was the rapid expansion of schools and decline in quality because of lack of proper control and supervision. To address this problem, a committee under the chairmanship of Archdeacon Leonard Beecher, was appointed in March 1949. It was "to inquire into the Scope, Content and Methods of African Education, financing and African teachers' salaries". The Beecher report observed that the few secondary schools at the time were not enough to cope with the increased numbers of primary school leavers. In addressing the problem, the committee recommended the establishment of an additional sixteen secondary schools by 1957(Beecher Report, 1949:88). Those proposed for girls secondary schools in western region were; Butere, Ng'iya, Kaimosi, Bunyore, Rang'ala and Eregi.

The Beecher report also emphasized the training of elementary school teachers. The immediate aim of the government was to encourage a greater proportion of the girls to train as primary teachers. When each primary day school was provided with women teachers, this would help to provide a more balanced education. It would also provide a proper outlook for girls. Girls needed to emulate their teachers, so there was need for educated women in the reserves. However, the

educated women in the reserves were currently very few to provide the norm.<sup>25</sup> In the report it had been acknowledged that most of the girls trained never ended up as teachers because of two main factors. First, the salary of the teachers was not very attractive and secondly, the educated girls were on high demand as wives for the educated men. However, the Beecher Report did not see this as a setback: “Women do not end their careers of usefulness even when marriage takes them out of school. Many of them remain progressive and an educative force to the rural life when they return”.<sup>26</sup>

Butere School was of great interest to the people of Western Kenya. By 1950, they were very keen on Butere being developed as a centre for higher girls’ education. At this time, two High Schools were known for African girls who made it; African Girls High School Kikuyu (Alliance Girls) and Loreto Convent Limuru (Popularly known as the Catholic Girls High School). These schools were however far and many girls in Western Kenya were not able to join them. Nearby was the C.M.S. Ng’iya Girls which was started in 1923 after Butere Girls.

By 1952 there was a lot of agitation to have a girls’ secondary school in North Nyanza. Leaders in the region had earlier put forward the case at the L.N.C. meetings.<sup>27</sup> They argued that there was higher demand for educated girls in the region. They also faltered the C.M.S. for offering what they called sub-standard education for girls. They raised concern that even though the girls were undergoing domestic science training, that this equally needed good grounding in literacy.

Because of this general dissatisfaction with what the Africans viewed as sub-standard education for girls offered by the missionaries, the C.M.S. held a conference to look at their policy on education in view of the changing circumstances. The greatest priority of the missions was to

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<sup>25</sup> Education Report, 1949 KNA ED/CN/GEN/30/109/1949

<sup>26</sup> Beecher Report 1949:4

<sup>27</sup> LNC Meeting 1951 KNA: PC/NZA/2/11/1951

demonstrate the highest technical proficiency in each institution they run. The C.M.S. made a resolution: “To run fewer institutions and to staff those fewer far better” (Warren, 1952).

In line with this policy and in response to the demand for a girls’ school in the Nyanza region, Max Warren, the C.M.S. general secretary, proposed to the council of the Mombasa Diocesan synod that, Butere would be the best school to advance higher Girls education in the region. According to him, there was a large number of the necessary school buildings in existence at Butere with which a start could be made; that there was room for a certain amount of expansion; that it could cater for both Luo and Bantu girls as well as a few other girls from other tribes and that it could become a complementary to the Kikuyu Girls High School.<sup>28</sup>

Being a C.M.S. institution, girls who qualified from Butere focused on joining the African Girls High School Kikuyu, a school for protestant girls. However, this school, started in 1948 was unable to satisfactorily meet the demands of Western Kenya. Apart from this, in the early part of 1950s there was political unrest in Kenya. This unrest was brought about by the state of emergency in the country and was particularly in the central province where this school is situated. As a result, parents in Western Kenya were not very enthusiastic to send their daughters to this troubled area.

It is this demand for higher education for girls, the implementation of the Beecher Report which had recommended establishment of a girls’ secondary school in this region and the state of emergency in the country in the early 1950s among other factors that saw the development of Butere Girls School to a secondary school in 1957. Butere Girls High School became the first girls’ secondary school in the area. It developed into an important centre for women education in

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<sup>28</sup> Warren letter to Mombasa Diocesan Synod: CMSA/F3 A5 1952

Western Kenya. Its role in giving the early girls in Western Kenya formal education is of critical importance.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the establishment of girls' education in Butere by the C.M.S between 1916 and 1956. It has been shown that education practice in Butere Girls School during this period was influenced by the ideology of domesticity. The aim of the missionaries and the colonial administration therefore was to give vocational training to the girls. This was also what the early ex-mission boys like Yona Orao were asking. Later these ex-mission boys requested literacy training to accompany the vocational training so that girls would be well grounded in their fields. The curriculum offered at Butere however did not stress intellectual knowledge. It focused on reading, religion and preparing girls for marriage.

Education policies at this time were focused on designing a curriculum which would help Africans accept their inferior status as labourers. The impact of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945 however led the colonial government to issue the first post-war education plan, *The Ten-Year Plan for the Development of African Education*. This policy together with increased demands by the Africans saw the C.M.S. change its approach. Following the recommendations of the Beecher report, Butere Girls School was upgraded to a secondary School in 1957.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **6.0 THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUTERE GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL, 1957 – 2007**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter sets out to document the history of Butere Girls High School right from the time of its initial establishment in 1957 up to 2007. The chapter examines some of the most important features with regard to the establishment and development of the school. This will be done after highlighting major factors behind its development into a high school in 1957. Attempts have also been made to highlight some of the challenges that faced the development of the school in the initial years. Finally the chapter examines the school's progress after 1985 and how it lost its position as one of the best girls' schools in Kenya.

#### **6.2 Development into a High School in 1957**

The establishment of Butere Girls' High School in 1957 followed the recommendations made in the report of the committee on African Education in Kenya, (the Beecher Report of 1949), as stated in the previous chapter. The committee chaired by Archdeacon L.J. Beecher, proposed Butere among other schools for upgrading to secondary level by 1957 in order to cope with the increased numbers of primary school leavers at that time (Beecher Report, 1949). Apart from this, the Beecher Report also formed the basis for development of girls' education at the time. In paragraph 339 of the Report, the general intention of girls' education is stated; "to get a larger number going on every year to higher education" (Beecher Report, 1949:74). Out of this, the C.M.S. decided to experiment with higher girls' education. "The expansion of education

envisaged by the Beecher report clearly anticipates that girls' education will develop in the direction of secondary education"<sup>29</sup>.

Another factor which prompted the C.M.S. to think about developing Butere Girls into a high school was due to funding. In the early 1950s, the colonial government's philosophy was based on: "The Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945" (Sifuna and Otiende, 1994). This philosophy shifted colonial policies from self-sufficiency to increasing the amount of aid to the colonies to steer progress towards self-governance. The thinking led to issuance of a memorandum in 1948 on education for citizens given by the colonial office in Britain which gave direction to African education in the colonies. The document also helped the colonies to progressively work towards self-governance. This memorandum argued that it was not enough to just give Africans literacy and technical skills, but that schools should go further and prepare learners for responsibility and democracy so that they are ready for self-governance (Sifuna and Otiende, 1994).

This kind of thinking was also influenced by the impact of the Second World War on education of Africans. The experiences during the war influenced the world opinion on colonisation. The formation of the United Nations (UN) with principles of human rights and the formation of UNESCO (1948) declared education a human right that should not be denied to any child. This and other factors challenged Britain to change its policies towards the education of Africans.

As a result of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, the government started spending more money to support higher education. The C.M.S. therefore saw an opportunity to tap into some of these funds for the development of Butere Girls into an institution of higher learning for girls.

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<sup>29</sup> Max Warren Letter to L.J. Beecher Bishop of Mombasa on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1952



Large sums of money are being expended by government on such large scale experiments such as the new Technical College at Nairobi. These are particular interests of the Governors but I do not suppose he is any less mindful of his desire for experiments in girls' education.<sup>30</sup>

At this time, only two High Schools had been established in the country for African girls who made it. They were Kikuyu Girls High School (Alliance Girls) and Loreto Convent Limuru (Popularly known as the Catholic Girls High School). These schools were however far and many girls in Western Kenya were not able to join them. Being a C.M.S. institution, girls who qualified from Butere focused on joining the African Girls High School Kikuyu, a school for protestant girls. However, this school, started in 1948 was unable to satisfactorily meet the demands of Western Kenya.

Apart from this, there was a political unrest in Kenya beginning the year 1952 until 1960. This unrest was brought about by the state of emergency in the country and was particularly severe in the central province where this school is situated. The state of emergency was declared by the British government on 20 October 1952, during which time it carried out a mass arrest of alleged *Mau Mau* leaders within Nairobi. This led to a military conflict that resulted in many deaths especially in the central province. As a result of this political unrest, parents in Western Kenya were not very enthusiastic to send their daughters to this troubled area. They therefore intensified their demand for a secondary school in this region for their girls.

