

African Matrimonial Relations: The Nandi Marital and Household Setup

By

Dr. Benjamin Kipkios Ng'etich, PhD.
Moi University, School of Arts & Social Sciences,
P. O. Box 3900-30100 ELDORET, KENYA.
Corresponding author: info.bkngetich@gmail.com

Abstract

This study analyzed the African matrimonial relations with specific reference to the Nandi people of Kenya marital and household setup. The study explored the Indigenous kinship of the Nandi and marriage setup, the family, social relations, responsibilities and rights of family members, relations of production, reproduction, and distribution, access to factors of production, access to resources, means of biological reproduction, Nandi social and political divisions, and other cultural practices and beliefs among the Nandi people of Kenya. It also questioned the relations that existed, and how marriages were negotiated, and the emergent labour relations of production and reproduction within and between individual households. The study was influenced by the Materialism approach, Agency, and the Pull-Push theories. It adopted a qualitative design. Both primary and secondary sources of data which consisted of documentary reviews, and oral interviews were analyzed. The respondents targeted were one hundred participants. The study found that having a family or marrying among the Nandi context was an economic and social affair and that men did not marry for love but for specific reasons. Polygyny was prestigious and a man could marry many wives as long as his wealth could afford. On extended family, the Nandi enjoyed staying scattered as a way of expanding their territory through polygyny. Internally, they had three categories of exogamic groups, the clan, the age-set, and the kindred group, and eight categories of sexual relations namely: premarital sex, extramarital sex, rape, homosexuality, wife inheritance, woman-to-woman marriage, marriage into the house, and child marriage. The Nandi also practised wife inheritance as they believed in fire lighting which meant *'to have children'* especially the boy child who inherited the wealth of the family. An analysis of their built forms, the Nandi showed that their settlements were sparsely distributed rather than being grouped into organized villages. All Nandi people built their huts with the front doors facing Mt. Elgon or *Sabaot* which was the North of Nandi land as they believed they came through the Elgon area.

Keywords: Nandi, Marital relations, Kenya, indigenous setup, pre-colonial, culture, social relations.

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1.0 Introduction

This article examines the pre-colonial Nandi marriage setup and household relations. The following subtopics are dealt with; indigenous Nandi Kinship and marriage setup, the family, sexual relations, responsibilities and rights of family members, relations of production, reproduction and distribution, access to factors of production, access to resources, means of biological reproduction, Nandi social and political divisions, and other beliefs among the Nandi of Kenya. This study analyzes the indigenous household practices and relations among the Nandi community during the pre-colonial period. It also sheds light on gender relations of production and reproduction within and between individual households. It responds to the objective of the study and thus answers the research question: How were the Nandi household practices and relations structured before the colonial era?

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study, therefore, analyzed the African matrimonial relations with specific emphasis on the Nandi of Kenya households to specifically resolve the following problem: to investigate the extent and how marriages were negotiated and the emergent gender relations of production and reproduction within and between individual households; and hence establish the matrimonial relations.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The objective of the study was to examine the pre-colonial Nandi marriage setup and household relations.

1.3 Indigenous Nandi Kinship, Marriage, and Religion.

1.3.1 The family.

The English word 'family' was derived from the Latin *familia*, meaning 'household'. Lewis Henry Morgan attempted to trace the origin of the family and came up with a theory that was viewed with contempt by many anthropologists. He argued that there was a close relationship between cultural patterns and technological changes. The family according to Morgan started as a crowd living in promiscuity with no sexual regulations and inhibitions. This was followed by incestuous relations between brothers and sisters. The third stage was characterized by group marriage while the fourth stage coincided with barbarism. It was characterized by loosely paired male and female but each individual could live with other people. The fifth stage was the husband-dominant family in which the husband was polygamous, and finally, the stage of civilization heralded a monogamous family. This was an evolutionary approach that influenced the ideas of communist ideology about property and family as stipulated by Marx and Engels (Ayisi, 1972: 13, Nyamu, 1981:4-35).

The functional approach to the family was associated with Bronislaw Malinowski (1884 – 1942). He assumed that all cultural traits serve the basic or derived needs of individuals in a society. To serve these needs, individuals had to create certain strategies to realize their aims. These needs among others were: nutrition, bodily comfort, relaxation, growth, movement, safety, and reproduction. According to him, secondary needs were created in the process of meeting the basic needs (Ember and Ember, 1977: 40 para 6).

Radcliffe Brown (1881 – 1955) was the proponent of the structural-functionalist family approach. He attests that human social behaviour is a product of cultural traits. A family then was the logical product of marriage consisting of a man, his wife, and child or children. By this, childless marriage was not a family (Schulz, 1976:19). It does not matter whether marital relations were permanent or temporary, whether there was polyandry or sexual license, or whether extended, one fact stands out beyond all others everywhere the husband, wife, and immature children constitute a family from the remainder of the community (Bottomore, 1962: 62). The Nandi way of doing this was either the grouping of the so-called nuclear family where the husband, wife, and children relationship were basic but rather the grouping of the extended kindred group consisting of close relatives.

Having a family or marrying in the Nandi context was an economic and social affair. A Nandi man did not marry for love, but for specific social reasons: a man must have somebody who could bear him children and help him with work that was not “man’s work” (Huntingford, 1944:16). There was plenty of sexual freedom before marriage and though Nandi had a girlfriend before marriage, this girlfriend hardly, if ever, became his wife. Subject to the clan setup, a man would marry any woman who was not a clan member or a close relative. (O. I. with John Kimitei, Christine Jerotich Teigong)

Among the Nandi, marriage (*Katunisiet*) was the term referring to all marriage rituals in total and a certain stage in marriage rituals. *Katunisiet* was the chief marriage ceremony among the Nandi and Kalenjin as a whole. It was done after the whole cattle of dowry had been paid and satisfactory. But there were cases when a girl was eloped and married the same night after circumcision. This was a special case.

Oral sources confirm that Nandis have intermarried with Kipsigis, Keiyo, Terik, Maasai and other Kalenjin neighbours in former European settlements. This means that their marriage borrowed much from these neighbours or intermarriages. Geographically, Nandi lived in a more suitable place for interaction and cultural borrowing (O. I. Arap Bartile, Arap Leting Kwombo Baras). Among the Keiyo of Kenya, *Katunisiet* was the third in a series of marriage rituals and took place in the eighth or ninth month of the woman’s first pregnancy. Among the Marakwet, *Katunio* was the second and major stage which took place after the birth of a child (Kipkorir & Wilbourn, 1973: 49 – 53). Similarly, the Kipsigis way of marriage was a bit different; *Katunisiet* was a beer and food festival which took place many months and possibly years after the giving of the cattle which in turn took place three or many more years after the initial binding of the couple (Peristiany, 1939: 56-75, Orchardson, I. Q., 1961:73-82).

1.3.2. Polygamous Nandi household Setup

Polygamy is a general term referring to multi-spouse relations for both men and women but in this study, it means one man marrying more than one wife (Polygyny). It was prestigious among the Kalenjin people and up to the 1970s and 1980s it was still practised by married Nandi

men. Each wife had her field, cattle, and house within the family compound. A Nandi proverb asserts *Mawendi songo chepyoso!* “No woman will be unmarried in her lifetime.” The first wife was regarded as the chief wife (*in Nandi, Chepkutwa*) in the family. The other wives were meant to expand the family (O. I. Kitur Chepkendi, 2015). Polygamy assisted in the realization of this proverb as the tribe knew not bachelors or spinsters. It was a bad idea for one to not get married; it was likened to a curse. The unmarried were only the barren ones.

A Nandi man could marry as many wives as his wealth could afford. For a man to have two or three wives was common and three or more was relatively rare. Although Hollis in his works records that he knew a Kipsigis *Laibon* to have had twenty-eight wives and wealthy Nandi reputedly as many as forty wives (Hollis, 1909: 64).

A man sought the approval of his chief or first wife before marrying the second or subsequent wives. It was one wife who chose another one. This practice was meant to cultivate a smooth and peaceful systemization of the family. The eldest son of the chief wife was regarded as the senior son of the family. Each wife had her own house and wealth from which she brought up her family and the husband visited his wives consistently.

According to the oral interview with Francis C. Ruto, the following additional information was collected:

Polygyny was part of Nandi culture. Its origin dates back to the Stone Age period about five hundred years back. The reason behind many wives was wealth. Acquiring wealth was a prestigious issue. The more wives one had was a sign of richness. This richness was in terms of cattle, sheep, and goats. Another reason which led to many wives had its origin in early childhood up to the late adolescent stage when a handsome boy could be followed and loved by many girls. The boy could have been a good singer, good soloist, the best hunter, and warrior or able-bodied in terms of physical appearance (O. I. Francis C. Ruto, 2015).

When one was ready for marriage, this was at the age of 30 - 35 years of age; his father prepared an auspicious occasion for his son. All the dowry was paid by the father and in some cases, if this son had acquired some personal wealth (cattle) one cow could be added to the father's dowry.

The ceremony for the first wife was very important to this family. This wife was given a special name in the family as *Jepkorek kutwo*. *Kutwet* or *kutwo* was a kind of special hat that warriors wore on their heads. This meant that this wife changed the young warrior and made him a husband and kingpost of his house. All the tools associated with warriors, and wars were put aside and this was the woman who could make him down the tools officially.

The downing of *kutwet* with its associated tools signified that one had become *boiyo* or *monong'ot*. This meant that one was now a man or husband in his house. The husband now could be given a bed referred to as *itogut*. This made one sire his children according to the tradition. *Itogut* was a traditional bed or sleeping place of dignity situated within the front section of a Nandi hut.

