

Influence of Abanyala Clans on Their Political Economy

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I. Introduction

The economic activities among the Abanyalais usually influenced by the various means of production from the land, labor, industrialization and entrepreneurship. While commenting about the characteristics of primitive community modes of production in Africa, (Ake 1976) states that;The basic means of production in this case is land, generally owned collectively by the lineage or clan or tribe, but its use is permitted to members of these primary groups, subject to certain conditions which vary from place to place. Labour is usually organized on the basis of the family or kinship, and the exchange of commodities is infrequent (Ake, 1976:1).

Land as a major factor of production thatpave way to modern capital as well as to industrial activities among the Abanyala of Navakholo Sub-County.

Pre-colonial economic situation in Kenya

Sheriff (1985) states that Kenyan communities had for a very long time adjusted themselves to their ecological environment as a result communities like the Agikuyu and Mijikenda developed agricultural based economies. The Luo's and Abagusii's engaged themselves in both crop cultivation and livestock keeping, not forgetting the Ogiek who entirely relied on hunting and gathering. Production was exclusively for subsistence rather than individual accumulation. The kinship system was the basis of ownership of production factors which comprised of Land, livestock and labour. Labour was mostly cooperative within the family and the larger clan grouping. It was majorly manual. Ndege (2009) refers to trade was limited due to a very small quantity of surplus products. Trade which comprised of regional and long distance usually involved very prestigious goods and only impacted on the society at a minimal level. Labour rewards were majorly redistributed according to need and in kind.

Ndege (2009:1) further asserts that in terms of wealth possession, there was very little difference amongst several communities. Very few communities had the aspect of classes existing among them. If they existed, they were to a large extent incipient. People never experienced abject poverty due to reciprocity amongst members. Reciprocity was a very positive contribution in the African Socio-economic life,bringing about the idea of social capitalism versus individualistic capitalism.

Ndege (2009:2) mentions that there was very little done to encourage the formation of a large state. Instead the largest political unit was the grouping of few families related to each other by blood. Most of the communities were greatly segmented. Most centralized kingdoms were mainly situated in the region to the west of Lake Victoria.

Economic Activities among Abanyala

The Abanyala clan politics which began during the pre-colonial period had been clearly influenced by the various means of production that had greatly expanded after independence and more so in the 1970s onwards. PainitoUkhevi (*Abatabani clan*) observed that; The most critical aspect in production within the clan, initially was the land owned by the clan and the labour which clan members provided, later on capital and entrepreneurship emerged to ensure full satisfaction of the needs of clan members as well as members of other clans. This was because of the changing times(Interview report 7th June, 2018 at Lutaso).

The various modes of production have been greatly influenced by clan politics among the Abanyala. herefore, as people engaged in their main economic activity which was agriculture, they did it basically for the benefit of the clans as well as to satisfy the family's needs. Clans never engaged in agriculture so as to sell their produce but to have enough for consumption and stored the rest in granaries for future consumption and more so in times of famine and drought.

Emma Ongeti from the Abasenya clan pointed out that the main system of production among the Banyala was domestic production, as both production and consumption were organised at the level of the clan and for the purposes of the household. There was only an exemption of clan members being allowed to trade on

the surplus goods they had whenever there was a particular essential commodity lacking amongst them. The main factors of production that the Banyala used to establish a sound economy that would propel them to a higher level included; Land, labour, industrialization and entrepreneurship.

Land

This was the main factor of production as the other three; labour, industrialization and entrepreneurship all depend on it. Mbithi, (1972:8) defines land as the natural resource found in the atmosphere above the surface to some metres below the soil surface. This, therefore means the following are taken into account; soil, vegetation, water, fauna (insects and animals) and surface minerals. Traditionally land was inherited patrilineally. Okoth-Ogendo, (1975:3) explains that land possession and control in East Africa is very much tied up intimately with social life. During the pre-colonial period, the Abanyala land was owned by the clan and distributed among its members by senior members of the clan usually referred to as clan heads (*ligurus*), this was mainly done by keeping in mind the laid down rules on land distribution. Rights of private land ownership by a single individual ownership and everything on it were not generally a feature of traditional law (Interview report, 10th May, 2018). Okoth (1987) stated that over the last 50 years, the traditional system of communal land tenure has eventually evolved into a system of private tenure but one which incorporates the community trust obligations inherent in indigenous law.

