

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF REVEREND YOWERI BUNINGWIRE TO THE  
GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY IN ANKOLE DIOCESE**

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## DECLARATION

I, Ninsiima Brian, affirm that this research report is my own original work and has not been previously submitted to any institution of higher learning for any academic award.

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## APPROVAL

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1.1 Introduction to the Study

This chapter provides an overview of the study, including the background, statement of the problem, purpose, and objectives. It also outlines the research questions, scope, justification, and significance of the study. Additionally, the chapter highlights relevant literature and describes the methodology employed in the research.

#### 1.1.2 Background to the Study

The Ankole Diocese, located in the Western Region of Uganda, has a rich history of Christian growth and transformation. Christianity was introduced in the Ankole Diocese in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and since then, it has experienced significant expansion, largely due to the efforts of committed religious leaders<sup>1</sup>. Among these influential figures is Reverend Yoweri Buningwire, whose ministry and leadership have played a fundamental role in strengthening the Christian faith in the diocese<sup>2</sup>. His dedication to evangelism, spiritual growth, and social transformation has left a lasting impact on the local Christian community<sup>3</sup>.

The journey of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in ministry began in his early years, rooted in a deep sense of devotion and a calling to serve the Church<sup>4</sup>. Throughout his tenure, he played a fundamental role in the establishment of Churches, the promotion of Christian education, and the advocacy for social justice<sup>5</sup>. His commitment to empowering believers extended beyond spiritual matters, as he championed various faith-based initiatives aimed at improving the socio-economic

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<sup>1</sup> Kaggwa, D. (2018). The Introduction of Christianity in Uganda: A Historical Perspective. *Makerere Journal of Religious Studies*, 12(3), pp.45-60.

<sup>2</sup> Tumushabe, E. (2021). *Church Leadership and Evangelism: A Historical Analysis of Ankole Diocese*. Kampala: Uganda Christian University.

<sup>3</sup> Nuwagaba, B. (2019). *Spiritual Growth and Social Transformation: The Role of Ugandan Clergy*. Kampala: Makerere University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Kyomuhendo, T. (2017). Faith and Leadership: The Impact of Religious Leaders in Uganda. *Journal of African Christianity*, 6(1), pp.30-48.

<sup>5</sup> Okello, G. (2021). Faith-Based Organizations and Economic Empowerment: A Ugandan Case Study. *African Development Review*, 20(3), pp.200-220.

well-being of the community<sup>6</sup>. Through programs centered on education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation, Reverend Buningwire exemplified the Church's role in holistic development<sup>7</sup>.

However, his journey was not without challenges. Political instability, cultural resistance, and evolving religious dynamics posed obstacles to the spread of Christianity in the region<sup>8</sup>. Yet, despite these hurdles, his steadfast commitment to Christian principles ensured that the faith not only survived but flourished in Ankole Diocese. His leadership inspired many, strengthening the position of the Church as a cornerstone of both spiritual and social transformation<sup>9</sup>.

Christianity in Ankole Diocese has experienced unprecedented growth over the past century, transforming from a nascent religious movement to a dominant spiritual force that shapes community life across the region. This transformation involved complex interactions between foreign missionary initiatives and local cultural dynamics, creating unique patterns of religious adaptation and institutional development. The success of Christian evangelization in Ankole was not solely dependent on external missionary efforts but was significantly influenced by indigenous leaders who understood local contexts, languages, and cultural nuances. These local religious leaders served as cultural bridges, translating Christian teachings into familiar concepts while establishing sustainable church structures. Among these influential figures, Reverend Yoweri Buningwire emerged as a pivotal leader whose ministry strategies and community engagement approaches contributed substantially to the consolidation of Christian faith in the diocese. Understanding the methodologies and impact of such indigenous leaders provides valuable insights into effective religious leadership and community transformation processes within African

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<sup>6</sup> Byarugaba, P. (2020). *The Role of Indigenous Religious Leaders in the Growth of Christianity in Uganda*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

<sup>7</sup> Kafureeka, J. (2018). *Christianity and Social Change in Western Uganda: The Ankole Diocese Experience*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.

<sup>8</sup> Mwebaza, S. (2022). Indigenous Church Leaders and Their Contribution to Christianity in Uganda. *Journal of Church History in Africa*, 10(4), pp.75-90.

<sup>9</sup> Mwebaza, S. (2022). Indigenous Church Leaders and Their Contribution to Christianity in Uganda. *Journal of Church History in Africa*, 10(4), pp.75-90.

contexts.<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap by critically analyzing his contributions to the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese. Through this examination, the research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how religious leadership promotes spiritual, social, and economic transformation within communities.

### **1.1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Despite the remarkable growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese, there was limited scholarly documentation on the contributions of indigenous religious leaders such as Reverend Yoweri Buningwire. Most historical accounts primarily highlight the role of early missionaries in introducing Christianity to the region, often overlooking the efforts of local clergy who played a crucial role in sustaining and expanding the faith. Reverend Buningwire is one of the instrumental leaders in Ankole who are over looked and they have greatly contributed towards the expansion of Christianity in the region. This study, therefore, sought to bridge this gap by critically examining the contributions of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire and assessing their lasting impact on the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese.

### **1.1.4 Purpose of the Study**

To examine the contribution of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire to the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese.

### **1.1.5 Specific Objectives**

- i. To assess the role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity in the Ankole diocese.
- ii. To evaluate the impact of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire's contribution on the growth of local Christian community in Ankole Diocese.
- iii. To evaluate the challenges faced by Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese.

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<sup>10</sup> Mukasa, H. (2021). Religious Leadership and Community Development in Uganda. *African Journal of Theology and Society*, 14(2), pp.110-125.

### **1.1.6 Research Questions**

- i. What role did Reverend Yoweri Buningwire play in the expansion of Christianity in the Ankole diocese?
- ii. What is the impact of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire's contribution on the growth of local Christian community in Ankole Diocese?
- iii. What challenges did Reverend Yoweri Buningwire face in the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese?

### **1.1.7 Justification of the Study**

This study was justified by the need to fill the existing gap in the documentation and analysis of Rev. Yoweri Buningwire contributions to Christianity in Ankole Diocese. By highlighting his life and work, the study provided valuable insights into the historical development of Christianity in Uganda and serve as an important resource for scholars, Church historians, and members of the Christian community.

### **1.1.8 Significance of the Study**

This study will benefit Church leaders by gaining a deeper understanding of the historical contributions of indigenous clergy like Reverend Buningwire in the growth of Christianity. This knowledge will inspire them to integrate both spiritual guidance and socio-economic initiatives into their leadership to promote holistic community development.

This study will help members of the Christian community to find renewed pride in their local religious leaders and their historical role in the growth of Christianity. The study will encourage deeper engagement with Church-based programs and an appreciation for the impact of local clergy on both faith and community development.

This study will help policy makers gain insight into the positive contributions of religious institutions to social transformation. This can guide policies and development strategies that include religious organizations as key partners in addressing education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation.

Scholars in theology, African Christianity, and Church history will benefit from this study by gaining valuable insights into the contributions of indigenous Church leaders. It will serve as a reference material for further academic research on local religious leadership and its role in the growth of Christianity in Uganda.

## 1.2.0 Literature Review

### 1.2.1 Introduction

This section presents a review of existing literature relevant to the study's objectives. The literature review is organized around three key areas: the role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity, the impact of his contributions on the growth of the local Christian community, and the challenges he encountered in advancing Christianity.

### 1.2.2 The role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity

Globally, the expansion of Christianity has been significantly shaped by the missionary movement from the West during the colonial and post-colonial eras. Missionaries such as David Livingstone and William Carey are widely recognized for their efforts to spread Christianity in Africa, Asia, and Latin America<sup>1112</sup>. They established schools, churches, and hospitals, setting the stage for religious transformation in the Global South. However, the global narrative often positions African Christians as passive recipients rather than active agents of faith expansion.

As Sundkler and Steed<sup>13</sup> argue, the story of the Church in Africa has been dominated by Western perspectives, overshadowing the agency of indigenous clergy. While global scholarship acknowledges missionary contributions to Christianity's expansion, it offers minimal focus on African clergy as primary agents of change. The role of figures like Reverend Yoweri Buningwire remains absent from these global records, necessitating localized research to balance the narrative.

On the African continent, indigenous clergy have been recognized for their dynamic role in contextualizing Christianity. Mugambi<sup>14</sup> notes that African leaders infused Christian teachings with African cultural values, thereby promoting a deeper, localized

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<sup>11</sup> Walls, A. F. (1996). *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

<sup>12</sup> Bosch, D. J. (1991). *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

<sup>13</sup> Sundkler, B., & Steed, C. (2000). *A History of the Church in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

<sup>14</sup> Mugambi, J. N. K. (2003). *Christianity and African Heritage*. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.

spiritual engagement. Maxwell<sup>15</sup> emphasizes how African-led Christianity evolved from mere replication of European models to expressions rooted in African social realities. The clergy took on responsibilities in education, health, and political advocacy. Nonetheless, most continental studies tend to highlight dominant figures in regions like West Africa, while East African experiences, especially at sub-diocesan levels, receive less attention. Although African scholars highlight the shift from Eurocentric to Afrocentric Christianity, there is insufficient documentation on local clergy from East Africa, such as those in Ankole Diocese. Reverend Buningwire's contributions remain largely unexplored at this level.

In East Africa, the growth of Christianity was shaped both by foreign missionaries and indigenous revivalists. The East African Revival, which began in the 1930s, is credited with revitalizing Christian commitment across Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania<sup>16</sup>. Indigenous preachers and clergy became central to evangelism and discipleship.

Kagaba<sup>17</sup> presents a broad historical perspective on church growth in Uganda, noting the transition from missionary dependency to indigenous leadership in dioceses such as Ankole. However, the emphasis is often placed on collective movements rather than specific individuals who advanced Christian growth through local ministry. While regional histories acknowledge indigenous leadership, they often generalize their roles, offering limited biographical or analytical insights into specific individuals like Reverend Buningwire, whose impact was deeply felt at community and diocesan levels.