The newly married wife could command the husband while downing the tools to sit down and start bearing children; it was said that *'tebe yu ak isigisie'* meaning 'sit here and bear children'. This command was honoured and made one to be respectable in society. This first

wife was branded more names denoting her important responsibility in the home. Another name was *Jepnyogat*, which meant the lady who was the first to step on the homestead. She was regarded as the founder member of the family and all family affairs originated from this house. Even her first son was next to the husband and the husband walked hand in hand with this firstborn son. All the hair was shaved when the first wife was married as a sign of the legitimacy of the marriage.

The second was known as *chemining'wet*, which meant younger wife, the third and all the other wives were referred to as '*bo bororiet ak oret*', wives of the clan or the community. In Nandi, this was illustrated well when an age mate paid a visit to his friend; the friend could leave his house and go to sleep elsewhere. During this time the age mate could enjoy everything in the house officially including their wife. But the first wife was not shared but respected. Sometimes when the husband was not around, the age mates could come in and share these wives.

There was a saying in Nandi which supported the above statement: '*mabo chi korgo eng' nandi*' meaning that a woman belonged to nobody but the community.' Sometimes this second wife was married due to her cleanliness and was given the name *kerotet*, meaning the 'clean one'. Many times the husband could spend more time in this house than in the other houses. During ceremonies of family rituals, the firstborn son of the first wife should be present on all occasions as he was deemed next to his father and could take over the seat of his father when the father was absent or in case he died. He eventually became the chairperson or overall manager of his fathers' estate and hence he became the father of all the other children in case the real father died.

Each wife had her property and no house could use wealth belonging to another house. The Nandi saying goes: '*ma amei go, go!*' this meant that no house ate another house. Literally this meant that each house was self-contained for it to exist; it had its wealth. Each house should have its own cattle *boma* and a farm for sorghum and millet.

Polygyny was not borrowed but it was part of Nandi culture and it had its reasons as follows:

Apart from being seen as a form of wealth and prestige, it was a way to increase family members so that in a time of raids, one family could have more members to enhance security. Sometimes when the first wife did not bear children, the husband was advised to marry another wife as children were very important in the community. Sometimes the first wife could leave the husband and go out of the family and this could lead to marrying the second wife. The first one could be left to go for any number of years as much as she could afford but later on, when she was old, she could come and be welcomed in the family. A married woman in Nandi was permanent and marriage was deemed indissoluble (O. I. Edward Birgen, Clement Chekwony, Mathias Tabot, William Chepkwony Kipkolum Birgen, 2015).

Also, in case the first wife, *Jepkorek kutwo*, did not have children, she could stay up for a certain period when she had used all the medication but did not bear any fruit, then the second wife could now come to relight the fire of the family. After the marriage of the second wife, the first son of this second wife was given to the first wife to bring warmth to this highly respected

wife. Now the first wife could be seen to have children like the other community members. This second wife was a blessing to the first one in case there were no children in the first marriage.

The third and the fourth and all other subsequent wives were for prestige and also for the community in case one could afford to pay dowry and raise these families. These wives had no other reason apart from leisure, luxury, and fame, they had no proper reason. (Barnaba Chepkwony, 2015) On the other hand, the Nandis were few in numbers and polygyny was a way of increasing tyranny of numbers (O. I. Bot Chebichii, Chemalan, 2015).

1.3.3 Extended Family

This was a family that expanded beyond the nuclear family, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other relatives, who all lived nearby or in one household. Among Nandi households, the family of an individual man includes not only his parents, siblings, and children but also all members of his kindred group. A man's cohort was his sisters and brothers and counterpart cousins referred to as *tupchet* and their spouses *bamuru* while the sister's husband was known as *sandanaa* or *sandet*. A mother's brother's son was called *mama* and his wife *mama* while the brother's daughter was called *kamet* and her husband *kwan*. A wife's father and his brothers were referred to as *kapyugoi*, while the wife's mother and her sisters were *korucho*; a wife's father's sisters were called *bamuru* and a wife's mother *abule*.

Among the Nandi, an uncle played an important role, particularly during the initiation ceremony. The boys sought consent from their uncle before going through initiation rituals referred to as *tumdo*, in the plural (Hollis, 1909: 94). The aunts together with uncles were equally important during special rituals. For example, during the engagement ceremony, the aunt played an integral role without which the occasion could not be a success minus these two relatives. The aunt was referred to as *Senge*. This relative could even pronounce a curse if not pleased. She could request to be given a gift and it was given (O. I. Salina Birgen, 2015).

The traditional Nandis were not interested in staying together as an extended family up to 1900. This was due to their culture which posed more value on wealth acquisition in terms of cattle than anything else. A cow was of importance than anything else. No man was a man without a cow. As far as cattle acquisition was concerned, there was a need to expand the territory in search of pastures for their animals. Every man could move far away from his fellow man to get more grass for his animals. They enjoyed being scattered as this was a way of expanding their territory (Paul Chelal, 2015). This notion made them even appreciate being squatters on European farms as long as they went there with their animals; they continued to labour for the white man even without payment.

They used polygyny as a way of expanding the community as each wife married was relocated away from her co-wife to acquire more wealth. Each homestead was in a different location. Wealth was important but the idea of staying together as a group did not exist. The Nandis did not like the idea of crowding in one place. They enjoyed scattering themselves as they believed that was a way of expanding their territory and also acquiring wealth. This was supported by a saying that a man could become a *manong'ot* only when he had wealth in terms of livestock. *Manong'ot* was a term referring to a respected Nandi elder with his family. Power and supremacy were in terms of livestock. The land was not valued like nowadays. The land was a gift from God, and anyone could acquire as much land as he could, and this depended on one's effort (O. I. Bot Sitienei Cheptilda, 2015).

During this period, the year 1900, other Nilotic tribes started moving closer to their territory and cattle theft started. They also raided the neighbouring tribes and thus enmity brewed slowly. This then prompted them to adopt this fashion of extended family. To them, the question of the extended family was borrowed from the Masaai, Luo, and Luyha communities to enhance security.

The extended family was therefore adopted so that during raids, the whole family could guard their property in one place. This also led to clanism. People of one clan could live in one place so that they could be identified by their clan name, and they could not mix up with other clans (O. I. Kogo Kapkisorio, 2015).

Beer among these people brought up friends and relatives to take part in a beer festival. When they stayed together as a community, this activity was easily achieved. The Nandis enjoyed beer drinking as a way of bringing community members together and issues related to the community were tabled and sorted out. On the other hand, the population of the clan was enhanced by encouraging members to live together as a clan. The clan's strength was its members. Ethnicity and clanism were very important in those days. It was prestigious to identify oneself with a large clan with a lot of wealth (O. I. Ernest Kogo, Kittur Kili, John Kipng'etich Chelugui, 2016).

1.3.4 The Clan

There were seventeen clans among the Nandi. Five of them used more than one totem. The Nandi clans were dispersed throughout the Nandi territory. The clan took its name in a patrilineal descent group from a common ancestor. All Kalenjin had patrilineal clans, which did not generally pose cooperative functions apart from those governing marriage with various rules. Specific patrilineal links were traced for only three to four generations then, from there, the same clans could intermarry, or interweave to strengthen the clan or bring the clan nearer. The terminology used in bringing nearer the relationship was called *keng'wal tiliet*, meaning to weave the relation and thus bring it nearer after three or four generations (O. I. Jonah Sono, 2016).

Clan membership was patrilineal and members of every clan could be found throughout Nandi County. Today most of the younger generations tend to forget their clans due to cultural changes but the subject of the clan has to be brought forward before the commencement of any marriage negotiations are conducted and hence Nandi tradition is followed. Intermarriage between some clans was prohibited and the question of totems aroused. Clans among the Nandi performed some tasks including the following:

- i) Distribution of clan land
- ii) Determining land boundaries
- iii) Regulating marriage
- iv) Presiding over important functions like marriage and initiation
- v) Settling disputes within the clan and outside the clan

These clans were not localized, but their members were spread throughout the district. Their local organizations were referred to as *koret* meaning their land or country. (Huntingford: 1944) Their names and the animals associated with them were as follows:

Totem(s) (Animal of the clan) Tiond' ap oret

Clan name (Oret)

- 1 *Kiptopke* **Monkey (*Cercopithecus griseo-viridis*):** This clan was not allowed to intermarry with Kipkenda or Sokom. Importance was given to their cattle and therefore their cattle could not pass a night outside their kraal.
- 2 *Kipsirgoi* **Bush Pig:** This clan was mainly made up of hunters but forbidden to kill any animal that had been wounded by another clan. Any man intending to marry would only find a girl that had previously conceived; if he failed to find one such girl, he had to elope with his bride and pay the bride price afterwards.
- 3 *Kamwaigei* **Monkey (*Cercopithecus albogularis*):** The members of this clan were not allowed to intermarry with *Tungo* or *Kipaa*.
- 4 *Kapchemuri* **Francolin:** No prohibitions whatsoever were established in this clan.
- 5 *Kipaa* **Wild Cat, Monkey, and Snake:** The members were not allowed to lay any trap and could only make hides out of the hyrax. They may not intermarry with the *Kamwaigei* clan.
- 6 *Kipkokos* **Buzzard:** They were not allowed to hunt but could eat all game meat except a zebra and rhinoceros. They could not intermarry with the *Tungo* clan.
- 7 *Kipkoiiting* **Snake, elephant and Chameleon:** This clan may not hunt but can eat meat belonging to any wild animal. They were not allowed to marry any girl who previously conceived.
- 8 *Kipamwi* **Duiker:** They may not build their huts near smiths men, buy weapons directly from them or allow their goats to meet with those of the smiths. They were not to intermarry with the *Tungo* clan.
- 9 *Kipasiso* **Sun, Mole:** They were not to harvest rain water or even use the water for cooking their meals.
- 10 *Kipyengen* **Baboon, House Rat:** The members of this clan were not permitted to intermarry with the *Kiptopke* and *Tungo* clans.
- 11 *Kipkenda* **Bee; Frog:** They may not hunt or set any traps for animals but were allowed to eat meat belonging to any animal except the duinker. They were not allowed to intermarry with the *Kiptopke* clan.
- 12 *Kipoiis* **Jackal, Cockroach:** They may not build their houses near the road and may also not intermarry with the *Talai* clan.
- 13 *Tungo* **Hyena:** This was a prestigious clan. The clan was held