The lands given to various families became family owned and were referred to as *omukundagwaguga* (lands of the grandfather). A man was allowed to apportion his land to his sons as they married but could not alienate it. Wives had the right to use their husbands' farms but could not inherit land. However, mothers could hold land in trust for their sons. Whenever a mother died, the last born son automatically inherited the land she farmed. Okoth-Ogendo, (1975) further observes that although women did not have the power of land allocation in indigenous tenure systems, their security of tenure was enhanced, in that a woman as a wife had to be allocated a parcel of land on which she cultivated as the principal producer of food crops. In traditional African communities, women had recognized the vital roles in the economic well being of their communities. Among the Agikuyu of Kenya, women were the major food producers. Therefore, they not only had access to land but also had authority on how land was to be used. It is because of their productive labour in producing and processing food that established and maintained their rights in the domestic and other spheres.

Communal lands, for instance, grazing land as well as surplus lands were strictly under the control of the clan and entirely administered by the *liguru* (village headman). Land disputes were entirely handled by the clan elders who were the custodians. After land distribution had occurred each and every individual was to ensure maximum utilization of land so as to produce enough to take care of the family and the surplus to be given to the vulnerable in society who included the aged people with no immediate family members and the physically challenged. During land allocation various factors including if one was polygamous or monogamous were looked into, thus making the one who is polygamous being allocated more land as their needs are more. One's family was also a factor, the title of an individual in society as well as the hard work and determination of a clan member. Davison (1987:19) states that women as a social category cannot be viewed as a single category even in the pre-colonial period. Their social status thus impinged upon their access to and their role in agricultural production. Male access to land was also based upon social factors like status in the community and size of the family, whereas women's access was and still often depended upon their relationship to men and their marital status.

In analysis, men traditionally gained access to land largely as lineage members and women gained access as wives. Guyer (1984) explains that historically therefore, control over land through inheritance ascribe to patrilineal ideology and organization. Characteristically, men controlled women's access to land and allocated their labour. For instance, the more wives a man had the more land he accumulated and controlled. Davison (1987:18) further states that the more land a man controlled the more wives and children he needed to help cultivate it.

During the colonial period, there were restrictions on where to get land and settle as Africans were not allowed to live near Europeans. Whenever Europeans occupied a given area, Africans were displaced and settled in areas famously referred to as African Native Reserves (ANR), this was not the case in Bunyala as the few Europeans who came around were given land which they used in establishing mission stations by the various clan heads Masakha et al. (2018:100-101)

In the post colonial era women are permitted to inherit land but most of them are land owners by virtue of buying. Communal grazing grounds are nowadays rare due to an increase in population. Most of the land among the Abanyala is registered and for the issue of buying and selling it all depends with an individual. Unlike the pre-colonial era, land disputes are handled majorly by the courts. Most of the respondents agreed to the fact that the backbone of Abanyala's economy is agriculture. For instance, most people in Bunyala engage in both cash crop and food crop growing. The major modern cash crop they grow is sugarcane which has been of importance to farmers since the establishment of Mumias Sugar Company (MSC) in 1971 Allen, (1983). Its

establishment, led to increase in revenue from the sugarcane supplied as well as from the jobs it offered. This made most families in Bunyala to improve their standards of living through the income they got. The collapse of MSC has led to many families being deprived off a regular source of income meant for development both individually and as a society (Group interview and Chief Wegulo, 12th July, 2018).

Due to the previous assurances on reviving the company, nothing has actually happened to date. The political tension being experienced in the country has even worsened the situation. Mises (1949) observed that; The mixing of politics and business not only is detrimental to politics, as is frequently observed, but even much more so to business (Mises, 1949: 162)

A sudden drop in revenue impacted seriously on the development of various areas. For instance, roads that were impassable could not be opened up making them inaccessible. Sugarcane growing being the backbone of Abanyala's economy. Most of the Abanyala clans through their leaders have urged their political leaders to advocate for the re-establishment of MSC to its original state which they have tried doing to no avail (Group Interview on 7th June, 2018 at Emuhuni). Apart from sugarcane, the Abanyala also grow maize in plenty as it is their staple food. This is done once in a year in some areas while in other areas, more so those living near water sources plant twice thus ensuring a bounty harvest therefore food security. Amos Wafula (*abaengereclan*) states that; The Abanyala began engaging in horticultural farming in the early 21st century which never existed before as most people believed it was unprofitable. Crops like bananas, pineapples, avocado, oranges, mangoes, kales, cabbages and a variety of beans which is usually intercropped with maize were being grown for sale and farmers involved are getting some good revenue (Interview Report, 7th June, 2018 at Siyenga).

The Bunyala forest is another very important resource as it plays a major role in feeding the livestock owned by the Banyala. At some point the Abanyala had to fight off the Kabras and the Nandi, the original inhabitants of the forest (Masakha et al. 2018:6). The forest is usually of help mainly during the dry period. Provision of firewood for those living around the forest, which is usually an important source of fuel. There is usually push and pull when it comes to allocation of forest land for farming, this is usually done with lots of favouritism. Officers placed in charge of the distribution tend to favour their relatives and clan members as well as consider one's popularity in the society. Those who are not known end up getting nothing despite their efforts in acquiring space to carry out farming (Group Interview, 16th May, 2018).