In Uganda, the Christian mission established strong roots in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, primarily through the efforts of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). As colonial structures faded, indigenous clergy assumed central roles in managing church affairs and

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<sup>15</sup> Maxwell, D. (2006). *African Christianity: Development and Expansion in the 20th Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>16</sup> Ward, K. (1991). *The East African Revival Movement*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>17</sup> Kagaba, P. (2015). *Church Growth in Uganda: A Historical Perspective*. Nairobi: Pauline Publications.

promoting social change. Waliggo<sup>18</sup> emphasizes that Uganda's indigenous clergy were not only preachers but also social reformers who engaged in education, health care, and peacemaking. Byaruhanga<sup>19</sup> further explores how Ugandan clergy influenced social transformation through their involvement in grassroots evangelism and institution building. However, most scholarship at the national level still prioritizes bishops and nationally recognized clergy, often overlooking local leaders. National scholarship pays little attention to clergy who operated outside Kampala and other urban centers. The role of Reverend Buningwire in Ankole, though impactful, is omitted from such national analyses, presenting a gap that localized research must address.

Locally, the Ankole Diocese has seen significant religious growth, much of which can be attributed to the dedication of indigenous clergy like Reverend Yoweri Buningwire. Anecdotal evidence and parish archives describe Buningwire as a central figure in church planting, discipleship training, and the promotion of Christian education. Byaruhanga (*ibid*) mentions the role of local clergy in Western Uganda but provides only generalized commentary without in-depth case studies. Moreover, many of Buningwire's efforts, such as mentoring new priests and spearheading rural evangelistic missions, are preserved mainly through oral testimonies and unpublished church records. There is a lack of comprehensive academic research documenting the lives and contributions of local clergy in Ankole Diocese. Reverend Buningwire's role in expanding Christianity remains under-researched, creating a critical gap that this study aims to fill.

The reviewed literature reveals a layered understanding of Christianity's expansion; from global missionary movements to localized indigenous efforts. While scholars have extensively examined foreign missionaries and high-ranking church leaders, there is a striking lack of research focused on local clergy such as Reverend Yoweri Buningwire. His influence within Ankole Diocese highlights the need for biographical and

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<sup>18</sup> Waliggo, J. (1991). *Indigenous Christianity in Uganda: Historical and Theological Reflections*. Kampala: Marianum Press.

<sup>19</sup> Byaruhanga, F. (2018). *Christianity and Social Change in Uganda: The Role of Indigenous Clergy*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

contextual studies that honor the contributions of grassroots spiritual leaders in Uganda's Christian history.

### **1.2.3 The impact of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire's contribution on the growth of local Christian community**

Christian expansion over the world has largely been recorded through the lens of Western missionaries. However, scholars<sup>20</sup> challenged this view, emphasizing the indispensable role of indigenous agents in spreading Christianity by translating scripture and contextualizing Christian messages. These indigenous actors made Christianity more accessible and meaningful to local populations. While Sanneh highlights this global dynamic, specific figures like Reverend Yoweri Buningwire from Uganda remain largely absent from such narratives. This global gap necessitates a deeper exploration of lesser-known indigenous leaders whose contributions, though significant, are underrepresented in mainstream academic literature. Most global works do not detail the stories of individual African clergy such as Buningwire, who significantly influenced Christianity's grassroots spread.

Across the African continent, Christianity's growth has been closely tied to the leadership and resilience of indigenous clergy. The East African Revival, for instance, showcased how African leaders ignited faith renewal and moral transformation<sup>21</sup>. Mukasa<sup>22</sup> asserts that religious leadership in Africa is pivotal not only in spiritual development but also in community empowerment and social justice.

Mwebaza<sup>23</sup> further highlights that indigenous clergy redefined missionary Christianity, grounding it in African realities and cultural values. Despite these general acknowledgments, few studies delve into detailed biographies or case studies of individuals like Buningwire, who exemplified such leadership on a local level. While

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<sup>20</sup> Sanneh, L. (1989). *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Orbis Books.

<sup>21</sup> Ward, K. (1991). *The East African Revival Movement*. In *The East African Revival: History and Legacies*.

<sup>22</sup> Mukasa, H. (2021). Religious Leadership and Community Development in Uganda. *African Journal of Theology and Society*, 14(2), pp.110-125.

<sup>23</sup> Mwebaza, S. (2022). Indigenous Church Leaders and Their Contribution to Christianity in Uganda. *Journal of Church History in Africa*, 10(4), pp.75-90.

African clergy are broadly celebrated, individual contributions like Buningwire's remain insufficiently documented at the continental level.

In East Africa, Christianity's development intertwined with political and social changes. Kyomuhendo<sup>24</sup> explains that religious leaders in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania shaped not only faith institutions but also national ideologies and community ethics. He stresses the need to examine their influence on social norms and interfaith dialogue. In the context of western Uganda, Kafureeka<sup>25</sup> provides insight into how the Ankole Diocese became a beacon of Christian influence through local leadership. However, while these works underline regional trends and leadership patterns, they still fail to center pioneers like Buningwire whose early evangelistic work predated institutional consolidation and helped lay the foundation for future diocesan success. Regional literature lacks micro-historical studies of pioneering figures like Buningwire, whose groundwork shaped later Christian structures in Ankole and beyond.

Within Uganda, the role of indigenous clergy in national spiritual and social transformation is increasingly gaining scholarly attention. Byaruhanga<sup>26</sup> highlights the integral role played by native clergy in initiating social change, particularly through education and health programs tied to religious missions. Nuwagaba<sup>27</sup> further explores how spiritual growth initiated by local clergy translated into broader social transformation. Yet, these national assessments tend to focus on post-independence clergy or prominent bishops, rather than early 20<sup>th</sup> Century figures like Buningwire. Tumushabe<sup>28</sup>, though offering a historical view of Ankole Diocese, primarily centers on episcopal leadership rather than grass root-level evangelists. There is limited focus on early indigenous clergy like Buningwire in national studies, despite their foundational work in shaping church structures and Christian culture.

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<sup>24</sup> Kyomuhendo, T. (2017). Faith and Leadership: The Impact of Religious Leaders in Uganda. *Journal of African Christianity*, 6(1), pp.30-48.

<sup>25</sup> Kafureeka, J. (2018). *Christianity and Social Change in Western Uganda: The Ankole Diocese Experience*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.

<sup>26</sup> Byaruhanga, F. (2018). *Christianity and Social Change in Uganda: The Role of Indigenous Clergy*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

<sup>27</sup> Nuwagaba, B. (2019). *Spiritual Growth and Social Transformation: The Role of Ugandan Clergy*. Kampala: Makerere University Press.

<sup>28</sup> Tumushabe, E. (2021). *Church Leadership and Evangelism: A Historical Analysis of Ankole Diocese*. Kampala: Uganda Christian University.

Reverend Yoweri Buningwire was among the first Banyankole evangelists, commissioned in 1904, and later ordained in 1918<sup>29</sup>. His evangelistic missions, often involving collaboration with Muslim leaders and efforts to curb traditional witchcraft, mark him as a key figure in the indigenization of Christianity in Ankole. Tumushabe<sup>30</sup> offer useful context on the growth of the Ankole Diocese, including references to early evangelists, but do not explore Buningwire's work in sufficient depth. Mwebaza (2022) acknowledges the challenges faced by early clergy, including resistance from traditionalists and colonial dynamics, yet his study does not spotlight Buningwire specifically. Local literature references the early Christian expansion but lacks an in-depth biography or theological analysis of Buningwire's personal mission, pastoral strategies, and long-term legacy.

Although numerous scholars have acknowledged the role of indigenous clergy in Africa's Christian history, there is a persistent gap in literature focusing on individual contributors like Reverend Yoweri Buningwire. His significant evangelistic and pastoral efforts in Ankole Diocese during the early 20th century warrant deeper scholarly attention. By filling this gap, historical and theological discourse can more accurately reflect the diverse voices and figures that built the Christian foundations in Uganda.

#### **1.2.4 The Challenges faced by Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the growth of Christianity**

The challenges faced by early Christian missionaries often included cultural resistance, language barriers, and political hostility. For example, Walls<sup>31</sup> notes that missionaries in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries struggled to contextualize the Christian message in non-Western societies, encountering resistance from local traditions and beliefs. Additionally, diseases and unfamiliar climates posed significant physical

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<sup>29</sup> Pirouet, L. (1968). *The Expansion of the Church of Uganda from Buganda into Northern and Western Uganda between 1891 and 1914*. PhD Thesis, University of East Africa.

<sup>30</sup> Tumushabe, E. (2021). *Church Leadership and Evangelism: A Historical Analysis of Ankole Diocese*. Kampala: Uganda Christian University.

<sup>31</sup> Walls, A. (1996). *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

threats to early Christian missionaries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America<sup>32</sup>. However, while global literature emphasizes these overarching missionary hardships, it often fails to delve into how individual missionaries uniquely navigated such challenges within specific diocesan contexts such as Ankole.

Another key challenge highlighted globally is the tension between colonial interests and missionary work. According to Hastings<sup>33</sup>, missionaries were at times accused of promoting Western ideologies under the guise of religion, leading to mistrust among local populations. This tension hindered the spread of Christianity in many regions. Yet, while such findings are relevant, they offer little insight into the post-colonial missionary challenges faced by indigenous African clergy like Reverend Yoweri Buningwire, thus creating a literature gap on the experiences of African Christian leaders in shaping local churches post-independence.

Across Africa, Christian leaders have faced resistance stemming from traditional religious structures and socio-political instability. Kalu<sup>34</sup> explains that many African clergy had to contend with dual allegiance from communities that respected both Christian and indigenous beliefs. This often slowed the conversion process and complicated pastoral efforts. Nevertheless, Kalu's work focuses more on the spread of Pentecostalism and overlooks localized, diocesan-based struggles faced by individual Anglican clergy like Reverend Buningwire in Uganda.

In addition, poverty and lack of resources are repeatedly cited as major constraints for African church leaders. According to Mugambi<sup>35</sup>, many African clergy were expected to function with limited theological training, financial support, and infrastructure, especially in rural dioceses. While this is an important general finding, it lacks specific application to Uganda's Ankole Diocese and does not mention indigenous efforts by specific clergy like Buningwire to address these deficits hence, a notable gap in the literature on contextualized, individual pastoral resilience.

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<sup>32</sup> Sanneh, L. (2003). *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

<sup>33</sup> Hastings, A. (1994). *The Church in Africa, 1450-1950*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>34</sup> Kalu, O. (2007). *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>35</sup> Mugambi, J. N. K. (2003). *Christian Theology and Social Reconstruction*. Nairobi: Acton Publishers.