- in high esteem by the Nandi and they were always selected to be the umpires or judges in any dispute concerning settlements. They were not to intermarry with the *Kipamwi*, *Kipkokos*, *Kipyegen*, *Talai*, *Sokom* and *Kamwaigei* clans respectively.
- 14 *Toiyoi* **Soldier Ant; Rain:** Members of this clan were not allowed to build in or near a forest. In case soldier ants got into a house belonging to this clan, they would be requested to move away or abandon the premises. No force was applied to ensure the ants left. The members of this household would leave the house if necessary only to come back after the ants had left.
- 15 *Talai* **Lion:** Were forbidden to neither eat any meat of an animal killed by a lion nor wear a headdress made of lion skin. The children from this clan wore a special necklace called *Sepetaik* which was made out of pieces of gourd. They too were not allowed to intermarry with *Tungo*, *Kipoiis* or *Sokom* clans respectively.
- 16 *Sokom* **Hawk:** They were always required to live apart and not to build their huts close to the other clans. They were not to intermarry with the *Tungo*, *Kiptopke*, and *Talai*.
- 17 *Mooi* **Small birds; Elephant; Crested Crane, Buffalo:** They were not allowed to build their huts near or inside a forest. When they decided to move their kraals or huts, they would only move to a site east of their former abode.

The animal was considered a man's brother and in the case of multiple totems, they were brothers to each other and so to the clansmen. These animals were not killed unless they did some harm to their brother, and their death was associated with the harm caused. A long time ago, these clans did not exist. They only came into existence as a way to regulate marriage. Some clans did not marry from other clans and so the use of animals to regulate who to marry or not to marry came into existence. Also, it was a way of controlling incest within the members of the same clan (Raphael Arap Kemboi, 2015).

1.3.5 Incest among the Nandi

The Nandi had three categories of exogamic groups, the clan, the age-set and the kindred group. Any sexual intercourse between the members of the same group was incestuous and thus there was clan incest, age-set incest, and kindred incest. A man was not allowed to marry a woman from his clan, not unless the same clan possessed more than one totem and thus this union was forbidden. A woman from one's kindred group or age-set group was referred to as 'your daughter' and thus marriage of such persons was forbidden. Marrying from one's age group was like marrying one's daughter and this was incestuous. Incest was viewed as a serious offence and the marriage between two related groups was dissolved (Snell, 1954:32-33).

Also, any sexual intercourse between any related groups considered incestuous attracted some punishment. Sometimes the relationship could not be that leading to marriage but if a man was found sleeping with his mother, sister or father with his daughter or mother-in-law, such incidences were termed as serious offences. The victim could be called to the village or elders' meeting and penalized with a cow or at other times a sheep. There was a specific song accompanying the punishment such that when people heard such a song, they could know that there was somebody somewhere who had done something and was being punished.

For the Nandi, it was a shameful act to be caught and punished in public. The victim was moved around the village by elders singing a special shaming song with the victim in front. Such a person was not welcome in any beer-drinking ceremony as he was termed as bad behaviour. Incest could also extend to animals; if a man was caught having a sexual relationship with an animal, he was equally punished as those who have intercourse with a relative (O. I. Rosa Boen Bot Some, 2015).

1.4.0 Sexual Relations

The Nandi had eight categories of sexual relations namely: premarital sex, extramarital sex, rape, homosexuality, wife inheritance, woman-to-woman marriage, marriage into the house, and child marriage (Agui Cheptaiwa, 2015).

1.4.1 Premarital Sex

Young warriors after circumcision were free to engage in sexual activities with young uncircumcised girls in their communal house. However, it was a shameful act for these warriors and their uncircumcised sweethearts in case a sweetheart was impregnated. The child born of such an illicit union was termed illegitimate and was either killed before it could take its first breath of life by its mother or taken to the cattle doorway so that the cattle could step on it till it died.

If a young uncircumcised girl got pregnant, the child was put into the mud and left to die; and if by chance one of these unmarried girls had a child by a warrior during this intercourse, she strangled it as soon as it was born. On the other hand, the young warrior who is the biological father of the kid was fined a goat to be given to the girl. In many cases, such illicit children were strangled by their mother and buried, and the young warrior who is the father was commanded to present the mother of the illegitimate child with a goat and her father with another goat. Such an impregnated girl was referred to as *Chesorbuchot* or *Cheburotiot* (O. I. Magdalena Melly, 2015). Such a girl was unclean for the rest of her life and lost respect in the society.

1.4.2 Extramarital Sex

A married woman in Nandi may continue enjoying a sexual relationship with her old sweetheart from the communal hut but this was in secret. A married man may give hospitality to another man of his age and abandon his house for his visitor since there were no extra rooms as is today and allow him to spend the night in his house. This included having sex with his wife; this was the second, the third or subsequent wife and not the first one. The first wife was respected and never shared with age mates or any other member of the community. Apart from the above special cases, no married woman was allowed to have extramarital sex. In case a woman was caught in this act, she could be punished by her husband by beating or sometimes

punished by divorce. This kind of offense was referred to as *chor-konget* meaning the woman was stolen (O. I. Pius Melly, 2015).

1.4.3 Rape

Rape was considered an outrage for the female sex. Snell asserts that a warrior guilty of such an offence was punished by beating by members of his age-set and denied certain privileges such as jumping and dancing during circumcision festivals. But an elder was punished severely. The punishment was termed *Njoketab Chepyosok*, meaning punishment of the women, meted out to male offenders as described by G. S. Snell (1954) [Langley M. S.:71]. Oral sources revealed that the rapist was called by names like *kipyatgo*, *chelesos*, and such a person was a vice in the society. If a man was guilty of raping or sleeping with his mother-in-law, he could be fined a cow or a goat. Such a person brought shame to his age-set (O. I. Edward Birgen, 2015).

1.4.4 Homosexuality

From the oral sources, offences of this nature were rare. People caught in this shameful act were beaten and some were even killed. The members of the offender's age set were responsible for punishment. The offender was called *kipsuguit* and such a person was not respected in the society. Everyone could ridicule him whenever he was seen. If the offender was considered uncorrectable by beating alone, he was cursed by the elders from the neighbourhood and held up to social ridicule. *Njoket* meaning punishment of the women was also administered to an offender of this category (O. I. Raphael Arap Kemboi, 2015).

1.5 Wife Inheritance

Marriage according to Nandi customs was permanent and indissoluble even after the death of a spouse a widow won't remarry. The Nandi practised wife inheritance, calling it *Kandiet* meaning inheriting, or *Kindi* meaning to inherit. In the event of the death of a husband, the widow was not left to stay alone or remarry. However, the eldest brother took the responsibility. (Snell: 34) When a man died, his elder brother took his all wives and property, but the arms of the deceased went to the eldest son. Wife inheritance in this community involved physical protection of the widow, her children, and property, it included the maintenance and rebuilding of her house, cultivation and fencing of her land and cattle sheds, care of her cattle and actual representation in any family or neighbourhood discussion or festival. The family members were responsible for the actual naming or choosing of the person responsible for inheritance. No one could just step in without the approval of the family members (O. I. Barnaba Chepkwony, 2015).

From the oral sources wife inheritance according to the Nandi customs did not equate to remarriage, but it was meant to only care for widows; their personal life, family or domestic, sexual and procreative needs within the context of the kindred group into which they were married (Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde (eds), 1977:78 -80). Following this belief, there was no compulsion for any widow to seek protection from her brother-in-law. This was so if the widow was rich and also if she had sons to inherit property. She lived independently and eventually being cared for by her youngest son called *towet* who built his house near hers.

The eldest son was called *kiboretiet*. If the deceased left more than one wife, only the younger or junior wife may be expected to cohabit with her deceased husband's brother. The

major reason for wife inheritance among the Nandi was to procure children, care or security of the family property and the widow, family work and representation during family and neighbourhood meetings.

However, since the circumcision of the *Sawe* towards *Kipkoimet* up to *Kaplelach* and *Kipnyigei*, wife inheritance had been seen as overtaken by events. This practice has since been discouraged by the onset of diseases like HIV/AIDS and more STDs. Also, more women had been empowered with skills such that in the event of the death of a husband, the wife still proceeded well with her normal life (O. I. Magdaline Melly, 2015).

1.6 Woman to Woman Household

Woman-woman household or marriage was present among the Kalenjin group, especially the Nandi, Kipsigis, and, since about the mid-twentieth century, among Keiyo. It was not customary among other Kalenjin sub-tribes. Both women and men were active in negotiating marriages and reconciling separated couples. Husbands were generally dominant, with the right to beat wives for certain offences. Wives were publicly deferential; private relations were more nearly egalitarian. Leisure was spent with same-gender companions more than with one's spouse. The question of a woman-to-woman marriage was practised for '*lighting the fire*'. It was done after the wife failed to bear children had reached menopause and could no longer receive monthly periods. This was also done after the death of the husband and the widow was rich enough with livestock to bring up her family. At this stage, she qualified to marry another woman or woman to bear her children. It was believed that at this stage the woman marrying was no longer sexually active so that she couldn't attract another man into the house. It was believed that she became a man of the house and was respected as a man like the other men. The children born by such marriage were referred to by the name of this woman in case the woman was not married but if once married, the children were named after the old man or their father. Names like *Arap Kogo* were used to signify that the son belonged to a grandmother. At times the names could be associated with the bulls which the tribe celebrated so much (O. I. Arap Mwei Birirchok, 2015).