In an oral interview with Juma Mwacho at Sivilie, he observed that apart from growing crops the Abanyala also practised fish farming. This is where those living near water sources are able to build fish-ponds or tanks so as to enhance fish production for both family consumption and trade purposes. Majority of the population are fish eaters thus a major commodity in most market places in Bunyala. The Abanyala are also into poultry farming, whereby both local breeds and hybrid chicken are kept. In almost all of the Banyala homesteads one cannot miss a chicken (*ingokho*). This is to ensure there is enough meat as well as eggs to satisfy the family and community's needs.

Keeping of hybrid poultry is a result of the development of the hotel industry. Initially most Banyala were only keeping the indigenous breeds of chicken but currently a good number have began embracing the latter. William Wafula (*abakwangwachi clan*), observed that; Indigenous cows produce very little amount of milk therefore instead of having ten of them its better to rear a single exotic dairy animal and put all your efforts on it and you will surely reap great benefits (Interview Report, 10th July, 2018 at Chebuyusi).

As compared to earlier years, currently most people have ventured into dairy farming as clan leaders have also seen its benefits and advised clan members accordingly.

Wycliffe Maero during an interview at Nambacha, observed that those Abanyala's living near water sources like; the Lusumu and Nzoia Rivers participate in mining of sand, while those living in rocky areas like sidikhomine stones. The mining is meant to be done by those located in that particular area and not outsiders. They feel those resources are their blessings and are entitled to them. This obviously creates a rift with the Abanyala from other clans who are not endowed with such resources hence similar treatment. Navakholo sub-county being part of Kakamega county has stepped in to resolve this as all resources in the county are now under the county government of Kakamega thereby reducing the animosity.

Most of the rural inhabitants earn their living from land. The remaining few are government employees and others are self employed in private business entities. With the introduction of iron implements, it became necessary that people acquire more land. The women did most of the work on the land ranging from digging, weeding and harvesting. They were economically profitable as they helped in increasing agricultural production. All families of the clan without any restriction freely and communally used grazing land, except when there were crops in the field. In theory, the land, both for pastures and for cultivation was and in most instances continues to be held by a group as a whole, although individual ownership of fragmented strip of land was allowed within this group. Okoth-Ogendo (1976:150) states that from pre-colonial land tenure studies, a generalization has emerged referring and describing African land tenure as 'communal', although there has been

no agreement on how it was politically administered, whether by individual, family, clan or ethnic group. Nonetheless, at the community level, land was and is still defined in terms of relation between kin, family members and neighbours.

Labour and Capital

Labour is the amount of physical, mental and social effort used to produce goods and services in an economy. Labour supplies the expertise, manpower and service needed to turn raw materials into finished products and services. In return, labourers receive a wage or a salary to buy the goods and services they do not produce themselves. During the pre-colonial and part of colonial period, labor was usually offered and often paid back in kind as it was something done collectively. Traditionally, individual labour was used to accomplish tasks belonging to ones' immediate family. Leakey (1977) explains that one of the chief obligations of a man to his wife (or wives) was to provide her with fields for cultivation, which meant he had the task of clearing the bush and of hoeing it with the digging stick to make it ready for the harrow. Subsequent cultivation and harvesting responsibilities rest with the man's wife or in situations of illness or incapacitation, labour was drawn from the man's other wives. Communal labour was when people came together to finish up chores belonging to various house holds. (Cowen & Murage, 1972a) stipulate that communal labour was organized if a household had insufficient labour to carry out an agricultural task. Groups of three to ten women, not necessarily related, would work from day to day on each others plots. The Abanyalas had both male and female labor and each group had to accomplish their role as specific roles were meant to be accomplished by a certain gender. Clan members usually organized themselves in such a manner that they assisted a single family for instance to till their land then moved to another in that sequence, by the end of it all they had dealt with huge tracts of land. By doing so labour is viewed as a commodity for sale as finally one was given a reward. Such kind of co-operation was also used in the construction of houses. As a reward those that took part in the cultivation were offered meals as a token of appreciation (Group Interview, 4th July, 2018, at Nambacha).

Hunting and warfare were roles strictly assigned to men. Farming activities were majorly women's' duty though men had to clear the fields. Women carried out the rest of the tasks like preparing soil, planting, weeding and harvesting. Planting of trees was the task of men with women being left to care for them. Taking care of large animals like cows was the work of men and unmarried boys.