In response to the demand for a girls' school in the Nyanza region, Max Warren, the C.M.S. general secretary in 1956 proposed to the council of the Mombasa Diocesan synod that, Butere would be the best school to advance higher girls education in the region. According to him, there were a large number of the necessary school buildings in existence at Butere with which a start

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<sup>30</sup>Rev P. Bostock letter to Max Warren, June 1954. KNA/MSS/61/556/1954

could be made and there was room for a certain amount of expansion. He also argued that the school could cater for both Luo and Bantu girls as well as a few other girls from other tribes. In this way, it could become a complementary school to the girls' school at Kikuyu. Apart from these, Warren also argued that there was a Christian community already in existence to which the school could be closely associated.<sup>31</sup>

In response, the Bishop of Mombasa wrote to the director of education in March 1956, asking that Butere Girls be elevated to a high school. In his response, the director of education, in his letter dated, 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 1956 to the Bishop of Mombasa, stated that: "I have obtained Treasury agreement to the starting of the first class in January 1957"<sup>32</sup>.

Butere Girls School therefore was developed to a secondary school in January 1957. It became the first girls' secondary school in Western Kenya. Other girls' schools which existed at this time were: African Girls High School Kikuyu, Loreto Convent Limuru, Mugoiri Girls in Nyeri, Manahill Secondary in Machakos, Machakos Convent School and Kahuhia in Forthall.

### **6.3 The Beginnings of Butere Girls High School, 1957**

The first secondary class at Butere Girls which included, Miriam Were, Mabel Kibisu, Margeret Wanyonyi and Esnas Imali arrived in the school in January 1957<sup>33</sup>. Most of the girls who were admitted to this first class were dejected and never liked the school at all. This is because most had set their eyes to admission at the Kikuyu Girls High School for the Protestants or Loreto Convent Limuru for the Catholics. These were the two known schools for girls who made it at that time.

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<sup>31</sup> Warren letter to Mombasa Diocesan Synod: CMSA/F3 A5 1952

<sup>32</sup> K.N.A/61/432/1957

<sup>33</sup> B.G.H.S School Magazine, 1971

“Then came the invitation to go to Butere to start a new secondary school. I do not remember if I cried most of the week that followed or if I was too sad to cry. On arrival at Butere I was not the only dejected looking girl. Practically everyone felt cheated, especially those who had been at Butere since standard five.”<sup>34</sup>

This feeling of disappointment was further heightened by the girls encounter with boys from the nearby C.M.S. Maseno High School at music festivals. The Maseno boys teased and laughed at them for being taught by primary school teachers and imagining that they were in high school. This was because most of the teachers at Butere in 1957 had been teaching primary school classes. “They scared us stiff on this highway to nowhere so called Butere Girls High School”<sup>35</sup>

With time however, the girls helped by their headmistress, Miss Mary Miles and other teachers overcame their negative feelings, got used to and eventually loved their school. They got assured that they were on the right track. With the assistance of their teachers, they worked so hard that it was not a surprise when the ‘O’ level results of this first class came out in 1961, and they all had passed<sup>36</sup>.

Life in these initial years of the girls’ secondary school was quite simple but focussed. There were no excesses and physical facilities were inadequate. The school diet for instance mainly consisted of maize and beans, ugali and cabbage, with porridge for breakfast. The girls however learnt to accept what was available and not to be derailed by their deficiencies. Beyond the class lessons, they organised tuition for one another, where those who were good in certain subjects coached the rest. These girls also formed a habit of praying together often. This was as a result of the education which they were offered which was in the context of a religious background of moral and ethical standards. It is no wonder that most girls who went to this school in the late

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<sup>34</sup> Miriam K. Were, “Some memories of my Butere Days (1957 - 1960)”

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> B.G.H.S school magazine, 1971

1950s and early 1960s as shall be outlined in the next chapter ended up being very successful and even currently, hold important positions in this country and beyond.

#### **6.4 Initial Hardships and Academic Life at Butere Girls High School**

Butere Girls High School right from its inception faced a number of challenges which stifled its development. The most striking one had to do with staffing. At the time of its establishment in January 1957, the school only had one teacher, Miss Mary Miles (the headmistress). Later in the year, the school received two other teachers; Lowise Provet (English) and Godfrey Awimbo (Mathematics) but these were not enough to effectively teach the secondary school. They nevertheless did their best with the hope of getting graduate teachers in the near future. However, it did not happen and by the end of the year 1957, Mary Miles was desperate in her plea for teachers<sup>37</sup>.

This staffing problem at Butere was heightened by the fact that the C.M.S. was experiencing financial constraints and therefore was not able to give enough grants for teachers at the school. In her letter dated, 29, November 1957, Mary Miles asks Ruth Douglas (Secretary for overseas education) for a teacher urgently.<sup>38</sup> This was followed by another letter in December of the same year in which Miles talks of a serious problem of staffing at Butere. In this letter, she asks that Joan Lloyd of Gayaza Girls (Uganda) should be loaned to Butere Girls until the end of 1958.

Gayaza Girls High School is the oldest girls' school in Uganda established by the C.M.S. in 1905. Initially its purpose was to train girls especially the daughters of chiefs in those skills that would make them better wives. When Gayaza opened its doors to all girls, the C.M.S. aimed to

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<sup>37</sup> KNA/MSS/61/2/242

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

educate them based on a strong Christian foundation. Its curriculum was similar to what was offered at Butere in its initial stages; needlework, handwork, childcare as well as scripture reading, writing and arithmetic. Since most of the missionaries who worked in Butere started their work in Uganda, a link between the two schools was created with an aim of establishing the girls' school at Butere to emulate that at Gayaza. Loaning of teachers from Gayaza therefore was one way of promoting this.

In her reply letter, Ruth Douglas through the chairman of the Board of Governors of Butere Girls High School, Bishop L.J Beecher said that if possible, a recruit would be available for Butere in January 1958. It was however decided in December 1957 by the C.M.S. Education Board that, Gayaza Girls should release Miss Plummer to Butere at the end of first term (1958). Butere was also allocated temporarily a Miss Mariel Wynter who “could be available for the school during part of the first term and second term”.<sup>39</sup>

In January 1958, the government gave grants for teachers at Butere as follows: three graduates; two Europeans and one African. In addition to these, the C.M.S. provided two grants for the school.<sup>40</sup> With these, the school managed to get at least four European and one African teacher in addition to Miles.

The new school also lacked adequate facilities and this became a challenge to the students, teachers and the administration. There was severe shortage of furniture, essential amenities like latrines and also classrooms. In 1958 however, a new building programme started on the thirteen and a half acre piece of land which had been given by the local clan “*Abashirotsa*”. Influenced by their ex-chief Mulama, and also having witnessed the progress of the people who had

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<sup>39</sup> KNA/MSS/61/2/242

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*

received education in their midst, these people had come to value educational institutions and therefore supported the development of Butere Girls so as to provide more opportunities for girls to get educated. Funding for this programme was obtained from the Motor Trust Fund who gave 950 British pounds for the construction of classrooms and a laboratory<sup>41</sup>. This improved physical facilities at the school. By 1960, a dining hall and a Biology laboratory were completed.

The school therefore picked up and began to develop slowly. At this time, it was receiving grants from the government. The curriculum included the following subjects: Swahili, English, maths, history, geography biology scripture, physical science, art, agriculture, home science and Physical Education. Apart from these, the girls also excelled in co – curricular activities which included debates and games like netball, hockey, volleyball, athletics and country dancing.

In 1961, Butere Girls High School received African teachers from Makerere University, Uganda who were on teaching practice. These teachers supplemented the ones from England and assisted the girls greatly. Some girls even aspired to take up teaching in the future to emulate the Makerere students. By 1962, four classrooms and teachers houses were completed. The head teacher's house and some four dormitories were also put up and completed. The dormitories were to accommodate the girls increasing population which by now was over two hundred.

In 1970, Miss Alice Barasa started the first “A” level class. It consisted of only one art stream. This first “A” level class passed highly; out of the 26 candidates, 24 got direct entry to universities. Of the remaining two, one got a scholarship to study in Britain and another studied library science at Makerere University. Ever since, the school maintained high passes in examinations. In 1971, the school again was faced with the challenge of inadequate staffing due

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<sup>41</sup> B.O.G Minutes, 27.5.1960

to the increase in the number of girls. The school's population at this time had reached 329 students but they had only 14 teachers. However the situation improved when an additional four teachers were employed to make 18 in 1972. Staff establishment in 1972 was as follows: Barasa BSc, (EA) Dip. Ed. (EA), M. Aderi BA, (EA) Dip. Ed (EA), K. Ashene B.Com. (Manchester), L. Echenje S1 (Kenyatta), B. Endusa B Ed. (EA), B. Holt BSc, M. Kariru BA (EA), L. Mahan B Ed. (EA), C. Nola S1 (Kenyatta), J. Mulahi P1 (Kaimosi), P. Nkumbi S1 (Kenyatta), B. Saddimbah BSC, L. Solberg, BA S. P, Tymms BA, S. Thompson BA C and Watt BA, Dip Ed<sup>42</sup>.