Oral sources revealed that on the marriage day, a man from the kindred group was identified to be responsible for the relighting of the fire. This was to be the husband of the newly married woman to the bridegroom who was another woman. But in case the man to relight the fire was not available on the material day, the bride was married to a bull in place of the bridegroom. This was a marriage like a man-to-woman marriage in nature and rituals. The woman marrying was then taken through some rituals to qualify her to assume the responsibilities of a man.

The ears could be pierced to correspond to those of the old men and some special earrings belonging to the men were put on. Even the men's clothing of skin referred to as *kiboet* was worn by this woman. She could also participate in the beer-drinking festival with other old men and be respected like other men in the drinking festival. She was also invited to male initiation ceremonies as a man and not as a woman. She was respected as a man. It was interesting to note that some of the women in this category could even be polygamists because of their elevated status in society as men. They could marry even two or three to four wives as long as they were rich enough to pay dowry and provide for all family necessities. Sometimes when a woman could not marry she could adopt a child from a relative or procure one from the

neighbouring tribes like Kavirondo or Gusii to relight the fire of the family (O. I. Barnaba Chepkwony, 2015).

Apart from relighting the fire of this family, this marriage was put in place to get an heir to inherit the land and property including the livestock. Many questions raised included; who would perpetuate the lineage? In this respect, a childless couple, a childless woman widowed, or a childless wife unable to conceive took a wife younger than her to bear children for her or the husband's clan. The genitor was an approved visitor by the childless woman or her husband's family. The genitor was either a married man or an unmarried man. Rules and regulations governing marriage were fully followed as the two women went through a full marriage ceremony. According to Nandi customs, this marriage was between the two women only (Langley, 1979:73).

1.7 Marriage into the House

Marriage into the house is a kind marriage which is not common nowadays as it seems most Nandi at the moment have both sons and daughters. The practice was common with the age sets of *maina*, *nyongi kimnyingei* and beyond about seventy years ago. This kind of marriage was meant to ensure that the inheritance was maintained within the family lineage and in particular in that household which daughters have been begotten only. Also apart from family wealth inheritance and expansion of family members at least to have sons in this house who were to relight the clan's fire. The eldest, the youngest or the most favourite daughter could remain at home while the other siblings got married outside the family.

The research revealed from the oral sources that the daughter who remained at home was married in to the house and the marriage ritual was done. The engagement was also done like any other engagement. This type of engagement was unique in nature as it involved the mother of the child giving out her child and the receiving bridegroom was the kingpost (*toloita*) of the house. The dowry process was negotiated and all the bride's wealth belonged to the father of the daughter alone. While the dowry of the other married girls belonged to the family and more so the mother had more say about the dowry as she believed the daughters were hers, but this one married in-to-the-house, the entire dowry belonged to the husband alone. He was privileged to use them the way he wished without consulting anyone (O. I. Magdalene Melly, 2015).

The married daughter was allowed to raise sons in the family and at some later stage, she could willingly or was free to get married and leave the homestead. This was because no man was allowed to live with her on the homestead; the ancestral land was the family's property and kept within the family and the clan's jurisdiction. The genitor was from outside the family and was her own choice (O. I. Kipsugut Arap Chelulei, 2015).

1.8 Child Marriage

As revealed from the oral sources, this type of marriage was not common and was only practised under some strict conditions. It was performed for socio-economic reasons. There were cases like when a poor family had a son ready for marriage, and this family headed by a man could arrange for an early marriage for their young daughter with a married man who was willing to pay a dowry for his son. After this marriage, the young girl was sent to be under the custody of now the first wife till she attained the age of circumcision when she was given her own house to start a family (O. I. Arap Muge Aroun, 2015).

Another interesting case related to the above was when in a time of hunger and famine, a poor man could give out her daughter to be married to a rich old man. An old man was approached to give some sort of food to salvage the family from dying of hunger. So the old man could supply food enough for the whole family and the young daughter was left under the custody of her parents till the age of circumcision then given to the old man. This was referred to as *kiwandererto*. This is meant to be given to an old man. The old man was told: *bae ni chu, tun keetuch makarkar inyo*. This meant that 'use this one to feed the others till such time when they will survive of tapeworms'. The marriage for such a child was not complete like a normal marriage. Under this, the marriage ended when the knot was tied without performing all the other rituals (O. I. Barnaba Keino, 2015).

1.9.0 Responsibilities and Rights of Household Members

Each member of the family had a role to play in ensuring that the household procures an improved standard of life according to their traditions. Any person who did not work or perform his or her role well was ridiculed in public. Traditionally, roles were classified according to gender. However, because of changing trends in life, the roles were to a greater extent shared in some cases (O.I. Kitur Kili, 2015). Some of the traditional responsibilities of family members were as discussed below: -

1.9.1 Husbands/Men

Men or husbands were expected to be role models and be responsible for providing all the basic needs of their children and wives. The caring of family property was for both men and women including children. The father was expected to love, care, listen to, guide, and advise their children on ways of participating in cultural activities. It was the father who was responsible for everything. His name *kon* or *konut* signifies that he was the giver of everything. He made sure that he possessed wealth in terms of cattle so that his sons used them as dowry and as a sign of a responsible man. The men were responsible for preparing initiation ceremonies for their children; and organized any cultural activity like marriage, dancing, engagement, raids, community security, and beer-drinking festivals. A Nandi man was seen as the chief provider holistically (O. I. Edward Birgen, 2015).

1.9.2 Wives/Women

Among the Nandi, women were confined in the home performing household chores only. They did not perform much of the duties except for the cleanliness of the homestead, looking after the young children, milking the cows and cutting grass for house construction. Women were expected to advise and guide girls on good morals. They also participated in cultural activities like dancing, engagements, marriage, and initiation. But generally, they were expected to be passive. They waited upon their husbands to give them commands. Most of Nandi's men were a bit dictatorial in nature and the women were, therefore, to be seen and not to be heard (O. I. Mary Tabusambu, 2015).

Many times, women were the heads of households. This refers to '*inside-the-house*' chores. Men were never allowed to interfere with household chores. These were referred to as the women's department and independent of any outside interference. This type of division of women's and men's works was seen even during the identification of children during childbirth.

In case a baby girl was born in a family, the father was notified that the baby born was 'kibo go', 'go' meant inside the household, this meant that the baby born was of 'inside gender' meaning a girl. Whereas when a baby boy was born, he was referred to as *kibo sang*, 'sang' meant outside the household. Boys were raised knowing that they belonged to the outside while girls belonged to the inside of the house (O. I. Magdalene Melly, 2015).

1.9.3 Children

Children had a responsibility to help their parents in carrying out their family chores. It was their duty to respect and obey their parents and also trained to take care of the family property. Other siblings were also to be respected and cared for by their younger siblings. The boys were trained to look after the sheep, goats, and calves but as they grew older, they started learning how to herd cattle and eventually assisted their father on other duties like hunting.

The girls, on the other hand, were trained on household chores like cleaning the house, milking the cows, fetching firewood, lighting the fire, preparing milk gourds and decorating them with cowrie shells, beads, and animal hides. Weeding of the family garden and harvesting of millet and sorghum was also taught to children. Fetching water was a responsibility of both children up to some level then it became strictly for girls only. Both children, male and female were taught good manners and behaviour. They were taught how to greet elders and also how to speak in a respected language without abusive words. They were taught to obey any other community elder even those who were not related to them. Children according to the Nandi culture belonged to the community (O. I. Raphael Kemboi, 2015).

1.9.4 Religion

Langley (1979:9) asserts that for Nandi traditionalists, all of life is religious. Every aspect of the cultural framework, material and spiritual, is a closely interwoven, direct response to the physical environment in which the people find themselves. Hollis argues that Nandi religion was somewhat vague and unformulated with *Asista* being the supreme deity. (Hollis:40) *Asista* was believed to dwell in the sky, the world, man and beast belong to him, prayers were addressed to him and as he was acknowledged as the giver of all things, offerings were made to him. The Nandi people also believed in the existence of *oik* (dead spirits) to whom they appealed to with milk, food, and beer, this was because they may cause death and sickness if insulted.

There were structures in place to act as forms of defence against evil spirits. There were *kimonjokut* and *kot ap musambwanik* (house of spirits). *Kimonjokut*: Was a stick on the apex of every Nandi hut which projected about 12 to 18 inches above the thatch. It was believed that this *kimonjokut* kept the evil spirits away from entering the house through the roof. On the other hand, *kot ap musambwanik* was a hut found mostly in the *Terik* border, South West of Nandi country. This hut was erected close to the front door of the family hut and served as a place to give offerings to the spirits. It was also a place where the evil disease spirits lodged instead of going into the family hut to cause illness (Hollis, 1909).

1.10.0 Relations of Production, Reproduction, and Distribution

The relations are discussed under the following categories:

2.10.1 Access to Factors of Production

These factors are further subdivided into the following sections.

1.10.1.1 Land

The land question in colonial Nandi was a highly skewed setup of land ownership up to independence in 1963. British colonialism was accompanied by the massive and widespread alienation of arable land for the benefit of settler agriculture. As a result, the most arable land was taken from the Nandi without compensation and parcelled out to white settlers. The Nandi lost valuable land that was occupied by them over generations to the British. The land ownership setup which the Nandi knew interfered. The communal or customary land tenure setup under which the Nandi had guaranteed claims over the land was supplemented by the registration of land to individual holders under the colonial setup.

In pre-colonial Nandi, land was owned communally. The land was plentiful and never owned permanently by the community. Individual land ownership was a creation of colonialism and was inherited after independence in 1963. Each clan occupied a section of land and no other clan could claim another clan's land. At this epoch, the land had no physical borders or something similar to fences. It was marked by trees, valleys, hills, rivers or other physical features. Each clan settled in one place although the same clan could occupy other locations depending on the population of the clan. The reason behind this kind of settlement in clans was for security reasons. There were wild animals which could attack their livestock or some other neighbouring communities could raid them.