According to the Abanyala traditions, men were allowed to engage in milking of cows. In the construction industry, there were different stages in house building each involving division of labour. Men's role was to build the structure and prepare thatching materials. Women's role was to generally mad and decorate the house and in case of damage later they repaired walls and floors. Boys and girls helped out in tasks such as tending to younger children, gathering firewood and fetching water. Moses Chemoto in an interview on 10th May, 2018 at Siyombe and Geoffrey Wanjala on 18th May, 2018 at Mukhweso agreed that in the post-colonial era, division of labour has greatly transformed. Concerning the cultivation of farm land, both men and women play an equal role whereby; clearing of land, preparation of soil, planting, harvesting and storing can be done by either party. Tree planting activities involves both genders as long as the planting is done in the right manner.

Due to rural-urban migration the responsibility of men taking care of the large animals has fallen on women and they cannot abdicate as most men have moved to urban centres to look for employment. Milking of both cows and goats is nowadays done by both men and women. Nowadays marketing of products involves both men and women, although most women are mainly involved in the selling of pots, grains, fruits and vegetables. Men have a responsibility of taking animals to the market. Currently, men's and women's roles among the Abanyala are varied, despite the fact that sexual division of labour within the home has not changed much. Both men and women have a wide range of occupational opportunities, this includes; agricultural extension officer, sugar factory worker as well as school teacher. Most of the initial roles changed after independence as both genders were encouraged to get an education hence the ability to secure white collar jobs (Group Interview, 18th May, 2018)

The young men were required to provide labour as they were still energetic and not old people who needed to relax after years of hard work. This is as per a clan head among the Abasaya, John Ndombi interviewed on 8th May, 2018 at Siyombe. According to Ndombi, young men should work and take care of their families when their parents get old and are unable to undertake manual tasks as they used to. It makes parents proud about how responsible their children have grown to be. In the post-colonial Kenya, matters regarding labour have changed as compared to what used to happen. For instance, unlike long time ago when labour was communal, nowadays one can only carry out labour for free if he or she for instance is tilling or working on their own farms, but in a situation in which one is tasked with a responsibility elsewhere a person has to be in agreement about their remuneration after accomplishing the task given. Terms and conditions of service must be put in place before commencement of duty.

Ndombi further states that, during the 1970s onwards most people had acquired some reasonable level of education. This meant that unlike the early post-colonial period, labour had become diversified, in the sense

that when one accomplished his or her primary education one could undergo training specializing in a particular field. This applied to high school education as well as university education. People specialized in various tasks for example teaching, nursing, masonry, plumbing, engineering, electrical wiring, architecture among other professions. Pioneering efforts in education involved people like the late Fred Masakha who was notably the first District Education Officer (DEO) from Bunyala. Masakha began Emuhuni Primary School and was also the chairman of Navakholo Secondary School Development Committee. Other Banyalas involved in establishment of private educational institutions included KulatiWangia, who established TomLiza Educational Centre made up of primary section and Early Childhood Development College. Rodgers Nato also established Bright Star Academy that has educated a lot of Banyala children and even beyond (Masakha *et al.* 2018:127-128). This brought in a large group of labourers who were expected to play a major role in the economic development of Navakholo sub-county as well as the entire nation.

An oral interview with a clan elder, JumaWesisi (*Abasuu clan*), revealed that; Unlike the pre-colonial and colonial period, the vast field of professionals that had been trained were no longer going to provide labour for free but due to their professionalism they had to be employed under terms and conditions of service (Interview report on 15th May 2018 at Navakholo).

Wesisi further pointed out that some of the labourers were employed by the government as civil servants working under the public services commission and serve under permanent and pensionable terms while others were employed in the private sector under contract terms whereby one served for a particular period before renewing their contract as per the wishes of the individual or requirements of the employer. Wesisi also noted that some of this labourers had an option of being self-employed and establishing their own business enterprises or agencies which were to offer services at a fee. This was against the clan norms where labour was to be provided and paid in kind as a way to benefit the community in which one resides. Most of the respondents had varied opinions on the issue as some supported the idea of free labour while others were vehemently opposed to such. For instance, during an interview, BenardOduki (*Abatecho clan*), who is a civil servant clearly stated; When an individual has undergone training for a specific period of time and qualified to practise the skill they acquired, whether among the Banyala or elsewhere then the income should be equivalent to the service offered and issues of relations should not be factored in as it will result to retrogressive development (Interview report 20th June 2018 at Lwakhupa).