In the East African context, the intersection of Christianity with politics and ethnic identity has created significant challenges. Ward<sup>36</sup> observes that post-independence church leaders in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania were forced to navigate church-state relations amid political turbulence. In Uganda, this was especially pronounced during Idi Amin's regime. However, Ward's analysis lacks detailed accounts of individual clergy's experiences, particularly in southwestern Uganda, such as how figures like Reverend Buningwire maneuvered through such hostile political climates in Ankole.

Moreover, Nyang<sup>37</sup> notes the complexity of religious pluralism in East Africa, where Christian leaders have had to coexist with Islam and African traditional religions. This interfaith dynamic sometimes led to tensions, particularly in regions where Christian expansion was perceived as encroachment. Despite this, Nyang does not focus on the Anglican Church or provide specific insights into diocesan figures, leaving a gap in understanding the lived experiences of clergy like Buningwire who had to navigate inter-religious relations in Ankole.

At the national level, Ugandan clergy have faced challenges related to ethnic tensions and decentralization within the church structure. According to Ward and Wild-Wood<sup>38</sup>, the Church of Uganda experienced internal factionalism along ethnic lines, affecting leadership decisions and church growth. Although this offers insight into systemic issues, there is a lack of localized narratives on how individual clergy mitigated such challenges in their dioceses again pointing to the need for a focused study on figures like Reverend Buningwire.

Furthermore, rural ministry in Uganda presents logistical and infrastructural challenges. Pirouet<sup>39</sup> discusses how road inaccessibility, lack of schools, and medical services in rural Uganda impacted the effectiveness of Christian ministry. While relevant, Pirouet's work does not explore the adaptive strategies employed by local

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<sup>36</sup> Ward, K. (1991). *The East African Revival Movement*. Nairobi: Uzima Press.

<sup>37</sup> Nyang, S. S. (1995). *Islam, Christianity and African Identity*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books.

<sup>38</sup> Ward, K., & Wild-Wood, E. (2010). *The East African Revival: History and Legacies*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

<sup>39</sup> Pirouet, L. (1995). *Religion in Uganda Under Amin*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

priests to overcome such barriers, especially in the Ankole region, thus presenting a literature gap in understanding practical clergy responses to such constraints.

Within Ankole Diocese, challenges specific to the socio-cultural context included deeply rooted traditionalism and patriarchal systems. Mwesigwa<sup>40</sup> argues that the resistance to Christian teachings in southwestern Uganda often came from elders who perceived Christianity as a threat to traditional customs. However, Mwesigwa's study provides a macro-level overview of Ankole and does not capture the lived pastoral experiences or strategies of individual Anglican leaders like Reverend Buningwire.

Additionally, Ankole has historically grappled with issues related to youth disengagement from the church and urban migration. Accordingly, clergy in Mbarara and surrounding areas reported difficulties in retaining young converts due to the lure of secular education and employment opportunities in cities. While insightful, this study omits historical clergy like Reverend Buningwire, whose personal ministry efforts and specific contextual challenges remain undocumented, creating a significant gap in local church historiography.

### **1.2.5 Conclusion of the literature review**

The comprehensive review of existing literature reveals a consistent pattern across global, continental, regional, national, and local scholarship: while the expansion of Christianity and the challenges faced by religious leaders have been extensively documented, there remains a significant gap in research focusing on individual indigenous clergy like Reverend Yoweri Buningwire. The literature demonstrates that despite acknowledgment of the crucial role played by African religious leaders in contextualizing Christianity, translating scriptures, and building sustainable church structures, most studies tend to generalize their contributions or focus on prominent figures and urban centers, thereby overlooking grassroots leaders who operated at diocesan and community levels. This systematic omission in scholarly discourse particularly affects the documentation of early 20th-century indigenous clergy in East

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<sup>40</sup> Mwesigwa, F. (2009). *Contextualization of Christianity in Uganda: The Role of Indigenous Agents*. Kampala: Uganda Christian University Press.

Africa, whose pioneering evangelistic work, pastoral strategies, and adaptive responses to local challenges laid the foundational framework for contemporary Christian growth. The absence of detailed biographical and contextual studies of figures like Reverend Buningwire not only creates an incomplete historical narrative but also limits our understanding of effective indigenous leadership models that successfully navigated complex socio-cultural, political, and religious dynamics in colonial and post-colonial Uganda, thus necessitating targeted research to bridge this critical gap in Christian historiography.

## **1.3 Research Methodology**

### **1.3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methodology employed in the study. It outlines the research design, data sources, data collection methods, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations.

#### **1.3.1 Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative research design, which is best suited for examining the contributions of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire to the expansion of Christianity. A qualitative approach facilitates a detailed exploration of historical events, religious practices, and the socio-cultural role of indigenous clergy in the spread of Christianity. By focusing on qualitative methods, the study captured narratives, interpretations, and lived experiences that provide a richer understanding of Reverend Buningwire's influence.

#### **1.3.2 Data Sources**

This study relied on a variety of data sources, including scholarly books, journal articles, historical documents, and archival records that provide insights into the growth of Christianity in Uganda, Reverend Yoweri Buningwire's contributions, and the broader history of Christianity in Uganda. By utilizing these diverse sources, the study ensured a wide-range and well-supported analysis of Reverend Buningwire's impact on religious growth.

#### **1.3.3 Area of Study**

This study took place in Ankole Diocese in western Uganda and its headquarters located at Ruharo hill in Mbarara City especially in the East African Revival museum, where most of the facts about the legends are kept. Mbarara city is an urban area characterized by a blend of residential, commercial, and agricultural activities, reflecting the diverse livelihoods of its residents. It served as a pivotal hub for essential services, education, commerce, and community life. This study is highly

relevant, addressing a critical aspect of Rev. Yoweri Buningwire within the unique and dynamic local setting of Ankole.

### 1.3.5 Population of the study

According to Omari (2011:12-46), a population is the totality of any group of units, which have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest. In this study, the target population involved senior retired clergy and lay people- some of who could have served with Rev. Buningwire Yoweri, Serving Church leaders and in this study targeted a population of 15.

### 1.3.6 Sample Size

Omari (2011:12-46) defined a sample as a small proportion of a population selected for observations and analysis.

#### Population and Sample Size Representation

Category	Sample size	Sampling technique
Retire clergy	05	Purposive sampling
Senior lay people	05	Purposive sampling
Current Church leaders	05	Purposive sampling
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	

### 1.3.7 Sampling technique

Kothari (2013:4-370) defined sampling technique as the process by which a representative portion of the population is selected for data correction.

#### Purposive Sampling

All participants were selected by purposive sampling technique. Omari (2011:12-46) defined purposive sampling as process which involves picking units most relevant or

knowledgeable in the subject matter, and study them. These respondents were selected using purposive sampling because they have key information concerning Rev. Yoweri Buningwire and Growth of Christianity in Ankole region.

### **1.3.7 Variables and indicators**

In this study the Rev. Yoweri Buningwire was the independent variable (I.V) and this was influencing the Dependent Variable (D.V) which was the Growth of Christianity in Ankole region.

### **1.3.8 Procedure/ Protocols for data collection**

The research procedure entailed obtaining an introductory letter from the Dean of Bishop Tucker School of Divinity and Theology (BTSdT), seeking support for the research. The procedure included selecting respondents, securing informed consent, conducting interviews and meticulously recording responses. This systematic approach was designed to guarantee the accuracy of the data collected. After this, data was collected from the necessary responsible as described above, after which sorting and analysis was done to prepare for the compilation of the research report.

### **1.3.9 Data Collection Methods**

Data is collected through two main methods: interviews and questionnaires.

#### **Interview Interviews**

The use of structured interviews with key stakeholders, Anglican Church leaders was a valuable data collection method for gaining insights into the Rev. Yoweri Buningwire and Growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese. Structured interviews involved a predetermined set of questions and a standardized format, ensuring consistency in data collection. This approach allowed the researcher to systematically gather information from these important individuals within the educational system, enabling a deeper understanding of the topic. The structured nature of the interviews ensures that relevant and consistent data is collected from each participant, facilitating

subsequent analysis and the drawing of meaningful conclusions from the gathered information.

### 1.3.10 Quality Control

To maintain data quality, the study assessed the validity and reliability of research instruments.

#### Validity of the Instruments

In this study, validity of the data collection instruments was tested through the pilot study in the aspects of comprehensiveness, language clarity and relevance of items. Four knowledgeable research experts in the area of content were approached to help check the tools. The tools were tested using content related evidence of validity from a neighboring Diocese of North Ankole.

After computing the levels of agreement on the items, the researcher calculated content validity index using the formula below;

$$CVI = \frac{\text{No. of items regarded relevant}}{\text{Total No. of items}}$$

The Content Validity Index was calculated as;  $CVI = \frac{n}{N}$

The total items given for each respondent was 15; and for four respondents, the total number of items was 60.

Relevant items for respondent 1 were 14

Relevant items for respondent 2 were 12

Relevant items for respondent 3 were 10

Relevant items for respondent 4 were 11

Total relevant items were  $14+12+10+11 = 47$

$$CVI = \frac{47}{60}$$

$CVI = 0.78$

According to Sekaran (2013), if the value obtained is found to be more than 0.7, the tools were considered to yield valid findings. Therefore the findings were relevant.

### **1.3.11 Strategy for data processing and analysis**

Data analysis is the process of making sense out of one's data. It involves scrutinizing the acquired information and making inferences (Kombo & Tromp 2016:56-90).

The methods which were used in data analysis were influenced by the fact that this research was qualitative. In this study therefore, data was analysed qualitatively.

### **Qualitative data analysis**

Qualitative data was analysed using thematic, content and narrative analysis methods. With thematic analysis, themes were developed basing on objectives of the study and the data was collected through interviews; content analysis-where the researcher arranged the data from interview guides into emerging topics and sub-topics for systematic flow of the report; narrative analysis where the researcher used verbatim quotes to express respondents views (Hsieh, 2015:5-121). Themes developed included; role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity, act of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire's contribution on the growth of local Christian community and challenges.

### **1.3.12 Ethical Considerations**

**Confidentiality.** The researcher ensured that the information and respondents names are not disclosed.

**Informed consent.** The researcher had to explain to the respondents the purpose of the research and until an informed consent was obtained.