1.10.1.2 Labour

The Nandi people were semi-pastoralists and much of their labour was in the form of herding. They planted millet, sorghum, sweet potatoes, cassava, and traditional vegetables namely: *mitiat*, *isakyat*, *nderemiat*, *mborochet*, *imbokiat*, *bobek*, and *isochot*. The men were responsible for most of the work assisted by the women and children. It was the work of women to weave the baskets, make the milking gourds, sewing the skin wear known as *Jepkaiyyet*, *Kiboet*. During farm cultivation, the women and men did the actual land tilling, while the children could assist in herding and firewood and water fetching.

In general, women did the cultivation work and all domestic chores such as looking after children, preparing food, fetching water and firewood, washing milk gourds, clean huts and cattle *boma*, cutting grass, making clothes and pottery work. The men, on the other hand, the men herded the cattle and went to war; they also cleared the ground of the bushes and stumps, cut trees, worked iron, made wooden objects, took cattle to the salt lick and went to war. Both women and men milked cows, herd cattle, plant, weed, and harvest crops. Other part-time specialized occupations included rain-making, tooth-extraction, piercing ear lobes, cattle-doctoring, and circumcising. Tools used in the home to facilitate various kinds of labour and professions included hoes, axes, knives, bows, arrows, shields, and spears.

1.10.2 Products of Labour

1.10.2.1 Harvested Crops

Crops harvested by the Nandi community included millet, sorghum, sweet potatoes, cassava and maize which chipped in during the colonial era. During dry seasons, their harvest was not adequate so they went to buy additional food from Kavirondo (Luiya). This was referred to as *kesumet*. Men were responsible for most of the farm work assisted by the children.

1.10.2.2 Milk and gourds.

Milk was stored in gourds. There were several milk gourds. Others for storing in a partition similar to a cupboard referred to as *lengut*. Milk was never boiled; it was just stored and added with charcoal from a special tree known as *itet*. This charcoal forms a special flavour believed to be an appetizer. Milk was used either in the fresh state or left to ferment (sore milk) and some blood from cow or bull was added to fortify and make it more traditional. *Sotet* (Gourd) and *sotonik* (plural) were obtained from pumpkins which were planted for that purpose known as *silagonik*. Gourds served as cups and jugs for serving milk and blood and were of assorted sizes. Each gourd had its mark to identify its owner and the warriors' gourds were ornamented with cowrie shells and were never allowed to drink from a new gourd.

1.10.2.3 Honey

Honey was harvested late in the evening or at night. Daytime harvesting was deemed dangerous for children and livestock. It was stored in the granary and not in the hut. There was a kind of skin bag known as *Kipsigot* used to store honey after harvesting. Honey was used together with some traditional medicine. The bee hives were made of wood logs and located far away from the homestead for safety reasons. Not everybody was able to harvest the honey. Some special people perfected the art of harvesting honey.

1.10.2.4 Meat and Skins

Meat among the Nandi was used as food as well as for sacrifices. It was taken boiled or roasted. Skins were used as a material for clothing. This skin came from either domesticated or wild animals. The meat was not taken together with milk. If somebody decided to take milk, the same person could not taste the meat. The meat was roasted and stored in a dry form known as *sirigenik*, this meat was mostly from a dead cow or if a cow was slaughtered in a family and the members could not consume it within two days, the remaining were either partially boiled or stored by hanging on sticks above the fireplace. Meat from hunting was not stored as this meat was not enough to be eaten for many days. The animals hunted were small animals like antelopes and hares which were relatively small.

1.10.3 Access to Resources/Ownership

Many informants agreed that men are entitled to control all the family resources in the home. If a woman had some income or acquired some cattle through petty business, it was the husband to controlled such income. Some informants said that the husband controlled even the chicken and vegetable income if it was significant. All the control of resources originated from the man and then down to wives or wives.

1.10.3.1 Livestock

Wealth is reckoned in terms of cattle, goats, and sheep, and is therefore accumulated. Wealth was dominated by cattle inheritance, raiding or theft, or purchase. Anything else is not counted as wealth, e.g. weapons, ornaments, and chicken. A married woman owned cattle which could not be relocated by her husband to other co-wives. Husbands and wives shared the rights of owning cattle which were seen as the prime property of the Nandi family. The husbands or the men predominantly controlled the most significant means of production.

Findings have revealed that it was the duty of men to allocate cattle to specific houses and those not allocated to any house belonged to him alone and could not jointly with his wives own them. On the other hand, the wife could also own some wealth in the form of sheep or goats were given to her during the engagement of her daughters or given to her by her parents on the wedding day. She had absolute rights over these animals and the husband could not interfere. The children were not entitled to any property except the young warriors who could acquire their cattle through raiding.

1.10.3.2 Salt licks, Grazing and Water Points.

There were various salt lick points in different parts of the Nandi country. They were referred to as *ng'omwo*, *ng'omwet*, *ng'eny*, *ng'enda*, *sugutek*. They were used for deworming cattle and supplementing minerals in their livestock. The following were principal salt licks located throughout the district as early as 1907:

1. Kapkoimur
2. Kapkenyelo
3. Ng'enyin Lel
4. Arara Nyukie
5. Lelmokwo
6. Baraton
7. Amai
8. Kiptoros
9. Ingonyek
10. Choimim
11. Ollesos
12. Cheripo
13. Chematich

Each clan had its salt lick point which was shared by the clan members.

1.10.3.3 Security Tools

Security or war tools were stored by men only. Women were never entitled to handle such tools. These tools were obtained from special craftsmen referred to as *kitong'ik* (blacksmiths). They produced tools like spears, knives, swords, arrows, hoes, axes, cowbells, and arm clamps among other traditional tools. The *kitong'ik* produced assorted tools but the war tools included only the spears, arrows, swords and knives. These tools were stored in a special place in the house near to sleeping place so that they could easily be accessed by men in case of an emergency. There was also a special poison known as *ng'wonet* used together with war tools like arrows and spears to catalyze the death of an enemy. This poison could kill even if it comes in contact with a drop of blood. This poison was stored far away out of reach of children and women.

A Nandi warrior would always be spotted with a spear, shield, sword, and club. Four different types vary in shape and size as follows:

Ndirit: This type of spear came in two different shapes i.e. the first had a small blade and a long shaft. It was mostly carried by the western country referred to as *Chesumei*. While the second kind was different from the first one as it had a short socket and a short shaft. It was mostly used by the eastern, southern and northern countries: *Soiin, Wareng' and Aldai*.

Ng'otit: It had a short and broad blade and used mostly by the central country people: *Emgwen*.

Erengatiat: It had a short, small leaf-shaped blade with a long-socketed shank and was used by the elders.

Among the Nandi, spears were used for stabbing, not for throwing. To remind each other of war, warriors would tie a knot of feathers belonging to a plantain-eating bird on the end of their spear and when this was done, he was not allowed to sleep with a woman.

Long'et (shield) was fabricated out of a buffalo's, elephant's or giant pig's hide and of an oval shape with a narrow piece of wood going around the edges while a broader one was attached down the centre. The centrepiece acted as a handle. The overall work was painted in red, white, black and grey or blue colours. Each country had a different mark on their shield that represented them differently.

Rotuet ap chok or rotuet (sword) was long and slender and not so balanced. It was narrow to the hilt and broad to the tip while the sheath (*choket*) was worn around the abdomen. For it to be worn, was attached to a leather belt that was ornamented with cowries.

Rungut/Kirungut (club) was used to attack an advancing or retreating foe and to give an enemy a coup' de grace. This was fastened into a leather fastening referred to as *torokeyuot* of the sword belt. *Sharit/Siarit* was a kind of club with a long handle and was used by old men only.

Kwanget was a warrior's bow and *kotiek* were arrows and about twenty to thirty in one quiver known as *mootiet*. The same *mootiet* was used to carry a fire stick referred to as the *pionik* and a needle called *katet* together with a spare arrowhead.

1.10.3.4 Dowry

According to Nandi culture, girls were engaged when they were already circumcised. This was done when they were aged between 14 to 18 years in groups of 5 to 8 girls. The standard dowry according to the informants was four animals. It was never less than four or more than eight according to the tradition. Nine animals were known to be dead persons from the family who killed to clean the way and the family fire (O. I., Bot Lucia Kapbalos, Kipkemboi Moso, Kipkerebet Arap Kuto, Kogo Kap Machi, Kogo Kap Muraria, Arap Bartile, and Arap Maritim Muzee, Arap Chepng'ok Kitur, 2015).

- 1) The first one was called *Chemwai* meaning oil. It was a cow that should be under lactation (*teta ne abai*) (be accompanied by a calf.)
- 2) The second one was referred to as *kimwai* should be an ox or bull (*eito*)
- 3) The third one was named *kanyiyet*. This was normally a heifer (*roriat*).
- 4) The fourth was named *teta ne bo njor, iyumi nego*, it is normally a bull or a mature cow. (*eito anan ko iywoget*) if a bull was not available at that moment, it was substituted with at least four or more sheep.

- 5) The fifth one was a sheep which was specifically for mother-in-law. It was called *Chepng'abait*. This was normally from the mother of the son to the mother of the daughter to be married.

Currently, things have changed. Dowry can be paid through money and real animals. And the number is no longer strictly four or eight. Dowry has also tended to attract a financial dimension. It is sometimes negotiated in terms of money and the level to which the son and daughter have scaled in education. And so the dowry at times is paid in an envelope. This means that hard cash or a banker's cheque is tabled instead of animals during dowry negotiations.

1.11 Housing and Clothing

1.11.1 Traditional Buildings

1.11.1.1 Family House (Koot, Kapsat)

Hollis in his findings states that the Nandi did not enjoy living in villages like their neighbours, but each man lived in his hut referred to as *kaita* or a group of huts called *nganaset* which was mainly near his fields of eleusine grain and millet. The huts (Kapsat) were circular in shape, and were built of wattle and mud mixed with cow dung; the walls were roughly four feet in height, and the grass roofs were conical. These huts were partitioned into two rooms each, one called *koiimaut* was used as a kitchen and the living room cum bedroom was occupied by the man, small children, and a few goats, and the other room the occupants were the calves, sheep, and the remaining goats referred to as *injoor* or *injurit*. This hut had two entry doors one to *koiimaut* and the other to *injoor* or *injurit* with a partitioned doorway joining the two sections of the house. Each wife had her hut built at a distance in another district.