In the year 1977, the retired President Daniel Moi (then the vice president of Kenya) visited the school during which time he helped raise 434,000 Kenya shillings. This money helped renovate teachers' houses and put up dormitories, laboratories and the extension of the Dining Hall so that it could cope with the rising population which by now had reached 650 girls<sup>43</sup>.

The Anglican Church of Kenya (A.C.K.) Diocese of Butere maintained its attachment to this institution as sponsors. They supported the school through sponsoring of needy students, spiritually guiding and counselling of the girls and providing a chaplain for the school. Even today, the Anglican church of Butere maintains this position.

There was however an unfortunate event in the year 1979. There was a student unrest which cost the school large amounts of money for repairs. When the C.M.S. established Butere as a school for girls, they emphasized religious formation and character training. The girls were therefore trained in strict adherence to rules and authority. All the girls belonged to a Christian family which was headed by a teacher and whose aim was mentorship. The girls would therefore carry out bible study and pray together. These families stayed in common houses which were built

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<sup>42</sup> B.G.H.S school magazine

<sup>43</sup> B.G.H.S school records

facing each other and in a circular design which resembled the African homestead. In a common ground just outside these houses, all the girls would occasionally meet for common prayers and talks (Wanyangu, 29.6.15; Barasa, 23.7.2015).



PLATE 3: Butere Girls Dormitories (with the chapel on the left), 1945



PLATE 4: Butere Girls Dormitories, 1975



Apart from emphasis on character formation, the C.M.S. faced with inadequacy of physical facilities in the initial stages worked hard to put them in place and this gave the girls some comfort at the school. From the late 1960s onwards, the school was equipped with well-furnished dormitories, spacious classrooms, the library, laboratory and even the ablution blocks. These facilities only became strained in the later years with increasing population without corresponding expansion of the facilities (Rapando, 19.07.15; Otieno, 19.07.15). In 1978 with a population of 700 girls, the dining hall, the dormitories, the library and the ablution blocks were the same ones that were in use in 1968 when the population was 250 girls.

When missionaries left Butere Girls High School Alice Barasa, the first African Headmistress kept up these traditions and even improved on them. For instance, the mentorship programme at the school was very strong. Each house was assigned a mother, and every new student a mentor. In later years, some of these traditions which held the school community together were abandoned. That strong sense of communal life was lost and facilities at the school also deteriorated. For instance, the well-furnished dining hall complete with cutlery became a thing of the past (Rapando, 27.6.15). The quality of meals also deteriorated. The girls therefore started complaining about what they termed a poor diet at the school. Moreover, the girls did not like the authoritarian style of leadership as imposed on them by the then head teacher, Hellen Omoka (Otieno, 19.7.2015; Namai; 27.6.2015; Barasa, 23.7.2015).

One morning, the girls refused to go to class but instead started singing and chanting in the compound, saying that they wanted Hellen Omoka out of the school. They also complained about their school diet (Otieno, 19.7.2015). They marched to the administration block and stoned the window panes. They also destroyed classrooms and the library (Wechuli, 17.6.15; Manya, 18.6.15). As a result, the school was closed down indefinitely and students sent home. When

they resumed at school after one week, the school administration promised to improve their diet and other facilities. In the same year however, Mrs Omoka was replaced by Lorna Ottaro who took over leadership of the school.

The 1979 riot was the first ever in the history of Butere Girls High School. After Lorna had settled down, the administration after this riot introduced class meetings. They were headed by class teachers and were held once per week as a way of creating rapport with the students. The meetings were also aimed at identifying students' grievances before they got out of hand. With these measures, the school was not kept down by this incidence for a long time. They quickly recovered from it and continued excelling academically.

Butere Girls High School celebrated its silver jubilee in 1982. This event was quite historical because it brought back some of her first headmistresses to the celebration, like Miss Mary Miles. Also brought to the celebration were a big number of old girls who were by then important women in society for example Dr (now professor) Miriam Were, Dr Julia Ojiambo, Lady Effie Owuor to mention just a few<sup>44</sup>. During this event, money was raised (Kenya shillings 682,000) which was used for building more classrooms and dormitories. Together with parents' contribution this money also saw the construction of staff houses and a modern kitchen to cater for approximately 800 girls. Enrolment in 1984 stood at 800 girls.

## **6.5 Progress and Challenges after 1985**

Apart from the 1979 student riot, this first girls' school in Western Kenya made very good progress and excelled in academic performance as well as in discipline. In co – curricular activities, the school excelled in drama, games and music. In 1985 for example, Butere Girls

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<sup>44</sup> B.G.H.S school records

High School produced the best cultural dance in national drama festival. The school also excelled in basketball, handball, hockey and volleyball. When its first 8.4.4 class sat for its first Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (K.C.S.E), Butere Girls High School was among the top 100 schools in Kenya. These were good results from the school which saw 52 girls join Kenyan universities. As a result, the then president of Kenya, Daniel Moi while on a tour of Western Kenya gave them a bull to feast on<sup>45</sup>.

However, this glory of the School was not to last for ever. In the late 1980s and early 1990s the school started facing challenges that made it decline particularly in academic performance. As a result of deteriorating performance, entry behaviour of students was affected in two ways. First, the school started admitting girls with lower marks as compared to earlier years. This is because some girls who had passed highly at primary level did not prioritise admission to Butere Girls High School. Parents particularly started to prefer Lugulu Girls, Mukumu Girls and Bunyore Girls schools within the same province because they were considered to be on an upward trend. Secondly, girls at the school were now drawn mainly from the local community. Before 1990, 75% of students at Butere Girls High School were drawn from the entire province, but in later years over 60% of the girls began to come from within Butere-Mumias District<sup>46</sup>. The school selected most of its learners from the local district and a few from surrounding districts in the province because of the quota system of admission which is as a result of classification of schools. Most girls from other regions who were admitted to Butere Girls High School chose to learn elsewhere. After all, the prestigious status of the school was declining.

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<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> B.G.H.S school records

Indiscipline also increased over the years. In 1994 for instance, five girls were suspended from the school over indiscipline cases. Theft cases were on the increase as some were caught stealing other girls' personal belongings<sup>47</sup>. Pregnancy cases were also being reported in the school. This was partly attributed to leadership. The headmistress at this time did not have a firm grip on the girls as compared to the former heads at the school. As a result, discipline of the students fell (Onyango, 15.5.15; Inganga, 20.5.15; Rapando, 27.6.15).

Given this downward trend of a school which had been the best girls' school in Western Kenya and nicknamed "The Alliance of Western Kenya", stakeholders started demanding for better management that would see the school reclaim its past success. The school administration therefore worked hard and tried various ways of improving the school's performance. After some time, the school began showing signs of improvement by posting good results in the late 1990s as shown in the table below:

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<sup>47</sup> B.G.H.S staff minutes, 15/6/1992

**Table 6.5.1 B.G.H.S K.C.S.E Mean Score over the Years**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Candidates</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>
1989	152	5.808
1990	163	5.387
1991	159	5.623
1992	182	5.264
1993	200	5.915
1994	186	6.565
1995	139	6.935
1996	149	7.698
1997	149	4.894
1998	237	7.025
1999	169	7.402
2000	199	7.603
2001	173	8.228
2002	149	7.700
2003	189	7.519
2004	181	7.685
2005	244	6.930
2006	244	7.527
2007	229	7.149

**Source: B.G.H.S School Records**

In fact, the school had just recorded commendable improvement in 1996 by attaining a 60% pass in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) when in 1997 results of 107 out of the 149 candidates were cancelled<sup>48</sup>. Report from the Kenya National Examination council said that the results of the chemistry paper had been cancelled due to collusion from students. No student had been caught cheating during the exams. This incidence may have been caused by over ambition to excel academically (Namai, 27.6.2015; Otieno, 19.17.2015).

This incidence almost brought Butere Girls High School which was struggling for good performance to its knees. Stakeholders expressed disappointment with the management of the school. Some even demanded transfer of the then head teacher. From this time, the relationship of the head teacher (Ruth Otieno) and the sponsor was affected. It may have occasioned the sponsors move to look for Mrs Grace Namai who took over leadership of the school from Ruth Otieno.