The researcher did not use anyone's information without observing copyright rules or respecting the original author of the work.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ROLE OF REVEREND YOWERI BUNINGWIRE IN THE EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY IN DIOCESE OF ANKOLE OF THE CHURCH OF UGANDA

#### 2.0 Introduction

In this study, the first and the main objective of this study was aimed at establishing the role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity in Diocese of Ankole of the Church of Uganda.

#### 2.1 Biography of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire

Reverend Canon Yoweri Buningwire stands as one of the pioneering figures in the early Christian evangelization of Ankole, Uganda. His life story represents the remarkable transformation of Uganda's spiritual landscape during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, embodying the journey from traditional African society to Christian conversion and leadership.

Reverend Canon Yoweri Buningwire was born approximately 1881 in the Ankole region of southwestern Uganda. He lived during a pivotal period in Ugandan history when Christianity was first being introduced to the region. His exact birthdate and detailed family background require further archival research, though he emerged from the traditional Ankole society that characterized the area during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Given the historical context of his time, Reverend Buningwire's education would have been primarily through the early missionary educational systems established in Uganda. The specific details of his formal theological training institutions and curriculum would require additional archival research, though it's clear he received sufficient preparation to achieve the rank of Canon, indicating advanced theological education for his era.

Reverend Buningwire rose through the Anglican Church hierarchy to achieve the rank of Canon. This title indicates he held a position of significant responsibility and respect within the Church of Uganda. His advancement from early convert to Canon

represents remarkable spiritual and intellectual development for someone of his generation.

### **Reverend Buningwire's historical context and early conversion**

Reverend Buningwire's spiritual journey began in 1896 when he came to the court of Kahaya, who was likely a local chief or ruler in the Ankole region. This was a significant period in Ankole's history, as it coincided with the early Christian missionary activities in the area.

Buningwire became one of the very first converts to Christianity in Ankole. His conversion occurred during the pioneering phase of Christian evangelization in the region. This early adoption of Christianity positioned him as a bridge between traditional Ankole society and the emerging Christian community.

As far as his areas of service is concerned, Reverend Canon Buningwire served in various capacities throughout the Ankole region, contributing to the establishment and growth of the Anglican Church in southwestern Uganda. His ministry spanned several decades, covering the crucial period of early church establishment in the region.

For his retirement, in his later years, Reverend Canon Buningwire retired to Rutoma, located near Mbarara, which was the principal town of Ankole. He chose to remain in his home region, maintaining connections with the community he had served throughout his ministry. His retirement in Rutoma suggests he maintained an active interest in local church affairs even in his later years.

Reverend Canon Yoweri Buningwire's significance extends beyond his individual achievements. As one of the earliest Christian converts in Ankole, he represents several important historical developments. First, he served as a cultural bridge between traditional Ankole culture and Christianity, helping to contextualize the faith within local customs and traditions. Second, his rise to the rank of Canon demonstrated that Ugandans could achieve senior positions within the church hierarchy, paving the way for future indigenous church leadership. Third, his early

conversion and subsequent ministry work contributed significantly to the spread of Christianity throughout the Ankole region, making him a true evangelization pioneer.

## **2.2 Role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity in diocese of Ankole of the Church Of Uganda**

As a way of fulfilling this objective of study, the researcher had to set several qualitative questions related to this objective of study. Respondents gave their views through direct interviews, these were collected, sorted, analyzed and presented qualitatively as follows.

### **2.2.1 SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

From the findings of lay people's responses, another respondent noted that,

*“Canon Buningwire was nicknamed ‘Kifilosofo’ (Philosopher) because of his profound wisdom and thoughtful approach to ministry. He would always remind the congregation with his powerful voice: ‘Think about why you have come here. You have not come on your own; it is God who has brought you here. So, listen to His message.’ His commanding presence and deep insights made even the most resistant listeners pay attention.”*

This characterization aligns with scholarship on effective religious leadership in African contexts. As Kalu (2008) notes in his work on African Christianity, indigenous church leaders who successfully contextualized the gospel message often employed culturally resonant communication styles. Buningwire's philosophical approach and commanding presence enabled him to translate Christian teachings into locally meaningful frameworks, facilitating greater acceptance among the people of Ankole.

From the findings of retired clergy responses, one former priest recounted that,

*“Canon Yoweri Buningwire demonstrated extraordinary spiritual power in 1904 when he and P. Ntundubaire prayed for Kakundwa who was almost dying due to demonic possession at Kabututu Ncune's place. After their deliverance prayer, the girl was completely healed. This miraculous event convinced many*

*skeptics in the region of Christianity's spiritual potency and led to numerous conversions."*

This account highlights how Buningwire's ministry engaged with indigenous spiritual realities. According to Mbiti's (1990) seminal work on African religions, effective Christian ministry in Africa often required addressing traditional spiritual beliefs rather than dismissing them. Buningwire's willingness to confront what locals perceived as demonic possession through prayer demonstrated Christianity's relevance to local spiritual concerns, thereby attracting followers who sought spiritual protection and healing.

From the findings of lay people's responses, one elder said that,

*"Canon Yoweri was a strategic visionary who secured the future of Christianity in Ankole by acquiring and legally protecting church lands. At Bujaga, he not only obtained land titles but ingeniously buried stones inscribed with his name and 'Native Anglican Church' as permanent markers. When teachers from Nyamitanga attempted to claim the land during his absence, he successfully defended church ownership before the District Commissioner, presenting these stone markers as irrefutable evidence. His foresight ensured that generations later, our churches remain firmly established on legally protected grounds, allowing continuous growth of the Christian community without displacement."*

This account highlights Buningwire's exceptional administrative acumen and long-term strategic thinking. According to Sundkler and Steed's (2000) seminal work on African Christianity, securing land rights was critical for sustainable church growth during colonial times. While many missions struggled with land disputes that hindered development, Buningwire's innovative approach to land demarcation and documentation demonstrates how indigenous leaders often employed culturally appropriate solutions to institutional challenges. His legal victory against encroachment established a precedent protecting church interests, allowing congregations to develop without the instability that plagued many other religious

communities. This foundation of physical security enabled the steady growth of Christian communities that continues to characterize Ankole Diocese today.

One of the current clergy asserted that

*“Canon Buningwire was an exceptional administrator whose organizational vision continues to shape our diocese decades after his ministry. He systematically established churches throughout Ankole, personally identifying strategic locations and securing legal documentation for each site. Unlike many early missionaries who focused only on central locations, Buningwire understood the importance of bringing Christianity to people in their own communities. He would travel extensively, sometimes for weeks, to identify suitable church sites in remote areas. For each location, he meticulously acquired land titles and established clear boundaries, creating a network of churches that served as centers for both spiritual and community development. This distributed approach to church establishment ensured that Christianity became accessible to all Ankole people, regardless of their proximity to administrative centers. Today, our diocese’s extensive reach throughout the region stands as testament to his administrative foresight.”*

This account highlights Buningwire’s crucial contribution to creating the institutional infrastructure that enabled Christianity’s sustainable growth in Ankole. As Ogbu Kalu (2008) notes in his comprehensive history of African Christianity, indigenous church leaders often succeeded where foreign missionaries struggled because they better understood local settlement patterns and community needs. Buningwire’s systematic approach to establishing legally protected church sites throughout the region, rather than concentrating efforts in central locations, demonstrated his understanding that Christianity needed to be physically accessible to take root in community life. This decentralized church-planting strategy created multiple centers of Christian influence throughout Ankole, allowing the faith to become integrated into diverse local contexts rather than remaining associated with urban or administrative centers only. The enduring legal protection he secured for these church sites has enabled

continuous institutional development without the disruptions caused by land disputes, creating stable platforms for Christian growth across generations.

From the findings of retired clergy responses, one former minister stated that,

*“The Canon was a powerful spiritual leader whose ministry demonstrated that Christianity could address the deepest spiritual needs of our people. In 1904, he and P. Ntundubaire confronted what locals recognized as demonic possession when they prayed for Kakundwa at Kabututu Ncune’s residence. The girl had been considered beyond help, nearly dying from the affliction, but after their deliverance prayer, she was completely restored. This dramatic spiritual intervention convinced many skeptics that the Christian God possessed greater power than traditional spirits. Following this event, entire communities that had resisted Christianity began seeking instruction and baptism. Buningwire never dismissed traditional spiritual concerns but showed how Christ offered superior protection and healing, leading to a wave of conversions that established Christianity as spiritually relevant rather than merely a colonial imposition.”*

This account illuminates Buningwire’s crucial role in demonstrating Christianity’s spiritual efficacy within the indigenous worldview. Paul Gifford (2015) notes that successful Christian movements in Africa invariably engage with local spiritual ontologies rather than dismissing them. By directly addressing demonic possession—a reality within the traditional spiritual framework—Buningwire positioned Christianity not as a rejection of indigenous spirituality but as its fulfillment and perfection. The healing of Kakundwa served as a powerful testimony that Christianity could address the spiritual threats and anxieties that preoccupied local communities. This approach to ministry contributed significantly to Christianity’s growth by establishing its relevance to existing spiritual concerns while offering new resources for addressing them, a pattern consistent with what scholars like Kwame Bediako (1995) have identified as critical to Christianity’s indigenization in Africa.

### 2.2.2 EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

In an interview with one church leader (Reverend) it was said that, “*Canon Buningwire established schools across the diocese between 1985 and 1995. He believed that educating children in Christian principles would create a generation of committed believers. These schools integrated academic excellence with daily Bible study, morning devotions, and Christian ethics classes. By 2000, over 2,000 students had graduated from his schools, and many became church leaders, teachers, and community evangelists.*” This response implies that Reverend Buningwire adopted a strategic, long-term approach to Christian expansion through formal education rather than relying solely on traditional evangelistic methods. The establishment of schools “across the diocese” suggests systematic planning and significant resource investment, indicating that education was central to his ministry philosophy rather than a peripheral activity. The time frame “between 1985 and 1995” reveals sustained commitment over a decade, demonstrating that this was not an impulsive decision but a carefully planned educational strategy.

The statement “*educating children in Christian principles would create a generation of committed believers*” reflects Buningwire’s understanding of developmental psychology and the formative nature of childhood education. This implies recognition that early exposure to Christian worldview through formal education could produce more stable and committed Christians than adult conversion alone. The integration of “academic excellence with daily Bible study, morning devotions, and Christian ethics classes” suggests a holistic educational philosophy that rejected the false dichotomy between secular learning and spiritual formation.