However, most of the youth were of the opinion that the elders had a responsibility of ensuring that, young people prosper in matters of profession by giving them advise in matters of conduct and perseverance at work as well as supporting them financially, on their way up the professional ladder. This was the only way that could develop their self-esteem and economic capacity. It was also noted that some of the economic activities that the Abanyala engaged in, for instance, sugarcane farming led to the rise of a class of specialized labour which included those hired to work within the sugar factory, tractor and truck drivers as well as cane cutters who worked across Navakholo sub-county and beyond, they provided a kind of labour usually referred to as casual as they often got their pay within the week of working. Interestingly, most of the respondents were in agreement that the economic activities carried out by the Abanyala needed intensity of labour and was therefore supposed to be appreciated as those who provided it also had dependants whose daily needs they catered for.

Capital is defined as man made resource used in the production process. Mill (1909) defines capital as the accumulated product of past labour destined for the production of future wealth, that is when human labour is applied on natural resources, then capital items are generated. It includes; money, factories, machinery, tools, equipments, means of transport as well as communication as well as raw materials. The income earned by owners of capital is usually interest. This is to say, money is a commodity but one which has been singled out to play a special role in relation to all other commodities as the measure of their values. Money is in the first place, the “Universal equivalent”, the form of values in which value takes on the form of a specific material substance. Beattie (2021) explains that further development of the money form in the late 20th century, however created money forms which have had a purely virtual existence rather than a tangible material substance. Bitcoin released in 2009 by the pseudonymous Satoshi Nakamoto, quickly became the standard for virtual currencies which have no physical coinage. The appeal for such currency is that it offers the promise of lower transaction fees. This means that different forms of payment were developed to enhance efficiency and avoid loss of money any how. The developments included use of credit cards, overdrafts as well as cheque system to carry out financial transactions.

Though unknown to the tribal society or to more developed societies in which trade was still restricted money had an ancient existence. With coinage coming into use wherever the great empires of the ancient world ancient Greece, the Islamic world concentrated significant social surpluses and allocated them for expansion of the scope of trade. Thus, existence of money was one of the preconditions for the development of capital, but it was not until the class of labourers with nothing to sell but their labour emerged, wage-earners were created, alongside a class who owned the means of production as their private property, could demand large sums of money be put into circulation in order to make a profit and become capital. According to the “general law of

capitalist accumulation,” the longer the capitalist mode of production prevails, the more capital will have accumulated, leading to both higher profits for capital owners *the bourgeoisie* and to worsening living conditions for the people who live by their labour *the proletariat* (Marx, 1909).

Giddens (1971) affirms that; Many Marxists attempt to show that the middle class is declining and polarization within capitalism. Marx’s view that the successful members of the middle class would become members of the bourgeoisie, while the unsuccessful would be forced into the proletariat (Giddens, 1971).

Among the Abanyala, a good number of the clans have been in leadership positions. Most took their opportunity and enhanced both clan and community development. Some leaders from other clans saw it as an individual opportunity to amass resources for their immediate families. The effect is as put by Marxists. Most of the beneficiaries have ended up looking for employment so as to make a living. Those that were labourers and advanced in their studies and businesses are now the bourgeoisie.

The British colonial economic policy in Kenya included development of settler dominated agricultural production and peasant commodity production. Establishment of rail and road transport, coming up with an elaborate communication system and development of education and health facilities. These policies were formulated and implemented during specific stages of colonialism. The implementations of such policies were characterized by a series of contradictions. The colonial state had to cope with those contradictions, rarely without success (Lonsdale & Berman, 1979). There was a clash between metropolitan capitalists and the colonial state in Kenya where British merchants and financiers often won. Other policies included land alienation for white settlement. African land which was fertile and located in areas with good climatic conditions was to be exclusively for the British settlers (Sorrenson, 1968).

Tarus (2004), identifies African taxation as the one which impacted negatively on Africans limiting their capital base, the taxes were divided mainly into two; hut tax which was to be paid for every hut an individual owned as well as poll tax for those people above eighteen years which was to be paid by either the young man or the father. It was one way of discouraging polygamy and getting affordable labour from the Africans, respectively.

Colonial industrial commodity production, as a result of inappropriate practise, led to environmental destruction. Forest concessions, which were granted to individuals and foreign companies led to massive deforestation, just as was the case of Bunyala forest. Generally, the colonial economic policies played an instrumental role in incorporating the pre-capitalist communities like the Banyala into the colonial economic system which has continued into the post-colonial period.