This school organised for Golden Jubilee celebrations in 2007. It was done under Grace Namai's leadership (also an old girl of the school). The event saw many alumni from all over Kenya report to the school some even wearing semblance of the school uniform. A few of those who attended include, Justice Wasilwa, Violet Atakos, Grace Rapando, Juddy Lubanga, Adelide Mbakali and Gladys Obare. In their speeches, the old girls praised Butere Girls High School for having given them a head start in their lives and careers. They remembered with nostalgia their Butere years. However, one message was clear from those who spoke; they wanted the old glory of Butere Girls High School to come back<sup>49</sup>. Faced with this challenge, the current principal of

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<sup>48</sup> B.G.H.S School records

<sup>49</sup> B.G.H.S school records

the school, Dorah Okaalo says that top on her agenda at the school is to soar it to greater heights both academically and discipline wise.

## **6.6 Leadership at Butere Girls High School**

In 1957, Miss Mary Miles opened the secondary school chapter at Butere Girls' School. Miss Miles was a very determined person with a clear goal. She streamlined the school such that it became an excellent institution, comparable to such Anglican Girls Schools as Gayaza in Uganda. Under her leadership, Butere became the second ranked African Girls High School in Kenya in 1957. Miss Miles was very successful. For instance, the first lot of form four students all attained first and second division in the Cambridge School Certificate Examination<sup>50</sup>. Today Miss Miles students as shall be shown in the next chapter are playing leading roles in their respective professions. Miles had been teaching at Butere before it was elevated to a secondary school. She was succeeded by Miss Plummer in 1959 upon her retirement.

When the school opened its doors to the first form one class in 1957, its Board of Governors (B.O.G.) was chaired by Bishop L.J. Beecher. He was succeeded by Bishop Festo Olang who chaired the board up to the year 1984. Other people who have served as chair of the school's B.O.G are, Mr John Okwara (1984 – 1985), Prof. C.M.P Onian'go (1986 – 1989), Mrs Sandy Kanyi (1990 – 1999), Mr Dan Ameyo (1999 – 2000), Rev. Canon M. Sande (2001 – 2005) and Mrs Alice Muyonga (2006 – 2012).

Miss Plummer headed Butere Girls High School between 1959 and 1964. She had come to the school the year before (1958) from Gayaza Girls in Uganda. She carried on the spirit of Miles at the school, emphasizing hard work and determination. The school therefore continued thriving

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<sup>50</sup> B.G.H.S school magazine

academically and spiritually. One of her pupils at this time was Lorna Ottaro who later became headmistress of B.G.H.S. In 1964 Miss Elizabeth Hannington (grand-daughter of Bishop Hannington who was murdered in Uganda) succeeded Miss Plummer. She had been teaching in this institution before her appointment as headmistress.

When Miss Hannington first offered herself for missionary work, she was posted to Uganda. She taught for many years at Gayaza before being posted to Butere. She emphasized upholding of Christian values and character in the education of girls. Apart from academics, she taught the girls how to pray and meditate upon bible verses. “She was a mother figure to the girls. She was so humble, kind and accommodating that I found it challenging to fit in her shoes in that sense” (Barasa, 23.7.2015).

Miss Alice Barasa was appointed the first African headmistress of Butere Girls High School in 1971. She was taking over from Hannington who upon her retirement wanted to go back to her family in England. At the time of this appointment she had worked as the deputy headmistress at Alliance Girls High School for two years, a position she got after having taught for only one term at the school. She had been posted to Alliance immediately after her graduation at the University of Nairobi.





## PLATE 5: Alice Barasa, the first African headmistress

The community generally welcomed her appointment as they had been anticipating African leadership especially after independence in 1963. However, some people (especially teachers and students) felt that the high standards at Butere Girls High School which had been maintained by European leadership would be affected (Rapando, 27.6.15). This transition therefore was not very smooth and it led to minor resistance. Miss Barasa however worked hard and proved her ability to effectively steer the school which was by now one of the best protestant girls' schools in the country. "Having come from Alliance, I aimed at quality education for girls. 'There is nothing a*Mzungu*<sup>51</sup> would do, that I could not!' I told myself"

Alice possessed excellent leadership skills and within no time, she received the support of not only teachers and the students, but also the community and the sponsors. She enjoyed tremendous support from Bishop Olang' (First African Archbishop who was by then B.O.G chairman at Butere Girls High School). He occasionally came to the school to talk to the students and the teachers. He mentored girls by telling them that it did not matter where they came from, that they needed to set their goals at the highest level (Barasa, 23.7.2015). It was through the help of Bishop Olang' that Chadwick College, which had been transferred to Siriba, was annexed to Butere Girls High School thus giving the school the enormous compound of 63 acres and the benefit of inheriting the Chadwick College buildings. Before this, the school faced a big challenge of facilities since girls were crowded in dormitories and some classes went on under trees.

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<sup>51</sup>*Mzungu* is a Swahili name for European

One of her innovative programmes which worked for Butere was the morning school day and free afternoon. She introduced this programme in response to the weather pattern in this part of the country. In the programme, lessons began at 5.00 a.m. in the morning and girls had free afternoons when they slept. They went for games in the evening before ending their day. As a result of this change in the school programme, girls woke up early while fresh and were very attentive in class (Barasa, 23.7.2015). All the girls participated in games in the evening and since the programme was inclusive, they excelled particularly in netball and volleyball as has already been mentioned. After a short period of three years, Alice left Butere Girls when she went for her postgraduate studies at the University of Pittsburgh in the U.S.A.

Mrs Hellen Omoka became the next headmistress who led the school from 1974 to 1979. Before her appointment, Hellen was a teacher who had taught at the school for two years. Her appointment however met a lot of resistance particularly from the teachers and the students. During her tenure, a number of teachers went on transfer and others left the school to go for further studies. This is partly attributed to her style of leadership which was authoritarian (Rapando, 19.7.15; Namai, 27.6.2015; Barasa, 23.7.2015). As a result, the strong social team work which had been nurtured through mentoring and working together began to disintegrate. “Bishop Olang’ did not come any more and we missed him” (Manya, 24.7.2015).

Despite these challenges in administration, Hellen increased the “O” level streams from two to three and in 1977 a fourth stream was added. More dormitories were also built other than the ones inherited from Chadwick College. Trouble started when girls rioted for the first time in the history of the school in 1979. The community and the sponsors demanded for a new headmistress claiming that Hellen was running down B.G.H.S. The education office responded to this by appointing Lorna Ottaro in the same year to take over the running of the school. When

she left Butere, Mrs Omoka proceeded for further studies at Kenyatta University College, which was then a constituent college of University of Nairobi.

Hellen was succeeded by Mrs Lorna Ottaro who headed the school from 1979 to 1984. She received a cordial welcome at Butere and in response tried her best to improve the schools image. During her era she renovated the “A” level classes and completed the physics laboratory. She also continued renovating teachers’ houses, a task started by Mrs Omoka. She transformed the Chadwick College social hall into the staffroom. However academic performance during her time maintained a normal curve.

Mrs Sella Liko then took over the leadership from Mrs Ottaro in 1984. She moved from Lugulu where she had been deputy headmistress. When she came into office, Butere Girls was under pressure to perform. Schools which were established after Butere like Lugulu Girls and Bunyore Girls had now overtaken it. This attracted a lot of concern especially from the sponsor. Immediately after settling in office in 1984, Sella became conscious of this pressure and tried her best to change things for the better.

As a school we stand greatly criticised now for our apparent failure as compared to our past success. To many in the republic, we are a fallen race therefore we need to rise once more- we need to work extra hard to revive our past glory and honour<sup>52</sup>.

During Sella’s time, the girls’ performance improved slightly and maintained a normal curve. On the other hand, high standards of discipline were maintained. With the help of donations from his Excellency the president, a home science workshop in preparation for the 8.4.4 system of education was constructed<sup>53</sup>. It was later completed by parents.

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<sup>52</sup> Sell Liko, former head of B.G.H.S, retrieved from School Magazine, 1985

<sup>53</sup> B.G.H.S school records

When Liko had stayed at Butere for close to ten years and not having been able to steer the school to very high academic performance like she could have wished, she opted on her own volition to move from Butere. In 1993, she was taken to Kaimosi Girls and Ruth Otieno who was then heading Kaimosi Girls became the new headmistress of Butere Girls High School. Ruth headed the school until 2003 when she handed over the leadership of the school to Mrs Grace Namai, an alumna of the school. From Butere, Ruth was posted to teach at Kagumo Teachers College.