Koiimaut: This was the front part of the hurt which served as the main family living room which encompasses the kitchen and sleeping areas. Above the sleeping place, approximately four feet from the floor was a loft made of strips of wood called *tabut* which was used for drying firewood, and a storage for utensils, gourds, tobacco and grain. A few inches from the loft and above the fireplace was a tray made of rope slung which was use used for drying grain called *sainet*. There was a small compartment built out of the wall used for storing milk. This was called *kaplengut* which housed milk gourds. Some depression in the floor (*Kilonget*) was made near the central pole (*toloita*) to accommodate the beer pot. Milk gourds were hanged around the *kaplengut* while some pegs along the partition wall were used to suspend arms and also some extra gourds. These wood pegs were called *ireusiek*. There were two earth moulds raised on one end to serve as a pillow, which acted as a bed space for the parents separated by a mud mould in the centre and covered with an ox hide. A special inaugural ceremony was performed when erecting a house.

The elders poured milk and beer together with some salt in to the hole prepared for the reception of the central pole (*toloita*) and prayed to God to give them life and health, milk, give them power, everything which is good, give them children, millet and sorghum, cattle and to protect them. The construction work of *koot* was carried out by men up to the skeleton level so that the women would take over to finish it. Building materials were gathered by men i.e. the posts and poles. A piece of a cooking pot or a wreath of grass was passed over the apex of the roof, and the top of the central pole bound round with grass.

The apex of the central pole was called *kimonjokut*. When the house was complete and occupied, during the first four days, the occupants could not mention the name of the ground-hornbill by name (*cheptiibiit*); also the owner of the house may not sleep with his wife for the first four days. It was believed that if this rule was infringed; the house would always be draughty and cold. Also one month later, some charm was installed near the front door. This charm was made up of the *tepesuet* (*croton sp*) tree which was put in the ground in the form of a circle and bound round with some cord of a tree called *chepnyaliliet*. This charm was to bring good luck to the family and renew it after it was destroyed. But those who had their roots in Lumbwa (Kipsigis) renewed theirs (Hollis, 1909). The charm was called *mabwaita*. The thatching work was done by men while naked as if by the customary requirement. The front door was referred to as *kurket ap serem* while the back door was called *kurket ap injoor*.

1.11.1.2 Superstitions of the Households.

The Nandi believed in some superstitions regarding the household setup thus: One was not allowed to stand upright in a house or sit at the door or on the threshold. If a person enters a house through one door, he must not exit through the next door otherwise, the visiting person must pose for some time then he may now leave through the next door. One needed to exit through the point of entry.

A man would not touch the threshold of his hut or any other thing other than his bed at a time when his wife was breastfeeding. Peeping into a hut and leaving was strictly forbidden. If such happened, then the person was to cross the threshold which was the seal of a doorway or the entrance of a building before leaving. Warriors would not leave the family hut at night and if he wanted to do so he was to notify his mother or any other person in the hut thus '*ilal mat*' meaning 'light the fire'. During the famine, women left for long journeys to get food for the family while the children embraced doorposts during their mothers' absence and said: '*a-a-sai, eiyo, ip-u amdit*' which meant 'I pray for the mother, bring food'.

1.11.1.3 Warriors' House (*Kai tap murenik*)

This kind of hut can be likened to a house or a social house where several warriors would meet occasionally to share their experiences. Women were not allowed to enter in to this kind of house. It usually had depressions (*kilongosiek*) around a central pole for the storage of beer pots as the elders would also meet in this house at times to discuss some issues of drink beer.

1.11.1.4 Warriors' Hut (*Sigiroinet*)

It was built a little to the rear of the family's hut and was for the unmarried warriors, although the young boys would sleep there and run errands for them. Men were associated with the cold and rain; while the women were associated with the warmth of the family hut (Oboler 1985). The exterior of this house resembled the ordinary hut in appearance but the interior was different as it did not house any animals like the family hut which housed goats and calves (Hollis, 1909).

1.11.1.5 Warriors' Hut (*Ekoruek*)

This kind of house can be likened to a slaughterhouse. It was built in the woods and was only used by warriors to slaughter oxen from time to time (Hollis 1909)

1.11.1.6 Hut for initiated boys/*tarusiek* (*Menjet*)

This kind of a house where young initiated boys lived was erected in secluded spots near a river bank by the boys expected to be circumcised together with their patrons (*motirenik*) and this would be their home for six months.

1.11.1.7 Granary (*Choket*)

According to Nandi tradition, it was a rule to build one or two granaries near the huts. The roof was conical and thatched. These circular structures were built on poles about two feet from the ground and made from wattle and daub mixed with cow dung. The granary had its superstitions thus: a *chesorbuchot* meaning a woman who had conceived before marriage was never allowed to look in to a granary as it was believed that it would spoil the grains, (Hollis 1909).

1.11.1.8 Cattle Kraal (*Piut/Peut*)

This was a cattle enclosure built near the dwelling huts. A few counts of cattle were kept here since a large part of the herd was often on grazing grounds in a distant venue.

1.11.1.9 Cattle Kraal at grazing points (*Kaptich*)

This kraal was formed of thorny bushes kept in place by wood poles with two entry points such that the calves and cows had independent entry points respectively. Traditionally, this kraal could host up to between 50 to 100 heads of animals at any given time. Various families could keep their cattle in this kraal referred to as *kaptich* and was managed by warriors of such families. Girls would usually accompany these warriors (Huntingford 1932).

1.11.1.10 Hut built in *Kaptich*/cattle kraal (*Chepkimaliot*)

This kind of hut was constructed within the cattle kraal/*kaptich* and partitioned into two rooms, one for calves and the other for herdsmen with two to three warriors and girls to sleep. The roof of this house was flat and covered with cow dung, unlike the other houses whose roofs were conical in shape and thatched. The walls were about five feet high and made of wattle trees and daub mixed with cow dung. Every morning, the girls would sweep the enclosure and throw the refuse on one side which formed a large mould with time.

1.11.1.11 Hut built in the grain fields (*Keriet*)

This was a small thatched house with a conical roof built in the cornfields and used as a shelter by the people responsible for driving away the birds and monkeys.

1.11.1.12 Huts for pottery (*Korik ap terenik*)

They resembled ordinary dwelling houses but the interior design was different as it was not partitioned to house the *injurut* and *koimaut* sections. Goats and people could not sleep in these huts. No utensils or grains could be stored here. No bed mould or goat pegs could be seen in this hut. It was designed only for those special groups of women who did make pots. This was

likened to a production unit or factory where goods were manufactured. Work could be done inside or outside this premise and no other person apart from these women was allowed to either watch or go near this place while the pot-making was under process.

1.12 Clothing and Ornaments

Nandi men and women dressed differently from each other. Each gender had their apparel and ornaments. Like the Maasai people, Nandi had a tribe mark which was a small hole bored in the upper part of the rear and both boys and girls fixed mall pegs on or reeds in it called *soliat*, *solik* (plural). Young boys wore *ingoriet*, *ingoroik* (plural). These were garments made of goat's skin and *sonoek/sonaiek* (necklaces made of black beads). It was taboo for boys to wear any of the girls' garments. The boys wore wooden earrings called *kपालपालiot* which were polished, ornamented and cut into assorted artistic shapes. Girls, on the other hand, wore some kind of dress referred to as *ingoriet ap ko* which was made of skin or cloth at a later stage. *Ingoriet ap ko* was worn with an apron called *osiek* adorned with seeds of a *Murguiyuet* tree. This *osiek* was made of leather strips fastened onto a belt ornamented with cowries. Other ornaments included iron chain necklaces called *asing'aiit* and *sirimwagik*, iron wire bracelets called *makirariot*, armllets called *indinyoliet*, leglets referred to as *tapakwet*, head armllets called *sonaiek/sonoek* and anklets known as *kipkarkarek/ingibiliek*. *Ketit ap it* (pieces of wood) was used to stretch the earlobes for both boys and girls.

Warriors in the same vain wore a special garment referred to as *kipoet* made out of up to three pieces of hides from goats or calves sewn together and loosely fixed by a strip of leather over one shoulder ornamented with white or coloured beads worn with wired bracelets called *samoiyot*, iron wire or chains on their fingers known as *tamokyet*, an ivory arm ring and a fur skin cap called *chepkulet*.

Twins would wear a special ornament referred to as *samoiyot*, boys, girls, and women wore this kind of ornament on their necks while the men on the other side wore it as an armllet. If a man's limb got injured, he was instructed to wear a chain bracelet or leglet and if he suffered from rheumatism, or itching in one of the ears, he put on an ostrich egg shell armllet, earring or bracelet. But if his head ached further, he strapped a piece of wire called *sengwetiet* on his forehead.

In the Nandi community, if a sibling died, the next younger sibling would wear an ornament for the rest of his life. This ornament is signified as a preventive measure against evil spirits or diseases from attacking the next sibling in this household. Little girls wore an arrangement of beads known as *songoniet* which was attached to their hair and hung over their foreheads and nose. Both girls and boys wore a necklace made of chips of a gourd called *sepetaik* while at other times the boys wore a garment made of colobus monkey skin instead of goat's skin. In the same vain women wore a special necklace called *karik ap teget* and the men an iron armllet called *asielda*. Men and women could frequently wear a claw or a piece of lion's or leopard's skin. These special ornaments were worn as follows:

1. **Kelelik:** Was worn when the arm felt painful;
2. **Sepetaik:** Worn by the boys and girls of the Talai clan and children whose younger siblings sibling had died;
3. **Muit ap sonai:** Women's necklace;

4. **Lapuonik:** Worn by children and calves to protect them from the evil eye;
5. **Karik ap teget:** Worn by girls who have lost their next elder brother or sister;
6. **Asingait:** Worn by men;
7. **Samweet:** Worn by old women.