Initially, the money commodity was first singled out as a measure of value. It would be itself the most useful of local products, though still very much a product of labour. The money commodity is of marginal use, apart that is, from its function as a measure, carrier and store of value. As the development continued, the aspect of money-commodity became an abstract symbol of value. Thereby, as a social category, expressing the values of the community. Marx (1972:64-76, 1976:188-198) introduces money’s role as a measure of value as a logical necessity emerging from exchange and a manifestation of the dual nature of commodities. He also makes a distinction between money as a measure of value and as the standard of price, with the latter being institutionally determined by the state. Nowadays, the development has gone much further. Despite all the uncertainties of modern life, no material substance could be as effective store, measure or carrier of value as a credit card account. Every act of production nowadays is part of main stream economy combined with the labour of workers at every stage. Money is a necessary part of life. It is not because it is necessary during the exchange of commodities, but because labour power in itself, is a commodity. Marx (2006) asserts that in a bourgeois society, a person must sell one’s labour power to “earn a living”. But the money relation not only facilitates labour but also bans it. Nothing can be done in a bourgeois society unless someone can pay for it. The abolition of capital is inconceivable without the transcendence of the money relation, but this entails an entirely new means of organisation of social labour. According to Marx, 1971; It is not money that renders commodities commensurable. Just to the contrary. It is because all commodities, as value, are realised human labour and therefore commensurable, that their values can be measured by one and the same special commodity, and the latter be converted into as a measure of value, is the phenomenal form that must of necessity be assumed by that measure of value which is imminent in commodities, labour-time (Marx, 1971:188).

Entrepreneurship

An entrepreneur is described as a person who organised the other factors of production and bears the risk and uncertainties which are involved in production of goods and services. The entrepreneur basically hires the other three factors of production; land, labour and capital then brings them together, organises and ensures their coordination so as to be able to achieve maximum profits. According to Schumpeter (1934) entrepreneurship can therefore be described as any kind of innovative function that could have a bearing on the welfare of an entrepreneur. For instance, most of the respondents were in agreement that majority farmers in Bunyala East, West and Central wards have intensively used their land for growing sugarcane. Before planting

the farmers usually prepared their land either using ox-drawn ploughs hired at a fee of 600 shillings per day for 5 hours or tractor drawn ploughs which are usually hired at a fee of 2500 shillings per acre of land.

Elkana Malava, a respondent and a large scale sugarcane farmer in the wider Navakholo Constituency. In an interview on 9th July, 2018 at Navakholo, revealed that, during planting the farmer usually obtained the seedlings by purchasing from a fellow farmer and organizes labourers to plant. The labour could either be family members or hired depending on the size of land. Continuous weeding occurs mainly using family labour to ensure the sugarcane grows well and fast by minimizing competition with the weeds. Sugarcane takes 18 months to mature and is often harvested within 4-6 months of maturity. He observes that the length of time before harvesting is too long. According to Odeket *al.* (2003) one of the reasons for decline in sugarcane production is at the farm, where poor seed of long maturing varieties exist, smut disease, high cost of inputs and delayed payments to farmers. While Kenya has long maturing varieties Sudan has short term varieties usually harvested within 14 months. Before harvest, the farmer usually gets consent from the sugarcane miller. The miller will in turn send their own tractors to ferry the sugarcane to the factory. Harvesting of the sugarcane is left for the farmer, in that he is to organize for the cane cutters to cut down the sugarcane as well as organize it in stacks. Having spent their money on land preparation as well as hiring labour the farmers who are the entrepreneurs are able to identify their profits from the revenue they earn after payment by the sugar millers that is either West Kenya or Butali Sugar millers.

Tom Liza Educational Centre which is located at the heart of Navakholo Sub-county, along Navakholo-Namirama road was founded by Kulati Wangia (*omutecho*) in 2009. The institution seats on a two and a half acre piece of land with permanent buildings erected. Despite the fact that some eight hundred metres away there already existed another private institution, by the name Bright Star Academy, which had absorbed most of the children around. At the beginning the school had three pupils. As the term and years went by the director of the school was able to recruit a work force based on competency and not nepotism. This motivated both the workers as well as the school community, thus increasing the learner population of the school to three hundred and ninety four. The swelling population could also be attributed to the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) performance posted by the school over the years. (KNEC: 2017).

In an oral interview, with the director of Tom Liza academy, Kulati Wangia on the 5th June, 2018, at Siyenga. He was of the assertion that at inception the income of the learning institution was at its lowest. He attributed this to the initial expenses involved in finishing up the buildings as well as equipping the school with much needed resources and facilities. But, currently the school has improved in terms of its revenue due to a well motivated and dedicated work force that has enhanced improved results of the institution. Hence attracting more learners. The director also stated that he wanted to reduce on the expenditure thus venturing into dairy farming within the school as an income generating project and a source of food. Entrepreneurs usually act as bosses and decide how the businesses should operate by deciding in what proportion factors should be combined, what and where he will produce and by what method. He usually is loosely identified with the owner and organiser of the business.