The appointment of Mrs Grace Namai to head B.G.H.S was initiated by the sponsor. They were concerned about standards at Butere and started looking for someone whom they thought would steer the school to greater heights. She was at this time heading Moi Girls Vokoli, a school she had put on an upward academic map. Her reception at Butere was therefore cordial and she settled down to work. During Namai's time, interest in co-curricular activities and academic work were maintained. Results also maintained a normal curve. She greatly improved the school's aesthetics by the flower initiative which saw planting and maintaining of flowers in the school compound. She also began the construction of a new dormitory, to house 200 students. She left Butere in 2007 upon attaining her retirement age. The current principal, Dorah Okaalo took over leadership of the school in 2008. Many are hopeful that she will bring back the old glory of Butere Girls High School.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has traced the history of Butere Girls High School from 1957 up to 2007. Some of the most important features with regard to the establishment and development of this school have been discussed. It has been shown that the establishment of the school followed the

recommendations made in the report of the committee on African education in Kenya; the Beecher Report of 1949, as well as the African demands for higher education of girls in Western Kenya. After its establishment, it developed into a highly performing school and became valued by the community and the entire country. Consequently, it attracted girls from different parts of Western Kenya who aimed at excellence as reflected in its motto “For Only the Best”.

The school faced a number of challenges after its establishment like inadequate staffing, and lack of infrastructure which stifled its development. However, these challenges did not deter both the staff and the students from their determination. Their hard work and dedication to the school distinguished it as one of the best girls’ schools in the country. Unfortunately, the school lost this position when its performance started dropping over the years. This continues to worry many stakeholders who keep hoping that it will in the near future reclaim its position as a highly performing school especially now that it has been granted national status.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **7.0 THE INFLUENCE OF BUTERE GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL ON THE COMMUNITY**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the influence which the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) has had on the socio-economic life of the community. The society was one of the leading missionary groups in educational matters in the region and established the first secondary school for girls in Western Kenya. As one of the pioneer girls' schools in the region, Butere has occupied a very prominent position and has been a point of reference to other developing schools in the area.

Apart from the school's influence on educational development, it has also played an important role in the social, economic and religious lives of the people. This chapter also gives an assessment of Butere's contribution to the Kenyan society as a whole. This has been done by documenting the various roles which the school's Old Girls have engaged in at the local, national as well as the international level.

#### **7.2 Butere Girls High School and Educational Development in Western Kenya and Beyond**

This school started at a time when there were very few secondary schools in Western Kenya. As already mentioned in previous chapters, Butere Girls was the first girls' secondary school to be established by the Protestant missionaries in Western Kenya. Other girls' schools that existed at this time in the country were: African Girls High School Kikuyu (Alliance Girls), Loreto Convent Limuru, Mugoiri Girls in Nyeri, Machakos Convent School and Kahuhia in Forthall. This means that Butere Girls High School was established at a time when educational opportunities for women in Western Kenya were very limited.

Butere Girls High School contributed significantly to the development of education in Western Kenya (Rapando, 27.6.15; Wanyangu, 29.6.15). Salome, now a retired educationist but who still holds important positions in the community and church says that she could not have been educated if the school was not started. Her father Barnaba Weche was among the first four boys that pioneered Butere School under Walter Chadwick. So when Butere Girls was started, her father was keen to help her children get what he himself had, and considered important. With a lot of praise for Butere Girls High School, Salome says that she appreciates the teaching, encouragement and support that she received at the school. She quickly adds that all her sisters (seven of them) learnt at Butere Girls High School and became successful in their various careers.

After the establishment of Butere Girls High School, the C.M.S and other missionary groups who served in Western Kenya established other girls' schools in the region. Some of these schools include, Ng'iya (C.M.S), Kaimosi and Lugulu (F.A.M), Mumias and Rang'ala (Catholics) and many more that came up later. The harambee effort which started at Chavakali saw the establishment of many other schools in the region especially after independence. The C.M.S continued to play a leading role in the establishment and development of these schools.

Butere as one of the leading C.M.S schools did a lot in assisting the upcoming schools. A good number of those who taught in these schools happened to be former students of Butere Girls High School. Even today, a number of head teachers and principals of schools in the region are former students of the school. Apart from this, it has also influenced the development of these schools. In what is called 'bench marking' students and teachers of other schools have for instance spend time at Butere, learning about their programmes with the aim of borrowing the most effective practices to apply back at their school (Namai; 27.6 2015; Barasa, 23.7.2015).

There particularly existed a very close relationship between Butere Girls and Ng'iya Girls. Many times the students of Ng'iya interacted with those at Butere through games, debates and subject discussions (Barasa, 23.7.2015; Namai, 27.6.2015). Whenever students from other schools visited Butere Girls, they played, held discussions and even ate together. In 1971 for instance, Butere Girls and Lugulu Girls collaborated to mentor and produce a future lawyer each. When they held their volleyball and netball games together, each time a school scored, their supporters would cheer by shouting 'Lawyer'. It indeed came to pass when in the same period, they both produced lawyers who currently are, Justice Nambuye from Butere and Justice Nekoye from Lugulu (Barasa, 23.7.2015).

Some teachers at Butere Girls were national examiners in their teaching subjects. They were therefore occasionally invited to schools within Western province to give talks on performance. Students of Butere Girls High school have also inspired students from neighbouring schools through Christian Union weekend challenges, debates, specific subject symposia, clubs and societies. Many schools in the region have been inspired by Butere's drama club (The Chadwicks) which has consistently over the years performed at national drama competitions.

The school has also influenced development of education not just in Western Kenya, but in the entire country. The list of former students of Butere Girls High School who became influential in the education sector is endless. These include the late Dr. Elizabeth Masiga, who served as Chief Inspector of Schools and permanent secretary in the Ministry of education, Prof Norah Olembu, a globally renowned research scientist with distinguished service on the Kenyan scene, Professor Florida Karani who was the first woman deputy vice-chancellor in Kenya and many others.



### **7.3 The influence of Butere Girls High School on the Socio-Economic life of the Community.**

For many years, Butere Girls High School was a school of choice for many bright girls in Western Province and surrounding regions. The school has produced prominent people nationally and even internationally. These include doctors, lawyers, judges, bankers, academicians, teachers, politicians, administrators and many other professionals who have passed through its gates. Old girls of Butere Girls High School have held privileged positions in this country and beyond.

Most of the former students interviewed say that their success in their various careers stems from the kind of training that they received at the school. Their school motto read “BUTERE GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL; FOR ONLY THE BEST”. Inspired by this motto, many girls considered themselves among the best in academics and character. They therefore aimed at achieving the best in school and in their future careers. For instance, one former student states that:

The success in my career was greatly influenced by my training at Butere Girls. I was trained to independently make decisions and use my discretion to come up with solutions when it was necessary to do so. We were trained and mentored in all spheres of life during our learning sessions and clubs programmes (Namai, 27.6.2015).

From the quotation above, we learn that this school has had a lot of positive influence to the girls who learnt there. “We learnt hard work and responsibility; there was no room for laxity in that school” (Inganga, 20.5.2015).

A major factor which has made most of the old girls of Butere Girls High School to prosper in their careers stems from the kind of discipline that the school instilled in its students right from the time of its inception in 1957 through to the late 1980s. The former students interviewed

revealed that the school had a wonderful reputation in terms of discipline and academic performance. Many say they are disappointed with the schools declining performance and discipline standards and wish that the good name of the school they love so much came back. They describe with nostalgia their days at Butere.

#### **7.4 Positions held in the society by the Old Girls of Butere Girls High School**

The influence of Butere Girls High School can be assessed by examining the calibre of its products. The successes which some of the former students attained both in their public and private lives clearly show the kind of contribution that this school has made to the development of the Kenyan nation and the world in general.

Many former students of Butere Girls High School have been instrumental in the social, economic and political transformation of the people's lives in Western Kenya, the entire country and even internationally. It is not easy to trace and document all the positions which the school's former students have held and are still holding at the moment. This study has therefore picked on a few old girls who have had influence on the local community, the Kenyan nation and also internationally to serve as case studies of the kind of influence which the school has had through its former students.

##### **7.4.1 Salome Apondi Wanyangu**

Salome attended Butere Girls Boarding Primary School (1945 – 1949) and African Girls High School Kikuyu, now Alliance Girls High (1950 – 1951) where she also trained as a P2 teacher (1952 – 1953). She taught at; Chadwick Teachers Training College (1954 - 1956), Lubinu Intermediate School (1957 - 1960), Kabsabet Women TTC (1961 - 1963) and Shitoto Primary

School as headmistress (1968 - 1971). It is while serving as headmistress that she received a scholarship to study Home Economics at Seaford College of Education in the United Kingdom.

Upon completion of her studies in the UK, Salome was appointed an Assistant Primary School Inspector (APSI) a position she held up to 1988. While in this position, she also attended Road Safety Programmes held in Helsinki – Finland in 1982 and represented the women of Western Province in the Women Decade in Nairobi in 1985. She then became the Regional Commissioner of the Girl Guides in Western province.