1.13 Hair, Teeth, Tattoos, Pottery and Musical Instruments

1.13.1. Hair:

Hollis (1909) in his book narrates that the Nandi people observed certain practices even with their hair which was differently treated depending on age and sex. In this case, the women and children shaved their hair once a month while old men and boys once a quarter. The boys would occasionally twist the seeds of a *murguiyuet* tree into their hair and at times a hawk or a vulture's feather down the back of their heads. Some women did not shave the whole head but would rather shave over the temples, ears and the back of the neck leaving the crown covered with a little hair and such a practice was not extended to the young girls. This practice was referred to as *piur*. On the other side, the warriors never shaved their hair but left to grow long and plait cloth or wool into the hair to give them a long big tail.

For the Nandi, it was customary to shave the hair as a sign of grief; and such shaved hair was thrown or hidden in the grass to the east or to where the sun rises. They shaved their eyebrows and the beards, armpits, pubes and shins whose hair was plucked out and not shaved. In the same vain, a prisoner's head was shaved once caught by his captor and the hair was retained until the captive was ransomed. When a man adopted a child, he shaved his hair and threw it to the east or where the sun rises.

1.13.2. Teeth:

All the Nandi people had their two lower incisors removed as soon as the milk teeth had all been replaced by permanent teeth. When a child removed his tooth, the same needed to be thrown away towards the direction of the rising sun and say: *Asis, ee kelek che muruonen, konoo che lelach aluote chepomoi*. This translates to 'God, take the brown teeth and give me white one, so that I may drink a calf's milk'. This procedure of removing the lower incisors was carried out using a large needle called *katet* or an arrow used to bleed the cattle known as *long'net*. Adult teeth were extracted and the milk teeth of young ones had to be hidden or buried in goats' dung.

1.13.3. Tattoos:

Girls obtained these marks by cutting horizontal lines in their cheeks below the eyes by drawing a line down the forehead and nose or by making a pattern around the eyebrows. Warriors burnt six scars on the front of their thighs, and on their wrists and made cicatrices on their shoulders. A black dye was rubbed into these marks or tattoos to make them more permanent.

1.13.4. Pottery:

Nandi had several cooking pots and other kinds of pots which were the handiwork of women referred to as *cheptereniot* (singular) and *chepterenik* (plural). This work was done in special houses built for this purpose only. These houses resembled ordinary houses but had no partitions inside like the living houses which had the *injoor* and *koima* respectively. No man may

go near this house or watch women at work. People could not sleep in such built forms nor may grain or utensils be kept in them. *Kamenon* was a place where pottery work was made. Implements used by potters were a handle of a hoe used to pounce and stir the clay and a shoulder-bleed of an ox, a stone, a seed pod known as *cheptaipesiet* and some plaited *taparariet* grass, and three pieces of straw known as *saatyet* with which the pots were smoothed and ornamented. After the pottery work was complete, the potters recited the following prayer:
Asis! Koonech koweit (God! Give us strength)

Ingekwang'e kikoch piich (Let us cook in them, that they may like them, men).

The Nandi principal earthen pots, jars, and cups were as follows:

<i>Loet:</i>	Pot used for roasting malt.
<i>Kipkorotit:</i>	Cooking pot for blood.
<i>Kipanyinyit:</i>	Cooking pot for vegetables only.
<i>Kipungut:</i>	Cooking pot for vegetables and meat.
<i>Kimwanit:</i>	Cooking pot for fat.
<i>Kipiitinit:</i>	Cooking pot for meat.
<i>Kipteregit:</i>	Pot used for boiling malt (large size).
<i>Riseiyuot:</i>	Pot used for boiling malt (small size).
<i>Tapokut:</i>	Pot used to store beer.
<i>Teret ap pei:</i>	Pot used to store water/water jar.
<i>Teret ap kimoi:</i>	Pot used for cooking porridge.
<i>Target:</i>	Men's drinking cup.
<i>Mwendet:</i>	Women's drinking cup.
<i>Tapet:</i>	Cut used for eating porridge.

1.13.5 Musical Instruments

The pre-colonial Nandi people did not have any advanced music culture and thus had very few instruments as stated below:

Kipokandet: This was a five-stringed lyre with an extra one string which was put in place in case one of the five breaks.

Ndurerut: This was a musical pipe.

Serengwet: A horn made of wood used by young boys who blew it when taking cattle to salt licks.

Kudo horn: This was an antelope horn used by warriors specifically for war purposes.

Ketet: This was a small wooden storage barrel for old men and was used to store old men's garments but was sometimes used in ceremonies as a drum. There were no drums among the Nandi but they referred to those of their neighbours as *sukutit*. At other times, at dances, women would accompany dances by scraping their metal bracelets against each other.

1.14.0 Means of Biological Reproduction

1.14.1 Birth and Naming

Every child had a right to a name according to the Nandi traditions. The naming was based on seasons, time and sometimes claims of ancestral intervention through dreams by pregnant women. The boys would retain their baby names only until they reached warrior age which was after their circumcision whereas girls retained theirs only till marriage.

Girl's birth names were dropped at marriage and took on their father's names. The married girls never took their husband's names. On the other hand, the boy's birth name was dropped and their father's name was adopted. Instances would occur when a man even after warrior age would still be referred to by a name instead of his father's name; mostly it would be that the family has had a particularly illustrious ancestor. In that case, his birth name would be carried to perpetuate his memory. A widow with sons would adopt names belonging to their sons, for instance, if a boy's name is *Kipkosgei*, the mother would refer to herself as *kobot Kipkosgei* (mother of *Kipkosgei*). Women were never allowed to refer to their husbands by their names nor even mention them, but would refer to them by the names of their sons above the name of the husband would be *kwombo Kipkosgei* (father of *Kipkosgei*).

1.14.2 Circumcision

Nandi practiced circumcision of both boys and girls though female circumcision was fast fading as a rite of initiation due to the government of Kenya that has banned female genital mutilation thus the rite has lost ground among the Nandi at the moment. Boys were circumcised every four years and at the end of every fifteen years marked the end of one age set and the beginning of the next age set as stated by Snell (1954). The boys needed to put up a secluded house known as *menjet* in the nearby forest near a stream that would be their home after the circumcision ceremony. The whole ceremony was accompanied by song and dance. Today the *tumndo* or male circumcision ceremony is carried out every year unlike long ago when it used to be once after four years. The initiates also took a shorter period compared to the 18th and 19th centuries which spent more time up to six months in the seclusion hut.

1.14.3 Other Beliefs and Practices among the Nandi

1.14.3.1 Funeral Rites

According to Nandi customs, people did not bury their dead ones like it is done today except for the old and children. Corpses were left in the open to be eaten by hyenas in the bush. Males were placed lying on their right side and females on their left side. Children and the aged people were buried under a manure heap in the cattle kraal known as *piut/peut* because children and the aged ones were closer to the spirit world. When a man died, his wife/wives would remain in their house and then perform ceremonial ablutions at the end of three days. The deceased's weapons and personal ornaments were anointed with oil, and laid out for display and beer made from new millet was drunk; then one of the oxen belonging to the deceased was slaughtered for the festival. The stick forming the apex of the house (*kimonjokut*) was cut or broken off and some of the family utensils were chipped as stated by Snell (1954).

1.14.3.2 Witchcraft – (*ponisio/ponisiet*)

Witchcraft and sorcery were practised by specific people in the Nandi society and it had several forms thus: *bonindet*, *sakutiindet*, *kimetindet*, and *chebusuriot*. *Bonindet* could practice magic although not born with this ability. *Sakutiindet* was a barren woman believed to have caused the death of a newborn baby due to jealousy. *Kimetindet* was a male member of certain clans who possessed an inborn ability that could harm others. *Chebusuriot*, on the other hand, was a woman who bewitched her husband using magic as stated by Oboler (1985). In his accounts, Snell (1954) asserts that the use of witchcraft among the Nandi was only allowed if the user had legitimate grievances and the offender for some reason could not be brought to justice as could be hiding or concealing his/her identity.

1.15.0 Nandi Political Divisions

The Nandi country was divided into districts and each of these was managed by two men: a representative of the chief medicine man the *Orkoiyot* and one representative of the people referred to as *kiruogindet*. The country was generally under the governance of circumcision age sets referred to as *ipinda* in singular and *ipinwek* in plural which circulates every seven years. *Orkoinotet* or the leadership of the *Orkoiyot* (chief medicine man) was an alien idea borrowed from the Maasai people whose medicine man was called *Ol-oibon*. Before the era of *Orkoiyot*, Nandi country was headed by *kiruogik* (plural) or *Kiruogindet* (singular) meaning councillors. (Hollis, 1909).

This new leadership of *Orkoiyot* or *Orkoiik* (plural) coined their clan referred to as *Talai* and their leader was called *Orkoiyot*. This position was hereditary and it was believed that the members of this clan possessed some supernatural powers which enabled them to foretell the future and interpret omens, something which no other members from outside this clan could do. The *Orkoiyot* appointed his representative referred to as *maotiot* (singular) and *maotik* (plural) in each *pororiet* council. The people elected their representatives called *kiruogik* who were answerable to *Orkoiyot* through *maotiot*. *Orkoiyot* and his team of *maotik* had no specific authority over the *ipinda* setup but due to their position as powerful men, possessed a certain degree of influence in their activities (Huntingford, 1927).