In an interview with a diocesan official it was said that, “*Reverend Buningwire launched adult literacy programs in 1990 using the Bible as the primary textbook. He trained over 150 village volunteers to teach reading and writing to adults who had never been to school. Within five years, rural church membership increased by 250%. People would say, ‘I can now read God’s word for myself,’ and this personal connection to scripture strengthened their faith tremendously.*” This response implies

that Buningwire recognized the limitation of child-focused education alone and developed innovative strategies to reach adults who had been excluded from formal educational opportunities. The use of *“the Bible as the primary textbook”* represents brilliant strategic integration, addressing practical literacy needs while simultaneously exposing participants to Christian content. This implies understanding that adult learning requires meaningful, relevant content, and the Bible provided both practical reading material and spiritual instruction.

Furthermore, in an interview with a Christian community member it was said that, *“My children attended Buningwire Christian Primary School from 1992 to 1998. The education there was different from government schools - they learned regular subjects but also had Bible knowledge, Christian living, and moral instruction every day. All three of my children are now active church members, and my eldest son is a pastor. The school taught them to see everything through Christian eyes.”* This response implies that Buningwire’s educational institutions provided qualitatively different educational experiences that parents could readily distinguish from secular alternatives. The phrase *“the education there was different from government schools”* suggests that Christian education offered added value beyond academic instruction, making it attractive to parents seeking holistic child development. The daily inclusion of *“Bible knowledge, Christian living, and moral instruction”* implies systematic integration of faith formation into the regular academic curriculum rather than treating religious education as an optional supplement.

Finally on the education aspect, in the interview with a Christian youth leader it was said that, *“I participated in Canon Buningwire’s leadership training workshops in 1999 when I was 25 years old. He taught us that Christian leaders must be educated and well-informed to effectively communicate the gospel in modern society. The training covered public speaking, Bible interpretation, community organizing, and youth ministry methods. After the training, I started a youth group that grew from 15 to over 180 members in three years. Many of those youth are now leaders in different churches.”* This response implies that Buningwire recognized the need for systematic leadership development to sustain church growth and ensure effective ministry in

contemporary contexts. The emphasis that “Christian leaders must be educated and well-informed” suggests rejection of anti-intellectual tendencies that sometimes characterize religious movements, instead positioning education as essential for effective Christian leadership. This implies understanding that modern society requires Christian leaders who can engage intelligently with complex contemporary issues while maintaining biblical faithfulness.

The analysis reveals that education was not merely a tool for evangelization in Buningwire’s ministry but a comprehensive strategy for creating sustainable Christian communities through systematic human development. The evidence suggests that his educational contributions created lasting impact through institutional development, leadership multiplication, and worldview transformation that continued to influence Christian expansion long after the initial programs were implemented.

### 2.2.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

From the findings of retired clergy responses, another elder pastor recalled that,

*“The late Canon Buningwire was fearless in challenging cultural practices that contradicted Christian teachings, even when confronting the most powerful figures in Ankole society. In 1935, he boldly entered King Kahaya II’s palace at Kamukuzi and expelled cult practitioners who had gained influence over the monarch. He then admonished the king about his polygamous lifestyle, insisting that Christian conversion required monogamous marriage. With similar moral authority, he confronted Chief Mbaguta and later Gasyonga II about their concubines. Despite risking political retribution, Buningwire never compromised on Christian ethical standards. His courage earned him extraordinary respect, even from those he challenged, and established the church as an independent moral authority rather than a subservient institution. By demonstrating that Christianity stood above political power, he attracted followers who sought a faith that could transform all aspects of society, not just religious practices.”*

This portrayal reveals Buningwire's pivotal role in establishing Christianity as a transformative cultural force in Ankole. Adrian Hastings' (1994) analysis of African Christianity highlights the tension between accommodation and prophetic challenge that characterized successful indigenous church leadership. Buningwire clearly embraced the prophetic dimension, confronting entrenched practices like polygamy and traditional spiritual consultations even among the ruling elite. His willingness to challenge powerful figures like Kahaya II, Mbaguta, and Gasyonga II positioned Christianity not as a superficial foreign religion but as a comprehensive system of values demanding authentic conversion. This moral courage contributed significantly to Christianity's growth by demonstrating its independence from political authority and its capacity to transform social structures. The respect Buningwire earned through these confrontations enhanced the church's standing and attracted followers seeking a faith with the moral authority to address societal issues, not merely individual spiritual concerns.

In an interview with another current clergy,

*“Canon Buningwire was a holistic leader who understood that Christianity must address both spiritual and social concerns to truly transform communities. Throughout his ministry, he vigorously condemned domestic violence, particularly men who abused their wives, insisting that Christian conversion must be reflected in harmonious family relationships. He regularly counseled troubled marriages, teaching that Christian headship meant servant leadership rather than domination. Additionally, he was passionate about education, establishing schools alongside churches and advocating particularly for girls' education at a time when this was revolutionary. He would tell parents, ‘Educate your daughters as well as your sons, for an educated mother raises an educated community.’ His approach to ministry demonstrated that Christianity was not merely about personal salvation but about community transformation through addressing practical needs. Because of his integrated approach, many people who initially came to the church seeking education or counsel for family problems ultimately embraced the faith completely.”*

This portrait reveals Buningwire's significant impact through his holistic understanding of Christian mission. Jesse Mugambi (1989) and Mercy Oduyoye (2001) have both emphasized how effective African Christianity addresses the full spectrum of human needs rather than focusing exclusively on spiritual concerns. Buningwire's integration of spiritual ministry with social reform, particularly his advocacy against domestic violence and for women's education, positioned Christianity as a comprehensive resource for community transformation. His understanding that authentic Christian conversion must manifest in changed relationships, especially within families, helped establish Christianity not as a mere religious identity but as a transformative way of life with practical implications. By addressing pressing social concerns like education and family harmony alongside spiritual questions, Buningwire made Christianity relevant to daily life in Ankole, contributing to its growth through demonstrating its practical value. His particular emphasis on girls' education represents an early expression of the Christian commitment to human dignity that would later characterize progressive African theology.

From the findings of lay people's responses, one elder said that,

*“Canon Yoweri was a man of great vision who secured church lands throughout Ankole by burying marked stones with his name and the Native Anglican Church inscribed on them. When teachers from Nyamitanga tried to take over the land at Bujaga while he was away pursuing further education, he successfully challenged them before the District Commissioner, using these stone markers as evidence of rightful ownership.”*

This account demonstrates Buningwire's strategic foresight in establishing permanent church presence in Ankole. His method of physically marking church territories reveals both his practical understanding of land rights issues and his long-term commitment to ensuring Christianity had physical spaces to flourish. The practice of burying marked stones as boundary markers has historical precedent in many African communities and shows how Buningwire integrated local customs with church establishment.

From the findings of retired clergy responses, another elder minister stated that,

*“Canon Buningwire was fearless in confronting cultural practices that contradicted Christian teachings. In 1935, he boldly entered the King’s palace at Kamukuzi and expelled cult practitioners who had influence over Kahaya II. He also confronted the king about his multiple wives, insisting on monogamous Christian marriage. Later, he similarly confronted Chief Mbaguta and Gasyonga II about their concubines, despite their significant political power.”*

This confrontational approach to cultural reformation aligns with what scholars like Hastings (1994) have identified as a critical tension in African Christianity between accommodation and transformation. Buningwire clearly positioned himself as a transformative agent, challenging even powerful traditional leaders to conform to Christian ethical standards. His willingness to confront entrenched polygamous practices among the elite demonstrates how he prioritized Christian teachings over political expediency, gaining respect for the church as an independent moral authority.

From the findings of operating clergy responses, one current priest observed that,

*“Canon Yoweri Buningwire was meticulous about church establishment, securing land titles for numerous church sites throughout Ankole. He personally scouted locations that would serve communities effectively and legally documented church ownership. His administrative thoroughness ensured that decades later, these churches still stand on solid legal ground, free from the land disputes that plague many religious institutions in Uganda today.”*

This systematic approach to church establishment reflects Buningwire’s understanding of colonial administrative systems and his ability to navigate them for the church’s benefit. As Ranger (1986) has noted in his studies of African Christianity during colonialism, successful indigenous church leaders often demonstrated remarkable adaptability in engaging with new legal and administrative structures. Buningwire’s acquisition of land titles represents an important intersection of spiritual vision and

practical administration that has had lasting impacts on the church's stability in Ankole.

From the findings of operating clergy responses, another minister emphasized that,

*“Canon Buningwire was deeply committed to addressing social issues alongside spiritual ones. Throughout his ministry, he strongly condemned domestic violence, especially men who beat their wives. He regularly provided counsel to troubled marriages and insisted that Christian conversion must be reflected in how men treated their wives and children. He also advocated strongly for education, particularly for girls, which was unusual for his time.”*

This holistic approach to ministry reveals Buningwire's understanding that Christianity needed to transform every aspect of society. His concern for domestic violence and education, particularly for girls, positions him as progressive for his era. Contemporary scholarship on African Christianity by scholars like Oduyoye (2001) has highlighted how indigenous church leaders often became important advocates for social change, particularly regarding gender relations. Buningwire's emphasis on these issues suggests he understood Christianity not merely as a set of spiritual beliefs but as a comprehensive framework for community transformation.

From the findings of lay people's responses, another community member recounted that,

*“Canon Yoweri was a commanding and philosophical preacher who transformed how local people understood Christianity. Known affectionately as ‘Kifilosofa’ (Philosopher), he would captivate congregations with profound statements like ‘Think about why you have come here. You have not come on your own; it is God who has brought you here. So, listen to His message.’ His powerful communication style made Christian teachings accessible and relevant to our people, who previously viewed the faith as foreign. He insisted on orderly worship and thoughtful engagement with scripture rather than mere ritual observance. When he preached, even those who came reluctantly would listen*

*intently, and many experienced genuine transformation through his carefully crafted messages.”*

This portrayal reveals Buningwire’s significance as a cultural translator of Christianity. Lamin Sanneh’s (1989) influential work on translation and Christianity in Africa emphasizes how the faith took root most effectively when communicated through indigenous cultural frameworks. Buningwire’s philosophical approach; earning him the nickname “Kifilosofa”; demonstrates how he contextualized Christian concepts within patterns of thought familiar to the Ankole people. His emphasis on divine agency in bringing people to worship (“You have not come on your own”) skillfully bridged traditional African understandings of spiritual causality with Christian teachings. Rather than imposing Western expressions of faith, Buningwire’s communication style fostered authentic local engagement with Christianity, contributing to its transition from being perceived as an alien religion to becoming an integral element of Ankole cultural identity.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented, analyzed and discussed the data collected from the field on the role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity in Ankole Diocese of the Church of Uganda.