For many years and even up to today Salome continues to play a very significant role in the church. She was among the pioneer group of women in Western Kenya to be commissioned as Mothers Union members in the Anglican Church in 1966. In her service in the church, Salome was a member of several Boards in the Diocese; Board of Finance, Board of Mission, Board of Education, Appointment Committee and the Bishop's Chaplaincy. She is now a lay Canon in the Diocese of Mumias. This is a position which is only bestowed to outstanding Christian leaders.

This old girl of Butere was not only outstanding in her career in education and in the church, but also made a significant impact on community work. She became a member of the Butere Girls High School B.O.G. committee. She has also served on several other Boards of Governors in different schools like, Lubinu Boys High School, Butere Boys High School, St. Joseph's Secondary School Shibinga, St. Gabriel Secondary School Isongo, Shitoto Girls Secondary School and St. Anne's Secondary School, Indangalasia.

Salome's other roles to the community include serving as treasurer of Elwasambi dispensary (1997 - 2010), Shianda Youth Polytechnic and East Wanga Electricity project. She was honoured

by the Government of Kenya for her services in the community and was awarded the Head of State Commendation (HSC) on 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2004.

#### **7.4.2 Professor Florida Amakobe Karani**

She made history as Kenya's first ever female Chancellor of a public university. Prof Florida Amakobe Karani was appointed the Chancellor of Maseno University in 2008. Prior to this appointment, Prof Karani had served as Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Academic Affairs at the University of Nairobi (1994 – 2004) and Principal, College of Education and External Studies (1988 – 1994).

Prof Karani attended Butere Girls High School between 1962 and 1965 before proceeding to the University of East Africa, Nairobi where she obtained her Bachelor of Arts Degree (1968), Post Graduate Diploma in Education (1969), and Master of Arts from the University of Nairobi (1974). She obtained her Doctor of Philosophy in Education from the University of Pittsburgh (U.S.A) in 1979.

Prior to becoming DVC, Prof Karani has been involved in training of trainers for the UN Economic Commission for Africa and UNICEF. In 2002 she was appointed a member of the Africa Regional Scientific Committee of the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge. She has also held membership positions in the Inter University Council of East Africa and Kenya's Commission for Higher Education (currently, Commission for University Education). She was a member of the commission of inquiry into the education system of Kenya, commonly referred to as the Davy Koech Commission of 1998 and has also chaired the board of adult education in Kenya. In 1994 she received the Order of the Grand Warrior of Kenya (OGW)

presidential award in recognition of her contribution towards improving the quality of higher education in Kenya.

#### **7.4.3 Lady Justice Effie Owuor**

Born in 1943, Justice Effie Owuor attended Butere Girls High School from 1958 to 1961 then proceeded to Alliance Girls High School (1962 - 1963). She is a graduate of the University of East Africa, Dar-Es-Salaam (Bachelor of Laws degree) and has undertaken various professional and judicial seminars on law reform, women's rights and criminal law.

Justice Owuor had a distinguished career in the Attorney General's chambers and Judiciary spanning over a period of 33 years. She rose through the ranks from a Resident Magistrate to a Judge of the Court of Appeal. Owuor was the first woman to be appointed judge in the High Court of Kenya in 1981, and later on the first lady judge of the Court of appeal.

The retired Judge of Appeal has a wide range of experience in family, women, children, marital and succession law. She has served as Commissioner of Kenya Law Reform Commission and was a founding member and chairperson of the Kenya Women's Judges Association. She was one time Kenya's Goodwill Ambassador to UNICEF whose special role was advocacy, fundraising, and spotlighting the rights and plight of children in need of special protection. She was also the chairperson of the National Task Force on Laws Relating to Children. Justice Owuor opted for retirement in 2003.

#### **7.4.4 Elizabeth Semo Masiga**

Elizabeth Semo Masiga attended Butere Girls High School between 1958 and 1961 after which she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree and later a post graduate diploma in education from the

University of Nairobi. In 1974, she obtained her Master's Degree in Geography specializing in urban development and sociology from the same university.

In 1975 Elizabeth was appointed Subject Inspector in Geography, one of the only three African Women Inspectors (the rest were Europeans). She moved through the ranks from the grade of Inspector to the highest grade in the Inspectorate, the Chief Inspector of Schools. In 1997 she was appointed the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and in 1998 she was posted to the Ministry of Tourism in the same position in which she retired in 1999.

While in the Ministry of Education Elizabeth paid special attention to Girl-Child Education introducing the policy of pregnant girls continuing to finish their education. After her retirement, Elizabeth continued her community service in different capacities. She undertook several projects including 'Care with a Vision' - An orphan care project, established an Academy (Mikisa Christian Academy) based on Christian Foundations and remained actively serving on school and hospital boards including Karen C Secondary School, Nairobi; Ganjala Secondary School, Busia; Maseno Hospital and Kenya Industrial Estates. She was the Vice Chair of Kenyatta University Council until her death in 2007.

#### **7.4.5 Professor Miriam Khamadi Were**

Prof Miriam Were was born in 1940. She was among the pioneer class at Butere Girls High School when it opened its doors in 1957. After high school, she obtained a degree in Natural Sciences from William Penn College, IOWA U.S.A in 1964 and postgraduate Diploma in Education from Makerere University in 1966. Prof. Were qualified as a medical doctor from the University of Nairobi in 1973 and was cited as the overall best-graduating student. Subsequently, she obtained both the Master of Public Health (1976) and Doctor of Public Health (1981) from

the Johns Hopkins University in the U.S.A. During her PhD studies, she was also awarded the George P. Tolbert Health Award for outstanding contribution to international health.

Prof. Were joined the University of Nairobi as a lecturer in the Department of Community Health in the Faculty of Health Sciences in 1974. In 1985 she became the Chief Health and Nutrition Adviser, UNICEF Ethiopia, a position she held until 1990. Thereafter, she was appointed the Representative and Chief of Mission, World Health Organization (WHO) to Ethiopia in Addis Ababa. She served in this position until 1993 when she was elevated to become the Director, United Nations Population Fund Country Support Team Addis Ababa (UNPF/CSTAA), a position she held until 2000. Prof Were has also served on boards both locally and internationally such as UZIMA Foundation, AMREF, National AIDS Control Council (NACC), Kenya Anticorruption Commission (KACC), MAP International, Global Health Workforce Alliance, and Action Africa Help International, among others.

For her community work in health, Prof Miriam K. Were has been recognized by many institutions. Recently (2015), she received the Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize for medical services because of her efforts to bring basic medical services and health rights to women and children in the villages of East Africa.

#### **7.4.6 Lady Justice Joyce Aluoch**

Born in 1947, Lady Justice Joyce Aluoch attended Butere Girls' High School between 1962 and 1965. After obtaining her Bachelor of Laws Degree the University of Nairobi, Hon. Aluoch joined the Kenyan Judiciary as a District Magistrate II in 1974. She rose through the ranks until 1993 when she was appointed as a Judge of the High Court and Judge of Appeal in December of 2007.

In 2003 Justice Aluoch was elected to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child where she served as the Vice-Chairperson. She had previously been elected the first Chairperson of the African Union Committee on the Rights of the Child in the year 2001. In that capacity, she addressed Heads of State and Governments of the African Union every year at the Annual Summit on the situation of children in Africa. This afforded her an opportunity to engage African Heads of States and Government in dialogue with a view to finding solutions to the problems facing the African child such as the use of children as soldiers, child labour and the effect of HIV/AIDS on children.

An outstanding female judge, her community service role through the Girl Guides Movement in Kenya helped to develop the Peer Prevention Programme for Young People, a programme for HIV/AIDS prevention among the youth, which has been adopted in many African countries. This program was aimed at reducing the spread of the HIV virus through the education of girls and women.

Lady Justice Joyce Aluoch was elected judge to the International Criminal Court in 2009 and became the president of the trial division in 2011. During her service Joyce received several awards including the Tufts University Distinguished Alumni Award (2015). She is also the recipient of two national awards for services rendered to the nation of Kenya, the EBS (Elder of the Burning Spear) awarded by President Daniel Arap Moi in 2000 and CBS (Chief of the Order of the Burning Spear) awarded by President Mwai Kibaki in 2010.

#### **7.4.7 Professor Norah Khadzini Olembo**

Professor Norah Olembo went to Butere Girls High School between 1960 and 1963. She is the Executive Director of African Biotechnology Stakeholders Forum (ABSF). She holds a Doctoral



Degree in Molecular Biology from Courthould Institute (University of London) in the United Kingdom, a Post Graduate Degree in Biochemistry from the University of Nairobi (UoN), Master's Degree in Zoology from UoN and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry, Zoology and Botany from the same University. She also holds an advanced level Certificate in Chemistry, Biology and Physics from Mount School in New York.