The availability of the factors of production for use as economic resources was initially not an inherent feature then but the result of specific historical changes. In particular, the freeing of land, labour and capital from the control of rulers (*clan heads*) and other authority figures among the Abanyala was necessary for these entities to function in market economy. Released from traditional restrictions, the factors of production are now subject to control of market forces through the mechanism of supply and demand. Since buyers and sellers want to sell at the highest possible price. The compromise between these opposing forces will set the terms for the production of any particular good or services (Encyclopedia almanacs). In the early 1970s, most of the clan leaders as well as political leaders had a hand in organisation and sensitizing their clan members on how to improve their livelihoods. This occurred as a result of the formation of MSC in 1971 clan elders, leaders as well as the politicians were supposed to enlighten their people on how important it will be if they engaged in the production of sugarcane as a raw material for the newly formed company. The leaders also made them realize that it was not only money they would get but also very important developments would come their way. The developments would include schools, roads, provision of farm inputs at reliable prices. Adema *et al.* (2016) states that the community is regarded as a necessary stake holder in corporate social responsibility (CSR), thus, it is important to evaluate the CSR as an essential element in the extractive industry to promote the entire communities to benefit from the projects taking place in their areas.

Lydia Situma (*mukhuvichi*) from Bunyala East, during an interview at Lutaso on 7th June, 2018, pointed out that they were encouraged to undertake sugarcane farming seriously as it would not just be for the benefit of the sugar company but also for their own benefit. The farming, they were convinced would give a positive impact to the society. She further pointed out that on inception the sugar miller gave the seedlings *cane stalk*, fertilizers and even field extension services to enhance a bumper production. The harvesting of the cane was within the first eighteen to twenty months when the sugarcane is at its best. The company pays farmers well and earns good revenue to the millers making the company to expound on its services such as road construction,

establishment of schools as well as supporting other educational and health institutions. Road construction led to the opening up of the interior of Bunyala making it accessible thus enhancing more development projects in the area.

As per a group interview on 24th May, 2018 at Malaha, MSC was also identified to have played a great role in ensuring food security in the region. Food security came about as a result of issuing maize seeds and fertilizers to farmers at subsidized prices. The company did not want exploitation of farmers by marauding business people. The business people had been doing so over the years. This clearly improved the livelihood of the Abanyala by reducing the poverty levels, as food production increased. As much as the company tried playing a big role in Abanyala lives, it failed terribly during its road to collapse. The Abanyala had to pay the price for being convinced to actively engage in cane farming.

AnericoSituma (*Muucha*) an elder from Bunyala East, was of the view that they had been clearly misled by their leaders more so from within their clans to engage in this main economic activity as he put it; The sugar company has benefited a lot from our sweat, we really toil for about two years and all we get is peanuts as the workload involved as well as the finances is not worth the input involved (Interview report, 5th June, 2018 at Namirama).

Furthermore, he points out that the payments take long before farmers receive and utilize the income. As a result, he and others claim is a factor dragging most of the Abanyala not to engage in meaningful development as they will finally have to pay debts they have incurred over the period. Many of respondents felt let down by their leaders as they believed their reliance on sugarcane as the major crop has brought them untold suffering despite the fact that initially it was of positive value to them (Group Interview, 20th June, 2018). They stipulated that they had devoted their energies to the production of cane as most of them were jobless and entirely depended on the proceeds to feed, cloth, educate and even be able to pay for medical services of their family members. Most claim that the sugar company has engaged in activities to enhance its prominence at the expense of the farmer. It has been noted that their problems began in the 1990s when the operations of the sugar millers were questionable this is as compared to their operations when it was till new.

The respondents claimed that MSC had practically increased its sources of revenue by using the by-products from sugarcane processing, namely the straw and bagasse (cane fibres) in the production of cellulosic ethanol which is a second energy biofuel which can be an alternative to gasoline. This they say was a cause of concern as the more revenue the company got, the worse it became as regards the plight of the farmer.

It is therefore in this regard that most farmers felt let down by the sugar millers resulting to some of those who were advocating for sugarcane growing to seek other alternatives. MSC can be said to have collapsed because of three major reasons. Being the driver of Western region, National politics crept in. Corruption was another issue whereby interested parties began swindling company money. Importation of cheaper sugar was also a reason as consumers also opted for it as compared to the locally produced sugar. The company also lacked strong leadership to drive it during its turbulent times. Oteny (2019) summarised the causes of trouble at the ailing MSC into three; poor governance, heavy borrowing and investments in projects that never give returns. As a result of this, Banyala's economy crumbled due to its main economic activity being affected though the emergence of other sugar millers that were privately owned like West Kenya Sugar millers which officially began its operations in 1981 and Butali Sugar Company that was licensed in 2010, it was around this time that MSC had began facing both financial and managerial problems thus coming to the rescue of farmers in terms of marketing their crop (Group Interview Report, 13th July, 2018).

