

## **ABSTRACT**

This study is about the history of the transition from subsistence to cash crop farming in Abogeta Sub-County in Meru County, Kenya, from 1937-1980. The main economic activity of the people in Abogeta Sub-County is farming and keeping livestock. Before 1937 farming practices were mainly for subsistence. Crops grown included millet, sorghum, peas, arrowroots, yams, beans and cowpeas. However, many changes occurred in the agricultural sector by 1937. This study aimed to examine the transition from subsistence to cash crop farming and its effects on food production in Abogeta Sub County of Meru from 1937 to 1980. The following objectives guided the study: to investigate the modes of agricultural practices embraced by the people of the Abogeta sub-county from 1937-1980, to account for the transition from subsistence to cash crop farming and to establish the implications of the transition from subsistence to cash crop farming on food production. It was guided by the Articulation of Modes of Production theory, whose main precept is that penetration of capitalism in Africa affected modes of production. The theory was used to explain how capitalist theory spread in Abogeta Sub County and its effects on food production. The study employed a descriptive research design to describe the events as they occurred systematically. The target population was 179608 as per the 2019 census. A total of 30 respondents were randomly sampled and interviewed from Abogeta Sub County. The data collection instruments were interview schedules, focused group discussions and observation schedules. The data sources included oral, archival, and secondary sources, which were corroborated to meet the reliability and objectivity of the research. The study was analyzed and presented through Qualitative Data Analysis. The study revealed that people from Abogeta Sub County traditionally engaged in subsistence farming. Farming shifted to cash crop farming in 1937 with the introduction of cash crops like coffee and tea. The study also noted that the transition had both positive and negative impacts on the people of Abogeta. Food insecurity and migration were noted during the study. Agricultural activities were mainly for subsistence and not for sale. Chapter four has evidence of the transition from subsistence to cash crop farming, where farmers shifted from food crops to planting cash crops of tea, coffee, French beans, bananas and cabbages for sale. The study revealed that money from the sale of cash crops had been diverted to paying school fees, loan payments, and buying clothes leaving little or no money to purchase enough food for household consumption. The study affected the social organization of the people of abogeta. The study may be useful to future researchers in a related area. Policymakers in the government may use the study to find solutions to food insecurity in Abogeta Sub County of Meru County.