Professor Olembo has received professional certificate from World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) training in Insect Growth, Development and Behaviour, Insect Endocrinology from International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) in Kenya, Strategic Planning from Voluntary Agencies Development Assistance in Kenya (V.A.D.A) and Recombinant DNA techniques from Courthould Institute in the United Kingdom.

Before her appointment at ABSF, Professor Olembo served as the Managing Director of Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI). She has also worked as the Director of the Kenya Industrial Property Office (KIPO) in the Ministry of Trade and Industry and chaired the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Nairobi. Prior to that, Professor Norah Olembo served as a consultant for Kenya Non-Governmental Organizations Committee for the 1995 United Nations End of Decade Women Conference. She has also been a Senior Lecturer and Graduate Research Assistant at the UoN.

Prof Olembo has consulted for various organizations including the Kenya Non-governmental Committee for the 1985 United Nations End of Decade Women's Conference, the UNEP Biodiversity/Biotechnology Programme, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Secretariat/World Bank and the International Service for National

Agricultural Research. She has published over 30 proceedings, abstract reports and research papers in international scientific journals. She is indeed one of Kenya's leading scientists.

#### **7.4.8 Grace Emily Akinyi Ogot**

Born in 1930, Grace Ogot attended Ng'iya Intermediate School between 1942 and 1945 before proceeding to Butere Girls between 1946 and 1949. A nurse by profession, she was educated at the Nursing Training Hospital in Uganda from 1949 to 1953. She served at the St. Thomas Hospital for Mothers and Babies in London and from 1958 to 1959 as a midwifery tutor and nursing sister at Maseno Hospital in Kenya.

She is a Kenyan author of widely anthologized short stories and novels who also held a ministerial position in the Kenyan government. One of the few well-known woman writers in Kenya, Ogot was the first woman to have fiction published by the East African Publishing House. Her stories appeared in European and African journals such as *Black Orpheus* and *Transition* and in collections such as *The Promised Land* (1966), *Land Without Thunder* (1968), *The Other Woman* (1976), *The Graduate* (1980), *The Island of Tears* (1980) and *The Strange Bride* (1985).

Grace Ogot was nominated the first woman councillor in Kisumu, which marked the beginning of her involvement with politics. In 1983 she was nominated as a Member of Parliament (MP), and two years later, was elected MP for Gem. Subsequently, Grace became Assistant Minister for Culture and Social Services a seat she occupied until 1993.

Ogot also worked as a scriptwriter and an announcer for the British Broadcasting Corporation, as a headmistress, as a community development officer, and as an Air India public relations officer. She was a columnist in *View Point* in the *East African Standard*.

#### **7.4.9 Mary Elizabeth Okelo**

She was the first woman bank manager at Barclays Bank-East Africa and also won the 2013 Enterprising Woman of the Year award. This is a prestigious yearly award given to women entrepreneurs from all over the world. Apart from these, Mary Okelo is also the founder of Barclays Bank Women's Association as well as the founder and first chairperson of Kenya Women's Finance Trust. She attended Butere Girls High School between 1960 and 1963.

She graduated with an Honours degree in History from Makerere University in Uganda. She also holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Early Childhood Education from Froebel College in Dublin, as well as a Diploma from the Institute of Bankers, in London. She is a Holder of two honorary Doctorates one from United Graduate College and Seminary in U.S.A for her contribution to humanity, and the other from Africa Nazarene University Nairobi for distinguished service to the community.

Mary Okelo joined Barclays Bank in 1970 as the first African woman management trainee and rose to become a manager in 1977. In this position, she developed policies leading to further financial inclusion for women in Africa. She has also had numerous other positions like Senior Advisor to the President of the African Development Bank and first regional representative of Women's World Banking. In 1984, she was named a member of a committee set up to look at all the antiquated laws that discriminated against women, like denying them the right to enter into contracts.

Based in Abidjan, she spent three and a half years before moving to be the Vice-President of the Women's World Banking (WWB), of which she was a founding member and had served as a regional representative for three years, from 1985. She later moved to New York where she

served as a Vice President in the WWB, from 1991 to 1992. In 1992, she took leave of absence and moved back to Kenya. Upon returning, she dedicated herself to a business she had begun in 1978, Makini Group of Schools. Her passion for children and to educate had seen her start the school which has grown to be one of the leading institutions in the country.

In 2013, she was the recipient of the Golden Jubilee Award presented by H.E President Uhuru Kenyatta to fifty distinguished Kenyans, and the following year she was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2014 Africa Bankers Awards in Kigali. She is also a Lay Canon in the Anglican Church of Kenya.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the influence of Butere Girls High School to the development of education and also the socio-economic life of the community. It has been shown that this school has contributed positively to the development of other schools in the region. It has also influenced the educational aspirations of many girls from Western Kenya and beyond.

It is not easy to trace and document all the positions which the old girls of Butere Girls High School have held or are still holding. It is therefore believed that the above case studies will suffice as a fair representation of the kind of influence which this school has had on the Kenyan nation and beyond. Given the former students privileged socio-economic levels in the community, it is right to conclude that Butere Girls High School has contributed positively to the socio-economic development of the community.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **8.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **8.1 Summary**

This study intended to find out the role of the Church Missionary Society in the development of girls education in Western Kenya. This was done by focussing on the establishment, and development of Butere Girls High School from 1957 to 2007. An attempt was also made to show the influence of this school on the educational aspirations and socio-economic development of the society in general.

To meet this objective, historical design was used in order to establish facts and draw conclusions concerning the contribution of the C.M.S in the development of girls' education in Western Kenya. Past historical records were used for the reconstruction and documentation on the happenings and events of the problem under study. In this regard, the study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary sources were mainly obtained from the Kenya National Archives, the A.C.K Archives in Nairobi, the Diocese of Butere Library (Chadwick Library) Archives and the Butere Girls High School Archives. Interviews were then employed after the primary search to obtain information which was deemed suitable to supplement the gaps in archival material and also to validate the documentary evidence from primary sources.

The C.M.S was a product of the evangelical revival in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Its founders believed that it was the duty of every Christian to try to propagate the knowledge of the Bible to the heathens. It is because of this that the C.M.S took it upon itself the responsibility of recruiting and sending out missionaries from the Church of England to work in Africa. The missionaries who planted the Anglican Church in Western Kenya were from this background.

The missionaries used education mainly as a tool for evangelism. They focused on formal education through the school. Their first school to be established in the region was Maseno School. It was described as a Christian base from which the gospel was to be carried far and wide into the surrounding country. The School offered elementary education based on the 3Rs. It also aimed at providing an all-round training of body, mind and soul. Industrial training and agriculture were also offered to enhance development of mission work.

Education practice in Butere Girls School between 1916 and 1956 was influenced by the ideology of domesticity. The aim of the missionaries and the colonial administration therefore was to give vocational training to the girls. This was also what the early ex-mission boys like Yona Orao were asking. Later these ex-mission boys requested literacy training to accompany the vocational training so that girls would be well grounded in their fields. The curriculum offered at this time therefore did not stress intellectual knowledge. It focused on reading, religion and preparing girls for marriage.

Education policies at this time were focused on designing a curriculum which would help Africans accept their inferior status as labourers. The impact of the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945 however led the colonial government to issue the first post-war education plan, *The Ten-Year Plan for the Development of African Education*. This policy together with increased demands by the Africans saw the C.M.S change its approach. Following the recommendations of the Beecher report, Butere Girls School was upgraded to a secondary school in 1957.

After its establishment, Butere Girls High School developed into a highly performing school and became valued by the community and the entire country. Consequently, it attracted girls from

different parts of Western Kenya who aimed at excellence as reflected in its motto “For Only the Best”. Even though the school faced a number of challenges after its establishment, these did not deter both the staff and the students from their determination. Their hard work and dedication to the school distinguished it as one of the best girls’ schools in the country. Unfortunately, the school lost this position when its performance especially in national examinations started to drop.

Apart from this drop in performance which occurred during the later period, the establishment of this school has had a lot of influence on the people of Western Kenya especially girls and women. It has also contributed positively to the development of other schools in the region. From the time of its establishment, Butere Girls especially in the early years has been a point of reference on which other schools have developed. It has also influenced the educational aspirations of many girls from Western Kenya and beyond.

## **8.2 Conclusions**

This study has revealed that the development of Western education among girls and women in Western Kenya was quite slow and lagged behind that of boys. While boys education started in the year 1906, that of girls only started in 1916 and it was not until the year 1957 that the first ever secondary school for girls (Butere Girls High School) was established in the region. This is attributed to the negative attitude which the African people themselves had on the education of women. They were considered important primarily for marriage and bearing of children. Apart from this, the study also revealed that the colonial government generally neglected girls’ education.