1.15.1 Emet/Emotinwek

Emet (singular) and *emotinwek* (plural) were the largest territorial divisions. *Emet* translates to land or country. Nandi country was divided into six *emotinwek* at the beginning of the 20th century namely (Huntingford, 1951):

- 1. Wareng':** To the North. This word means the uninhabited country where grass could be burnt without restriction. The name was given before the Nandi settled in this part early 19th Century.
- 2. Soiin:** To the South and South East. This land was largely a flat country at the foot of the escarpment (South) and hilly bordering on the Tinderet forest. This name was derived from the word *soi* which means grazing ground with the prefix *-in* to mean grazing ground.
- 3. Chesumei:** To the West. This area constituted a large forest. The name was a derivative of the word *sume* which means hairy or forest.

4. **Mosop:** to East.
5. **Aldai:** To the South West of the country. The residents cultivated corn (*alde*) therefore the name was derived from that.
6. **Emgwen:** Centre of the country. The word *emgwen* is a derivative of *em-in* and *kwen*–centre.

1.15.2 Koret

The basic unit comprised between 20 to 100 homesteads and was referred to as *koret*. This unit was determined by population size and virtue of topography. Each one of these units had a special name derived from the names of animals, birds or trees. The governing council of *koret* was located in a place called *kokwet* which was responsible for the *koret*. This was the most important council of elders among the Nandi. All men from a *koret* needed to attend this council.

This meeting was held under a fig tree or any other species of fig tree found in Nandi. This place for *kokwet* was called *kapkiruok*, or *kapkiruoket*. *Kokwet* was the only legal and binding assembly for the people as there was no other tribal court for the whole community. This was meant for social ties only. There was no hereditary or elected chief to head the *kokwet*.

1.15.3 Pororiet

The Nandi were divided geographically into districts or divisions called *pororiet*, pl. *pororiosiek*, and subdivisions, *siritiet*, pl. *siritoiik*, and geographically into clans and families, *oret*, pl. *ortinwuek*. Each clan had one or more totems or sacred animals.

Pororiet was formed out of all the *korotinwek* and their *kokwet* councils thus forming a larger group referred to as *pororiet*. Its mandate was to handle matters affecting all *korotinwek* within its jurisdiction, which included wars, planting of crops, and circumcision. This larger council called *kapkiruoket ap pororiet* made decisions on matters affecting *korotinwek*. Such a council consisted of elders called *boisiek ap kokwet* or *boisiek ap kok* of the *pororiet* area presided over by two representatives of the *Orkoiyot* known as *maotik*. These representatives of the *Orkoiyot* were not *orkoiik* or the same as *Orkoiyot* but common men elected by the members of *pororiet* from among themselves.

This council could decide to go to war on its own although the *orkoiyot*'s blessings were sought first. *Maotik* would convey this message to *Orkoiyot* in the company of one old man from the *pororiet* council. A pot of beer was taken to *Orkoiyot* before his blessings or sanction was sought. If the *Orkoiyot* approved the request, then the leader was given magic to protect the warriors going to war. *Pororiet* council was constantly in touch with the *Orkoiyot* for its operations, unlike the *kokwet* which was independent in its operations.

1.16 Nandi Social Divisions

The Nandi social setup was divided into five thus; the male group into boys, warriors, and elders; the female group into girls and married women (Hollis 1909). The social groupings consisted of families and kindred groups often called *tiliet* meaning relatives and clans. Boys aged 15 -25 years were circumcised and admitted into an age-set group called *ipinda* (age-sets) or *ipinwek* in plural.

1.16.1 Age Sets (*Ipinwek*)

Circumcision ceremony among the Nandi was conducted every fifteen years. Hollis states that the age set setup came into place every seven and a half years but the findings from Langley (1979) and some Nandi elders differ in that it was a cycle of 15 years which means a complete cycle would take up to 105 years. All the boys circumcised together belonged to the same age set called *ipinda* up to date although its mandate to lead the Nandi country has ceased to exist. The Nandi possess seven age sets namely: *maina*, *nyongi*, *kimnyingei*, *kaplelach*, *kipkoimet*, *sawe* and *chumo*. This makes a total period of one hundred and five years for a single cycle to be complete. Each *ipinda* progressed to a new age set after a handing-over ceremony called *saket ap eito* (Langley 1979). This made it almost impossible that no age set would come into existence while the same age set was still alive. If alive then the victim should be over one hundred and five years old.

Each *ipinda* had further subdivision within itself thus the eldest was called *chonginiek* or *chongin opir*, the middle class was referred to as *tetagat* or *kibal kong*, the lower was called *kiptoinik*, *kiptaitoinik* meaning young bulls. A man and his son should not belong to adjacent age sets; if a man, for example, is of the *maina* age set, his eldest son should be a *sawe*. The handing-over ceremony was called *saket ap eito*. The main feature of the ceremony was the slaughter of a white ox to mark the climax of this event. This event marked the change-over as Oboler (1985) states that the initiates became warriors, warriors became elders and a new age set was begun for boys about to be initiated. Hollis (1909) on the other hand describes the ceremony as important in the handing over process of the country from one *ipinda* to another.

All adult males were to attend this ceremony except married warriors whose wives were not to leave their huts whilst the ceremony was underway. For this occasion to proceed well, the Orkoiyot needed to be present as the chief celebrant. The bull was brought by the warriors. It was slaughtered and while the meat had been eaten, the warriors would form a circle around the Orkoiyot who stood near a traditional stool which was heaped with cow dung studded with fruits of *lapotuet* shrub (*solanum campylanthum sp*). All the old men and the members of the age set immediately preceding the age of the one in power stood up, while the warriors to receive control of the country sat down. On the signature from the chief medicine man, all the members of the preceding age set took off their warrior garments and put on the old men's attire. And once the ceremony adjourned, each member was required to leave for home and never sleep by the wayside under whatever circumstance.

1.17 Conclusion

This article presented the pre-colonial Nandi Marriage setup and household relations from the late pre-colonial up to the colonial epoch. On the Indigenous Nandi kinship and marriage setup, this chapter examined the family, polygynous Nandi household setup, extended family, the clan, incest, sexual relations, pre-marital sex, extramarital sex, rape, and homosexuality. It showed that, having a family or marrying in the Nandi context was an economic and social affair and that men did not marry for love but for specific reasons. Polygyny was prestigious among the Nandi and was practised by married men. A man could marry as many wives as his wealth could afford. On extended family, the Nandi were not interested in staying together as an extended family up to 1900 AD due to their culture of wealth acquisition in terms of cattle; the community enjoyed staying scattered as a way of expanding their territory

through polygyny. This community had seventeen clans dispersed throughout their territory and five of them had more than one totem.

Internally, they had three categories of exogamic groups, the clan, the age-set and the kindred group. Any sexual intercourse between the members of the same group was incestuous and thus there was clan incest, age-set incest, and kindred incest. These people had eight categories of sexual relations namely: premarital sex, extramarital sex, rape, homosexuality, wife inheritance, woman-to-woman marriage, marriage into the house, and child marriage. Young warriors after circumcision were free to engage in sexual activities with young uncircumcised girls on condition that they don't impregnate their sweethearts. However, married women may continue enjoying a sexual relationship with their old sweetheart from the communal hut but in secret. Also, a married man could give hospitality to another man of his age set and allow him to spend the night in his house including having sex with his wife.

Rape and homosexuality were considered a serious offence and an outrage on the female sex and were punishable by beating by the members of his age-set and the offender was denied some privileges during communal festivals. The Nandi practised wife inheritance in the event of the death of a husband and this could not equate to remarriage as marriage according to Nandi customs was permanent and indissoluble even after the death of a spouse. Woman-to-woman marriage was also present to light the fire of the clan alongside the marriage in to the house. They believed in fire lighting which meant '*to have children*' especially the boy child who inherited the wealth of the family. Child marriage was not common but was practised under some strict economic reasons.

Each member of the family had a role to play in ensuring that the family procured an improved standard of living according to their traditions. A person who violated his role was ridiculed in public. In total, some of the cultural beliefs as derived from the study show that; *Orkoiyot* was a later introduction in to the political setup of the Nandi having been adopted from the Maasai in the 19th Century. Warriors defended the community and would engage in wars and raids with approval from the *Orkoiyot*. The practice of both male and female circumcision was practised among these people. The ways of life of a Nandi were centred on their cattle before and after the turn of the 19th century when they began practising the cultivation of crops such as finger millet. They believed in the existence of a supreme being known as *Asis*, the presence of evil spirits called *oik* and the power of lightning (*ilet*).

An analysis of their houses or built forms among the Nandi showed that their settlements were more or less evenly distributed rather than being grouped into organized villages. All Nandi people built their huts with the front doors facing Mt. Elgon or *Sabaot* which was the North of Nandi land as they believed they came through the Elgon area. *Sabaot* belongs to the larger Kalenjin group of people and today most of them still live in the Mt. Elgon area. The clan setup influenced the location of one's homestead and the sitting of the hut/*koot*. Cattle were important to the Nandi; therefore their cattle were kept near the main hut in a circular cattle kraal/*piut/peut*. They also had a *kaptich* located in the grazing grounds away from the homestead where cattle were taken care of by warriors.

Koot and *sigiroinet* had subtle implications; women were associated with the warmth of the heart, men with cold and rain outside. The cooking area in the *koot* was symbolic and symbolized both the domestic role of the wife and her position in the property setup. Marriage negotiations were discussed in the back room of the family hut referred to as *injurut/injoor* at the

bride's home. Circumcision ceremonies were conducted in the open grounds for the boys but male initiates were circumcised and secluded in a seclusion hut called *menjet*, while the girls remained in the hut.

1.18 Recommendations

Most African heritage is on the verge of decline due to pertinent and contemporary issues, such as education, religion, the evolution of technology, and industrialization. Therefore, this study recommends a revisit to African culture and mainstreaming of African heritage in learning institutions at all levels so that positive cultural values such as marriage, language, and various aspects of discipline should be preserved for posterity. This preservation will form a background to the African cultural heritage of the community, the country and by extension Africa.

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