The other sugar millers are not into development as MSC was since their main focus is on profits. The two factories that took over milling of sugarcane from Mumias Sugar never bothered with the issue of food security. They played a positive role in the money economy, development of unique skills that never existed among the Abanyala and opened up various avenues of interaction in the social life of the inhabitants of Navakholo sub-county, for instance field extension workers. A majority of the respondents in a group interview said that they learnt a lot from being entirely reliant on sugarcane farming and they have since changed their entrepreneurship skills by diversifying the areas they depend on for a living. The areas mentioned carried out mixed farming, where they now grow a variety of crops as well as animals. Others engaged in businesses of different kinds. They said it has made them to be able to meet their daily needs. A new study by Booz et al. (2008) reveals that; A strong, sustainable economy enhances a nation's standard of living, creates wealth and jobs, encourage the development of new knowledge and technology, and helps ensure a suitable political climate. Economic diversity across a wide range of profitable sectors and sustainability are intrinsically linked, and are key to a sustainable economy (Booz et al. 2008).

The fact is that economic diversification whereby the country does not rely on a single income source reduces a nation's economic volatility. This increases its real activity performance. It has made most of the Banyala clans to embrace alternative economic activities as well as education so as to be free from exploitation and reliance on a single source of income. Interestingly, most of those interviewed agree that since this

realization people's lives are increasingly changing for the better. From the history of the Abanyala, the following would be the possible ventures to diversify their economic activities.

Masakhaet *al.* (2018) states that the Banyala's can now be found in various sectors of the economy. Administratively, the first Muniyala female officer to the position of Deputy County Commissioner of Kangundo was Justin Nelima. In the health sector there is Dr. Evans Nyongesa of Kenyatta National Hospital to mention but a few contributing significantly not only back home but also nationally. Farmers are also involved in various agricultural sectors such as horticulture, bee keeping, dairy farming and food crop farming which has greatly transformed the livelihoods of a great number of Navakholo sub-county residents and in particular the Banyala sub-tribe. The researchers' observation of the sub-county is that lots of developments have occurred as a result of clans setting aside their political and ideological differences to work together for the benefit of the people. This was as a result of the experiences that they could not work in isolation with other clans and be successful. Some of the developments witnessed include; distribution of electricity to remote parts of the sub-county, establishment of a modern market at Nambacha and one currently being built at Navakholo.

The market at Nambacha is famous for livestock, the only market besides Lubao market where dogs can be easily traded on. The price will always depend with the breed and health of the dog. Equipping and upgrading health facilities like Navakholo level four hospital which provides essential health service for most Abanyala people. Unlike earlier years where a police post was present at Navakholo, the police post has since been upgraded and police posts established in various areas of the sub-county hence ensuring safety of lives and property of individuals.

Productivity rise, favourable natural resources distribution, physical and human capital contribute to economic growth and development (Cypher & Dietz, 2009). In less-developed and developing countries specialization in raw material export (Massol & Banal-Estanol, 2014) and agricultural sector are the determinants of economic growth. ElkanaMalava thus states; I have seen a great change over the years initially most of the Banyala clans were entirely reliant on agriculture as the main economic activity just after 1963 which in my view was not good enough to sustain families as there were lots of dependants. Nowadays people have diversified what they do and entirely do not rely on a single activity thus earn income in a variety of ways when you trace their family situation its far much better than some years back. This is the way to go (Interview report, 9th July, 2018 at Navakholo).

Diversification of agricultural activities began earnestly in 2010 when MSC began experiencing instability thereby resulting to delayed payment of workers. Farmers began reducing land under sugarcane and increase production of food crops that could also be commercialised whenever there is surplus. Today most farmers have engaged themselves in a variety of farming activities that they feel will supplement their income like horticultural farming and fishing while either doing away with sugarcane farming or reducing land under sugarcane.

II. Conclusion

The chapter aimed at finding out the ways in which Abanyala clans influence their political agricultural economy. The four main modes of production; land, labour, capital and entrepreneurship were identified as being key in improving the political economy of the Banyala. Land was discovered to be key in production from the pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial periods. Other factors of production revolved around availability of land. Labour was also assessed in detail from the traditional aspect, where relatives and family members were the major providers. The labour sector has since transformed from paying in kind to a capitalist economy where labour is being provided at a fee and has been diversified. Capital has been viewed as a key component in any given economy as without it no advancements can be made in any society. Some of the major importance is that it is used in developing the land as well as appreciating labour through wages and salaries. Finally, the chapter looked at how an entrepreneur organises other factors of production so as to make profit and therefore improve on the Abanyala political economy. The next chapter will examine how the Abanyala society and their economy combine to determine how the resources will be distributed among its numerous clans.

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