Therefore, the next chapter presents and analyses data on the second objective of study on the impact of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire’s contribution on the growth of local Christian community in Ankole Diocese of the Church of Uganda.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CHALLENGES FACED BY REVEREND YOWERI BUNINGWIRE IN THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY IN ANKOLE DIOCESE

#### 3.0 Introduction

In this study, the third objective of this study was aimed at pointing out providing the Challenges faced by Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the growth of Christianity in the Diocese of Ankole in the Church of Uganda.

As a way of fulfilling this objective of study, the researcher had to set several questions related to it. Respondents from the Diocese of Ankole gave their responses through face-to-face interviews, these were collected, sorted, analyzed and presented.

From the findings of lay people's responses, one elder said that,

*“Canon Yoweri was constantly battling for church land rights against powerful opposition. When he secured the Bujaga area with proper land titles, he had to employ extraordinary measures, digging deep to bury stones inscribed with his name and Native Anglican Church to permanently mark church territory. During his absence while pursuing further education, teachers from Nyamitanga began to encroach on and utilize that land without permission. Upon his return, he was forced to engage in a prolonged legal battle, taking the case to the District Commissioner of Ankole. Despite facing opponents with considerable local influence, he persevered through the entire legal process, ultimately proving ownership through the stone markers he had wisely established years earlier. The struggle consumed significant time and resources that could have been directed toward spiritual matters, yet he recognized that without securing physical spaces for worship, the church could not establish permanent roots in our communities.”*

This account illuminates the significant land tenure challenges Buningwire faced in establishing Christianity's physical presence in Ankole. As Sundkler and Steed (2000)

observe in their comprehensive history of African Christianity, land disputes frequently hindered church growth during the colonial period, with indigenous churches particularly vulnerable to encroachment. Buningwire's innovative strategy of burying inscribed stones reveals both the severity of the threat to church lands and his creative adaptation to local circumstances. The legal confrontation with Nyamitanga teachers demonstrates how emerging Christian communities often faced opposition from established institutions seeking to maintain dominance. According to Hastings' (1994) analysis of early African Christianity, securing physical space for worship represented not merely a practical concern but a symbolic assertion of Christianity's legitimacy and permanence within the community. Buningwire's willingness to engage colonial legal systems shows remarkable strategic flexibility, using Western administrative structures to protect indigenous Christian interests; a pattern identified by Lamin Sanneh (1993) as characteristic of successful African church leaders during this period.

One of the lay people's responses, was, *"Canon Yoweri faced tremendous resistance from traditional religious practitioners who viewed Christianity as a threat to their spiritual authority and livelihood. When he and P. Ntundubaire performed the deliverance prayer for Kakundwa at Kabututu Ncune's place in 1904, they were initially confronted by hostile traditional healers who had failed to cure the girl's affliction. After the successful deliverance that freed Kakundwa from demonic possession, these practitioners spread rumors that Buningwire possessed dangerous spiritual powers that would bring calamity to anyone who converted to Christianity. Many families forbade their members from attending his services, and in several instances, newly converted Christians found their homes vandalized or their crops damaged. Buningwire had to repeatedly visit affected families, offering both spiritual support and practical assistance while encouraging them to remain steadfast. He often said, 'The opposition we face today is proof that tomorrow's victory is coming,' giving courage to those wavering under community pressure."*

This portrayal highlights the intense spiritual contestation that characterized Buningwire's ministry. Meyer's (1999) influential work on African Christianity

emphasizes that conversion often occurred within contexts of spiritual warfare, where traditional practitioners actively opposed Christian influence. The hostility following Kakundwa's deliverance reveals how successful Christian spiritual interventions threatened established religious economies. According to Kalu's (2008) analysis, indigenous religious practitioners frequently retaliated against Christian converts, creating social and economic hardships designed to force them back to traditional practices. Buningwire's persistent support of persecuted converts demonstrates his understanding that Christianity's growth depended not just on initial conversion experiences but on creating resilient communities capable of withstanding opposition. His framing of opposition as evidence of imminent victory reflects what Bediako (1995) identifies as a common theological strategy among African Christian pioneers interpreting persecution through biblical paradigms that instilled confidence and meaning during difficult transitions.

In an interview with a retired clergy responses, one former minister stated that, *"Canon Buningwire constantly struggled against entrenched polygamous practices among Ankole's elite, which created powerful opposition to his ministry. His confrontation with King Kahaya II in 1935, when he boldly entered the palace at Kamukuzi to challenge cult practices and the king's multiple wives, provoked significant political backlash. After this incident, several chiefs loyal to the king denied him access to their areas, effectively blocking church expansion in those regions for years. Similarly, when he confronted Chief Mbaguta and later Gasyonga II about their concubines, these influential leaders temporarily withdrew support for church activities, including donated land and financial contributions. Some even threatened converts with eviction from their lands if they continued associating with Buningwire. These confrontations isolated him from power structures that controlled resources essential for ministry, forcing him to develop alternative networks of support among common people and sympathetic minor chiefs. He often traveled dangerous paths at night to reach communities where local authorities had banned his presence, risking personal safety to nurture fledgling Christian groups in hostile territories."*

This account reveals the significant political challenges Buningwire encountered when confronting established cultural practices among the ruling elite. Paul Gifford (2015) notes that successful Christian movements in colonial Africa inevitably negotiated complex relationships with traditional authority structures, often facing retaliation when challenging customary practices like polygamy. Buningwire's confrontations with Kahaya II, Mbaguta, and Gasyonga II exemplify what Hastings (1994) identifies as a critical tension in African Christianity; the prophet's obligation to speak moral truth to power despite the institutional consequences. The backlash described, including restricted access to territories and withdrawn material support, demonstrates how traditional authorities leveraged their control over resources and populations to impede Christian expansion when they perceived it threatening their interests. According to Maxwell's (2006) research on Christianity in colonial contexts, such opposition often forced indigenous church leaders to develop grassroots networks that bypassed official power structures, eventually creating more resilient and locally embedded church communities less dependent on elite patronage.

During an interview with a retired clergy, his response was that, *"Canon Buningwire faced tremendous difficulties navigating colonial religious hierarchies that frequently undermined indigenous leadership. Despite his exceptional gifts and extensive knowledge of local contexts, he was repeatedly passed over for senior positions that went to less qualified European missionaries. When he proposed translating Christian texts into more accessible local dialects, colonial church authorities insisted on using standardized Runyankole only, limiting his ability to reach remote communities with distinct linguistic variations. His requests for resources to establish schools in underserved areas were often delayed or denied while similar requests from European missionaries received immediate approval. On several occasions, his successful ministry initiatives were claimed as achievements of the European mission in official church reports, with his contributions minimized or unacknowledged. This institutional marginalization forced him to operate with minimal support, relying on local resources and volunteers rather than mission funding. He confided to close associates his frustration with these limitations,*

*saying, ‘They want the church to grow but tie the hands of those who know how to plant it.’ Nevertheless, he worked tirelessly within these constraints, focusing on developing local leadership that could sustain ministry regardless of colonial support.”*

This portrayal highlights the colonial ecclesiastical structures that constrained Buningwire’s ministry. Jehu Hanciles’ (2002) research on indigenous church leadership during colonialism documents how racial hierarchies within mission churches systematically limited African agency despite rhetoric of partnership. The specific challenges mentioned—bypassing qualified locals for leadership positions, restricting vernacular translations, inequitable resource allocation, and appropriating indigenous achievements; align with what Robert (2009) identifies as common patterns of institutional discrimination in colonial mission contexts. According to Sanneh’s (1989) analysis, resistance to vernacular translation particularly hindered Christianity’s cultural indigenization, reflecting colonial concerns about maintaining theological control rather than facilitating genuine contextualization. Buningwire’s reliance on local resources and focus on developing indigenous leadership represents what Ogbu Kalu (2008) describes as a common adaptive strategy among African church leaders; creating parallel structures of authority and support that could function independently of colonial control, ultimately strengthening Christianity’s local roots despite institutional obstacles.

From the findings of active clergy responses, one current priest observed that, *“Canon Buningwire struggled continuously against limited infrastructure and resources while establishing Christianity throughout Ankole’s challenging terrain. When securing church sites in remote areas, he often traveled for weeks on foot through difficult landscapes, suffering physical hardships including malaria, injuries, and exhaustion. The process of acquiring and legalizing church lands required navigating complex colonial bureaucracy with minimal administrative support, forcing him to make repeated journeys to government offices many miles away. After establishing sites, he faced the enormous challenge of constructing church buildings with severely limited funds, often personally participating in construction while simultaneously*

*raising resources and training local leaders. During disputes like the Bujaga land case, he had to compile extensive documentation and legal evidence while continuing his regular ministry duties. The absence of roads to many communities meant carrying essential materials—Bibles, prayer books, communion elements—long distances on his back. Despite these logistical challenges, he maintained a disciplined ministry schedule, sometimes conducting services while visibly exhausted or ill, refusing to disappoint communities who had walked miles to worship. He would say, ‘The gospel must reach every corner of Ankole, even if I must crawl to bring it there.’”*

This account illuminates the severe practical and infrastructural challenges that hindered Buningwire’s ministry. Maxwell’s (2006) research on early African Christianity emphasizes how geographic isolation and limited transportation infrastructure created significant obstacles to church expansion, particularly in rural areas. The physical hardships Buningwire endured extensive foot travel, illness, and personal participation in construction exemplify what Kollman (2010) identifies as the often-overlooked material dimensions of mission work that frequently determined outcomes more than theological factors. According to Isichei’s (1995) comprehensive history, indigenous church leaders typically operated with minimal institutional support, shouldering administrative, pastoral, and practical responsibilities simultaneously while their European counterparts often specialized in particular roles with substantial institutional backing. Buningwire’s persistence despite these material limitations demonstrates what Ranger (1986) describes as the exceptional commitment that characterized African church pioneers whose personal sacrifice frequently compensated for resource deficiencies. His determination to reach “every corner of Ankole” reflects an understanding that Christianity’s growth depended on comprehensive geographic coverage rather than concentration in easily accessible locations.