This study has revealed that the C.M.S played a vital role in the development of girls’ education in Western Kenya. It is this missionary group which pioneered education for girls in the region.

After establishment of Butere Girls, the missionaries laid a very firm foundation of discipline and good performance which saw most of the girls who went to this school reach the highest ladder in their careers and contribute significantly to the development of this country and beyond.

The study has demonstrated the important role played by Butere Girls High School in the formation of leaders and in transformation of society. This was seen from the calibre of the school's graduates. The school has produced high calibre educationists, judges, doctors, academicians, teachers, politicians and other professionals who have passed through its gates. The school has also formed ladies with a pioneering spirit in the country for instance, the first female bank manager, the first female judge in the high court of Kenya, the first female chancellor of a public university, the first Kenyan judge at the International Criminal Court (ICC) and others. This is a reference that the school has contributed significantly on the socio-economic life of the people of Western Kenya.

This study therefore has demonstrated the importance of education for leadership. Most graduates of Butere Girls High School became opinion leaders and very influential people in the society. They influenced a lot of change in the society because of their education, their positions in society and also because they were economically empowered.

This study has also demonstrated the importance of continuing education in the empowerment of women. Although Butere mainly offered secondary education for girls, the school nurtured continuing education programmes through talks and role models. The schooling at Butere motivated the girls to seek further education in different fields.



Finally, this study has underlined the importance of education for transformation and development. People need basic literacy skills to access information and make decisions which directly affect their survival.

### **8.3 Recommendations**

#### **Policy makers**

Equal educational opportunities for both men and women are very essential for development and transformation of the society in general. This study therefore recommends that provision of such facilities should cater for both genders.

The ministry of education should design programmes which enhance continuing education as a means to empowering citizens economically and also for leadership.

#### **The Church**

There should be continued cooperation between the Church, state and other private agencies in the provision of education and in development. The Anglican Church therefore, should continue their support of schools, especially in the provision of religious services.

#### **Butere Girls High School**

It has also been noted that the excellent performance of Butere Girls High School, has been declining over the years. Even though the school has now been accorded national status, its performance does not match that of the early years. The principal and teachers of this school should stimulate high academic performance through innovative programmes like exchange of ideas with high performing schools. Students of B.G.H.S should be exposed to and encouraged to adopt those practices which have worked from performing schools in the region.

The school administration should also design programmes that nurture character formation through mentorship programmes and role models. Guidance and counselling programmes which are geared towards nurturing talent and character should be enforced.

### **Butere Girls alumni**

The stakeholders of this school especially the old girls should take an active role in the management of the school, so as to uplift its performance. Given the privileged positions which they hold in this country particularly in the education sector, the old girls should go out of their way to support and nurture young girls at the institution.

### **8.4 Suggestions for further research**

The study has examined the contribution of the Church Missionary Society in the development of education in Western Kenya. This has been done based on the history of Butere Girls High School from 1957 to 2007. Despite the fact that this happened to be among the first secondary schools in the region, other schools such as Ng'iya Girls High School and Nambale Boys High School were established by the same Church. It would be important if some studies can be carried out about these schools to find out how they were initiated and their contribution to the community.

Apart from the Anglican Church, Western Kenya was also evangelised by other missionary groups such as the Catholic Mill Hill Fathers, the Church of God, the Friends Africa Mission and the Pentecostal Assemblies of God. These missionaries also took the education of Africans as an important aspect of their overall process of evangelisation although in varying degrees. For those whose contribution to education has not been documented like the Mill Hill Fathers and Church of God, it is important that this is done as well.

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## APPENDIX I

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FORMER CHURCH ELDERS/ EDUCATION

#### OFFICIALS/ FORMER SCHOOL OFFICIALS

- Name
  - Age
  - Denomination
  - Current occupation
1. In what ways did the C.M.S. contribute to the development of girls' education in Western Kenya?
  2. What led to the establishment of Butere Girls High School in 1957?
  3. Apart from the C.M.S. what role did the local church, other Christians and non-Christians play in the establishment of Butere Girls High School?
  4. What kind of relationship existed between the C.M.S. and the school between 1957 and 2007?
  5. In what ways has the local church contributed to the development of Butere Girls High School?
  6. In your opinion how did the C.M.S. tradition affect the development of girls' education in Western Kenya?
  7. How do you compare the standards of this school both in academics and non-academics over the years up to 2007? In case of any differences, what in your opinion could be the cause?
  8. In your opinion, what kind of impact has this school had on the educational aspirations of girls in Western Kenya?
  9. In your opinion, what kind of impact has this school had on the socio-economic and political development of the local community?

## **APPENDIX II**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS/FORMER LOCAL LEADERS/ OTHER KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSONS**

- Name
- Age
- Denomination
- Current occupation

1. How did Butere Girls High School come to be established in your midst?

2. How did members of your community receive the news of the establishment of this school in their midst?

3. What kind of support did the community give to the development of this school?

4. How has this school benefited the local community?

5. Have you educated any of your daughters in this school? If yes, how did you receive the news of your daughter's admission to Butere Girls High School?

6. Why did you decide to take your daughter to Butere Girls High School and not to any other School?

7. In what ways can you say this school prepared your daughter for the kind of life she is leading now?

8. In your opinion, what kind of impact has this school had on the educational aspirations of girls in Western Kenya?

9. In your opinion, how did the establishment of Butere Girls High School contribute to the general development of girls' education in the country?

### **APPENDIX III**

#### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR BUTERE GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL FORMER STUDENTS**

- Name
  - Age
  - Tribe
  - Denomination
  - Current occupation
1. Between which years were you a student at Butere Girls High School?
  2. What made you opt to study at this school and not any other?
  3. What qualification made you merit admission to this school?
  4. How did members of your family receive the news of your admission to this school?
  5. What distinct features existed in this school during your stay there? (Probe for any possible influence by the Anglican Church especially on the co-curricular activities).
  6. How do you compare the standards of this school both in academics and non-academics over the years up to 2007? In case of any differences, what in your opinion could have caused these differences?
  7. Apart from being a student, did you have other responsibilities in the school? If yes, which ones?
  8. Up to which level did you study at Butere Girls High School and what qualifications did you leave with?
  9. Were there any differences between Butere Girls and other girls' schools in other parts of the country?

10. In what ways can you say that Butere Girls prepared you for the kind of life you are leading now plus other activities that you have engaged yourself in since?

10. In your opinion, what kind of impact has this school had on the educational aspirations of girls in Western Kenya?

## **APPENDIX IV**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FORMER TEACHERS**

- Name
  - Age
  - Tribe
  - Denomination
  - Current occupation
1. Between which years did you teach at Butere Girls High School?
  2. What were your academic qualifications then?
  3. Had you been a teacher before your appointment to teach at the School? If yes, where and for how long?
  4. How did you receive the news of your appointment to this school?
  5. What academic and non-academic activities did the students engage in and how did the school compete with other schools in these activities?
  6. How do you compare the standards of this school both in academics and non-academics over the years up to 1985? In case of any differences, what in your opinion could have caused the differences?
  7. What kind of relationship existed between the school and the Anglican Church? (Probe for any support from the church and the influence on the running of the school especially in co-curricular activities).

8. In your opinion, how did this school influence the development of girls' secondary education in western Kenya and the country as a whole?
9. What kind of influence has this school had on the local community over the years?

## APPENDIX V

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**  
**MS. SARA BRENDA KHANANI**  
**of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 0-217**  
**LIMURU, has been permitted to conduct**  
**research in Kakamega County**

**on the topic: THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH**  
**MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN THE**  
**DEVELOPMENT OF GIRLS EDUCATION IN**  
**WESTERN KENYA: A CASE OF BUTERE**  
**GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL 1957 - 2007**

**for the period ending:**  
**31st December, 2015**

**Permit No : NACOSTI/P/15/8188/6276**  
**Date Of Issue : 19th June, 2015**  
**Fee Received :Ksh 1,000**



**Applicant's Signature**

**Director General**  
**National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation**

## APPENDIX VI



### NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,  
2241349, 310571, 2219420  
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249  
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
When replying please quote

9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Utalii House  
Uhuru Highway  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No.

Date:  
**19<sup>th</sup> June, 2015**

**NACOSTI/P/15/8188/6276**

Sara Brenda Khanani  
University of Nairobi  
P.O Box 30197-00100  
**NAIROBI.**

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“The role of the church missionary society in the development of girls education in Western Kenya: A case of Butere Girls High School 1957 – 2007,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Kakamega County** for a period ending **31<sup>st</sup> December, 2015.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Kakamega County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

  
**SAID HUSSEIN**  
**FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to

The County Commissioner  
Kakamega County.

The County Director of Education  
Kakamega County.