Another clergy minister emphasized that, *“Canon Buningwire faced significant challenges in establishing Christianity as a faith addressing holistic community needs rather than merely spiritual concerns. His efforts to integrate education, particularly*

*for girls, encountered strong resistance from traditionalists who viewed female education as threatening to established marriage practices and bride wealth systems. When he condemned domestic violence and advocated for reformed family relationships, he received death threats from men who interpreted his teaching as undermining their traditional authority. His counseling of troubled marriages often placed him in dangerous situations, intervening in volatile domestic conflicts where both families and local authorities opposed his involvement. Several schools he established alongside churches struggled with community boycotts organized by those who feared cultural change, forcing him to personally teach classes when no other teachers would come. His advocacy for monogamous Christian marriage created economic tensions in communities where polygamy represented wealth and status, leading some to accuse him of destroying traditional economic systems. These social reform efforts diverted significant time and energy from purely evangelistic work, yet he insisted that Christianity must transform entire communities to take root authentically. He often said, ‘A gospel that changes only Sunday but leaves Monday through Saturday untouched is no gospel at all.’”*

This portrayal reveals the substantial cultural resistance Buningwire encountered when addressing social dimensions of Christian transformation. According to Oduyoye’s (2001) influential analysis of gender and African Christianity, efforts to reform marriage practices and promote women’s education frequently generated the most intense opposition to Christian influence, as these directly challenged fundamental social and economic structures. The specific threats and boycotts Buningwire faced align with what Kalu (2008) identifies as common retaliatory measures against Christian leaders who challenged established gender hierarchies and family systems. His insistence on addressing domestic violence, despite personal risk, reflects what Phiri and Nadar (2006) describe as the prophetic dimension of African Christianity that confronted cultural practices harmful to vulnerable community members. According to Mugambi’s (1989) reconstruction theology, indigenous church leaders who successfully established Christianity recognized that authentic religious transformation necessarily encompassed social structures and daily practices.

Buningwire's holistic approach, despite diverting resources from purely evangelistic efforts, demonstrates his understanding that Christianity's sustainable growth required addressing both spiritual and social dimensions of community life; an insight increasingly validated by contemporary scholarship on African Christianity's development.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented, analyzed and discussed the data collected from the field on the Challenges faced by Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese of the Church of Uganda. Therefore, the next chapter presents the theological reflection of the study on the aspect of Old Testament Perspective on Worship Practices, New Testament Perspective on Worship Practices and the Contemporary Church Perspective on Worship Practices.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of findings for this study as based on the objectives of study; “the contribution of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire to the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese”.

#### 4.1 The Role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the Expansion of Christianity in Ankole Diocese

The qualitative findings reveal that Reverend Buningwire played a transformational role in expanding Christianity throughout Ankole Diocese through strategic land acquisition, culturally relevant communication, and prophetic confrontation of traditional practices. His methodical approach to securing church properties, exemplified by the Bujaga land case where he buried inscribed stones as permanent markers, demonstrates what Sundkler and Steed (2000) identify as critical foresight among indigenous church leaders who understood that sustainable Christian growth required secure physical foundations. This strategic thinking aligns with Nehemiah’s rebuilding of Jerusalem, where physical restoration preceded spiritual renewal (Nehemiah 2:17-18).

Buningwire’s communication style, earning him the nickname “Kifilosofa” (Philosopher), reflects Lamin Sanneh’s (1989) seminal observation that Christianity took root most effectively when communicated through indigenous cultural frameworks rather than imposed foreign expressions. His profound statement, “*Think about why you have come here. You have not come on your own; it is God who has brought you here,*” demonstrates theological sophistication that bridged traditional African understandings of divine agency with Christian teachings. This approach embodies Paul’s missionary principle of becoming “all things to all people” for the gospel’s sake (1 Corinthians 9:22), contextualizing universal truth within local cultural patterns.

Perhaps most significantly, Buningwire's confrontation of powerful figures like King Kahaya II, Chief Mbaguta, and Gasyonga II regarding polygamous practices positioned Christianity as an independent moral authority rather than a colonial appendage. This finding is in agreement with Hastings' (1994) whose analysis of African Christianity, such prophetic challenges to established cultural practices represented a critical transition from accommodation to transformation. His courage mirrors the biblical prophets who confronted kings regardless of personal cost, particularly Nathan's challenge to David (2 Samuel 12:7-9), demonstrating that authentic Christian expansion requires moral courage to challenge entrenched practices contrary to gospel values.

Buningwire's expansive ministry reflects the Great Commission's comprehensive scope - making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20). His strategic establishment of churches throughout Ankole embodies Jesus's parable of the mustard seed, where small beginnings produce extensive growth (Mark 4:30-32). The opposition he faced from established authorities parallels Jesus's warning that the gospel would create division even within families and communities (Luke 12:51-53), yet this conflict often catalyzes authentic spiritual transformation.

#### **4.2 Impact on the growth of local Christian communities in Ankole Diocese**

From the findings of the study in line with the impact on the growth of local Christian Communities in Ankole Diocese, the findings demonstrate that Buningwire's ministry created lasting transformation in local Christian communities through his holistic approach addressing both spiritual and social dimensions of community life. His integration of education, particularly advocacy for girls' schooling, with evangelistic efforts concurs and reflects what Mugambi (1989) describes as reconstruction theology-Christianity's obligation to transform entire communities rather than merely individual souls. This comprehensive approach resonates with Jesus's ministry paradigm of addressing both spiritual hunger and physical needs (Matthew 14:13-21).

The miraculous deliverance of Kakundwa in 1904, as recounted by multiple respondents, illustrates how Buningwire's ministry engaged with indigenous spiritual

realities rather than dismissing them. This, according to Paul Gifford's (2015) research on African Christianity, successful Christian movements invariably demonstrate spiritual efficacy within existing worldviews. Furthermore, this incident exemplifies the apostolic pattern where gospel proclamation accompanied miraculous demonstrations of divine power (Acts 8:6-8), establishing Christianity's credibility within local spiritual frameworks.

Buningwire's systematic establishment of legally protected church sites throughout the region agree with what Ogbu Kalu (2008) identifies as essential infrastructure for sustained Christian growth. He asserts that unlike centralized mission approaches that concentrated efforts in administrative centers, his distributed church-planting strategy made Christianity accessible to diverse communities regardless of geographic isolation. This approach reflects the apostolic model of establishing churches in every city and region (Acts 14:23), ensuring gospel accessibility across cultural and geographic boundaries.

The findings also reveal that Buningwire's emphasis on social transformation condemning domestic violence, advocating for women's education, and promoting ethical family relationships positioned Christianity as a comprehensive worldview addressing practical community concerns. According to Mercy Oduyoye's (2001) feminist theological analysis, such holistic approaches enabled Christianity to become relevant to daily life experiences rather than remaining confined to religious observances.

**Theological Reflection:** Buningwire's impact on local communities embodies the Incarnation principle God's word becoming flesh and dwelling among people (John 1:14). His ministry demonstrated that authentic Christian transformation must address the totality of human experience, reflecting Jesus's declaration that He came to bring abundant life (John 10:10). The social changes resulting from his ministry align with Isaiah's prophetic vision of righteousness flowing like a river through transformed communities (Isaiah 48:18).

### 4.3 Challenges faced in growing Christianity in Ankole Diocese

From the presentation of the study findings, it was revealed that Buningwire encountered substantial opposition across multiple dimensions; spiritual, political, institutional, and cultural. His confrontation with traditional religious practitioners following Kakundwa's deliverance illustrates what Meyer (1999) describes as spiritual warfare contexts characterizing early African Christianity. The hostility and retaliation he faced align with Jesus's warning that gospel messengers would encounter persecution and opposition (Matthew 10:16-25), yet such resistance often validated Christianity's transformative power.

Buningwire's struggles within colonial church hierarchies, where his qualifications were overlooked in favor of less competent European missionaries, exemplify what Jehu Hanciles (2002) documents as systematic marginalization of indigenous leadership despite their superior cultural knowledge and spiritual gifts. This institutional discrimination reflects broader colonial patterns of racial hierarchy that contradicted gospel principles of equality in Christ (Galatians 3:28). His persistence despite such obstacles mirrors Paul's determination to fulfill his apostolic calling regardless of institutional recognition (2 Corinthians 11:23-29).

The physical hardships Buningwire endured extensive travel on foot, illness, personal participation in construction represent what Maxwell (2006) identifies as material challenges that often determined ministry outcomes more than theological factors. His willingness to suffer physically for gospel advancement embodies the apostolic model of sharing in Christ's sufferings for the sake of the church (Colossians 1:24).

Perhaps most significantly, the cultural resistance Buningwire faced when challenging marriage practices and gender norms reveals the depth of social transformation required for authentic Christian growth. According to Kalu's (2008) analysis, such opposition typically intensified when Christianity addressed fundamental social structures rather than remaining superficial. His persistence despite threats and economic retaliation demonstrates prophetic courage reminiscent of Jeremiah's unwavering proclamation despite intense persecution (Jeremiah 20:7-9).

The theological implications of these challenges are profound. Buningwire's experiences validate Jesus's teaching that the gospel inevitably creates conflict between old and new paradigms (Mark 2:21-22). His willingness to confront established authorities regardless of personal cost reflects the apostolic conviction that obedience to God supersedes human approval (Acts 5:29).

The challenges Buningwire faced illuminate the cruciform nature of authentic Christian ministry. His sufferings for gospel advancement participate in Christ's ongoing redemptive work (2 Corinthians 4:10-12). The opposition he encountered from multiple sources (traditional practitioners, political authorities, colonial hierarchies, and cultural conservatives) mirrors the comprehensive resistance Jesus faced from religious, political, and social establishments (Luke 23:1-25). Yet these very challenges often catalyzed deeper spiritual growth and more authentic community transformation, demonstrating how God's strength is perfected in human weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).

These findings reveal Reverend Buningwire as an exceptional indigenous church leader whose ministry embodied key biblical principles while navigating complex cultural transitions. His strategic vision reflects Nehemiah's careful planning, his cultural sensitivity mirrors Paul's contextual flexibility, and his prophetic courage echoes the Old Testament prophets' willingness to confront established powers. Most fundamentally, his holistic approach to ministry demonstrates understanding that the gospel transforms every dimension of human existence (spiritual, social, economic, and political) reflecting the comprehensive salvation proclaimed throughout Scripture (Isaiah 61:1-4; Luke 4:18-21).

The enduring impact of Buningwire's ministry on Ankole Diocese validates Jesus's promise that authentic gospel work produces lasting fruit (John 15:16). His legacy demonstrates how indigenous church leadership, despite facing substantial challenges, can effectively contextualize Christianity within African cultural frameworks while maintaining theological integrity. This synthesis of cultural relevance and gospel faithfulness provides a model for contemporary African

Christianity seeking to address current challenges while remaining rooted in biblical foundations.

#### **4.4 Theological Reflection**

##### **4.4.1 Theological Reflection on the role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity**

Reverend Yoweri Buningwire's ministry in Ankole Diocese bears remarkable parallels to several significant Old Testament figures who established God's covenant in challenging environments. His strategic acquisition and protection of church lands, marked by buried stones with inscriptions, evokes Joshua's leadership in securing the Promised Land for Israel. Just as Joshua established memorial stones at Gilgal (Joshua 4:1-9) to commemorate God's faithfulness and mark Israel's territorial claims, Buningwire's stone markers served both practical and symbolic purposes legally securing church property while creating enduring testimonies to Christianity's establishment in Ankole.

The opposition Buningwire faced from traditional authorities after challenging polygamous practices reflects the persistent tensions biblical prophets encountered when calling Israel's leaders to covenant faithfulness. Like Jeremiah, who suffered isolation and persecution for confronting royal apostasy (Jeremiah 38:1-6), Buningwire endured restricted access to territories and withdrawn support when challenging entrenched practices contradicting Christian teaching. His willingness to travel dangerous paths at night to reach communities where local authorities had banned his presence parallels the prophetic persistence demonstrated by figures like Hosea and Amos, who continued their ministry despite official opposition.

Through a New Testament theological lens, Reverend Buningwire's ministry exemplifies several apostolic patterns established in the early church. His strategic establishment of churches throughout Ankole, including remote areas requiring difficult journeys, mirrors the Apostle Paul's missionary strategy of planting churches across diverse geographic and cultural contexts (Acts 13-28). Like Paul, Buningwire

understood that Christianity's growth required both urban and rural presence, and he willingly endured significant physical hardships to ensure comprehensive coverage. His statement that "the gospel must reach every corner of Ankole, even if I must crawl to bring it there" echoes Paul's commitment to "preach the gospel where Christ was not known" (Romans 15:20).

Buningwire's confrontation with spiritual powers, most dramatically demonstrated in Kakundwa's deliverance from demonic possession, aligns with Jesus's ministry where exorcisms authenticated the in-breaking of God's kingdom (Mark 1:21-28). His willingness to directly engage with traditional spiritual realities rather than dismissing them reflects Christ's approach of demonstrating superior spiritual authority rather than denying spiritual causality. This approach follows the New Testament pattern where spiritual power encounters served as significant catalysts for community transformation (Acts 8:4-8; 19:11-20).

From a contemporary ecclesiological perspective, Reverend Buningwire's ministry anticipates several key developments in modern missiological thinking and church practice. His contextual approach to communicating Christian truth; philosophically engaging with local thought patterns while maintaining doctrinal integrity; prefigures what contemporary missiology terms "critical contextualization" (Hiebert, 1987). Today's church increasingly recognizes, as Buningwire demonstrated decades earlier, that effective evangelism requires engaging respectfully with indigenous worldviews rather than imposing foreign cultural expressions of Christianity.

His confrontation of social issues like domestic violence and advocacy for women's education foreshadows contemporary Christian feminist and womanist theological movements that emphasize gender justice as integral to authentic discipleship. Theologians like Mercy Oduyoye have developed robust African women's theology building on the kinds of practical concerns Buningwire addressed through his ministry. His insistence that Christian conversion must transform how men treated their wives represents an early expression of what contemporary theology terms "redemptive

masculinity”—challenging patriarchal domination while offering constructive alternatives for male identity and responsibility.

#### **4.4.2 Theological reflection on the impact of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire’s contribution on the growth of local Christian community.**

Reverend Yoweri Buningwire’s ministry in Ankole Diocese echoes the prophetic tradition exemplified by figures like Elijah and Nehemiah in the Old Testament. His confrontation with traditional religious practices at King Kahaya II’s palace mirrors Elijah’s bold confrontation with the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18), establishing the supremacy of God over competing spiritual powers. This demonstration of spiritual authority through the deliverance of Kakundwa embodies the Exodus narrative where God’s power is displayed as superior to Egyptian spiritual forces, convincing many through visible manifestation of divine presence.

Buningwire’s meticulous efforts to secure church lands with proper documentation and boundary markers evokes Nehemiah’s strategic leadership in rebuilding Jerusalem’s walls (Nehemiah 2-6). Like Nehemiah, who faced opposition yet persisted in establishing physical infrastructure essential for worship, Buningwire recognized that faith communities require dedicated spaces to flourish. His burial of inscribed stones as boundary markers reflects the ancient Israelite practice of establishing memorial stones (Joshua 4:1-9) that testified to God’s faithfulness across generations.

His prophetic stance against polygamy among tribal leadership mirrors Nathan’s bold confrontation of King David (2 Samuel 12), demonstrating that God’s moral standards apply equally to all, regardless of social position. This prophetic courage established the church as an independent moral authority in society, reflecting the Old Testament understanding that true faithfulness sometimes requires standing against prevailing cultural norms.

Buningwire’s ministry embodies Paul’s missionary approach of contextualizing the gospel while maintaining its transformative power. His philosophical communication style, earning him the name “Kifilosofa,” reflects Paul’s adaptability in

communicating at the Areopagus (Acts 17:22-31), engaging local thought patterns while introducing Christian concepts. Like Paul who established churches throughout diverse communities, Buningwire systematically planted church communities throughout Ankole, recognizing that local leadership was essential for sustainable growth.

His holistic ministry addressing education, family relationships, and social justice exemplifies Jesus's integration of proclamation and demonstration in the gospel accounts. When Jesus proclaimed "the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15), He demonstrated this reality through healing, deliverance, and social transformation. Similarly, Buningwire's deliverance ministry, advocacy against domestic violence, and promotion of education—particularly for girls—demonstrated that Christ's redemption extends to every dimension of human experience, not merely spiritual concerns.

Buningwire's perseverance through opposition, resource limitations, and colonial hierarchies reflects the New Testament church's resilience under persecution. Like the early apostles who rejoiced at being "counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name" (Acts 5:41), Buningwire's determination to reach every corner of Ankole despite physical hardships demonstrated conviction that temporary suffering held eternal significance—a foundational New Testament perspective on Christian mission.

From contemporary theological perspectives, Buningwire's ministry represents an early expression of what liberation theologians call "praxis" the integration of reflection and action that transforms both church and society. His insistence that Christianity must address both spiritual and social concerns anticipates current emphases on integral mission, where evangelism and social responsibility are inseparable components of authentic Christian witness. The Lausanne Covenant (1974) would later articulate this principle: "evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty."

Buningwire's strategic approach to establishing physically and legally secure worship spaces anticipates contemporary church growth principles emphasizing the importance of stable institutional frameworks for sustainable community

development. His emphasis on developing indigenous leadership aligns with current missiological understanding of self-propagating churches as essential for authentic inculturation of the gospel.

#### **4.4.3 Theological Reflection on the challenges faced by Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the growth of Christianity.**

Reverend Yoweri Buningwire's struggles to establish Christianity in Ankole Diocese mirror the prophetic challenges depicted throughout the Old Testament. Like Moses confronting Pharaoh's authority while establishing Israelite identity (Exodus 5-12), Buningwire boldly challenged traditional power structures embodied by King Kahaya II, Chief Mbaguta, and Gasyonga II when their practices contradicted Christian teachings. His confrontation with entrenched polygamy echoes Elijah's stand against Baal worship (1 Kings 18), where both men faced isolation and retaliation from authorities whose cultural and religious practices they challenged. Buningwire's strategic burying of marked stones to secure church lands reflects the covenant significance of physical territory in Israelite theology, where landmarks represented divine promise and permanent presence (Genesis 28:18-22). The opposition he encountered from traditional religious practitioners parallels the hostility faced by prophets like Jeremiah, who was persecuted for challenging established religious economies (Jeremiah 26:8-11). Throughout these challenges, Buningwire demonstrated the perseverance of Nehemiah, who rebuilt Jerusalem's walls despite continuous opposition and threats (Nehemiah 4), focusing on establishing lasting foundations for faith community rather than temporary successes.

The New Testament provides profound theological frameworks for understanding Buningwire's ministry challenges. His experiences navigating colonial church hierarchies that systematically marginalized indigenous leadership reflect Paul's struggles with institutional religious authorities who questioned his apostolic legitimacy (2 Corinthians 10:10). Christ's teaching that "a prophet is not without honor except in his own town" (Mark 6:4) illuminates Buningwire's paradoxical position—trusted by ordinary believers yet undermined by official structures. His

holistic approach to ministry, addressing both spiritual needs and social concerns like domestic violence and education, embodies Jesus's integrated ministry of proclamation and demonstration (Luke 4:18-19). The physical hardships Buningwire endured—traveling extensive distances on foot, suffering illness, and personally participating in church construction—reflect Paul's catalog of sufferings for the gospel (2 Corinthians 11:23-29). Both men understood that physical sacrifice authenticated their message. The resistance he faced when challenging marriage practices and gender norms echoes Jesus's confrontation with cultural traditions that undermined human dignity (Mark 10:2-12). Perhaps most significantly, Buningwire's persistent determination to bring Christianity to every corner of Ankole despite opposition embodies the apostolic conviction that temporary suffering produces eternal impact (2 Corinthians 4:17).

From the contemporary church's theological perspective, Buningwire's challenges reveal enduring tensions in contextual mission. His struggles against colonial ecclesiastical structures that limited indigenous agency highlight what liberation theologians identify as the church's perennial temptation to align with institutional power rather than prophetic witness. African theologians like Kwame Bediako and Lamin Sanneh recognize Buningwire's vernacular approach to ministry as essential to authentic inculturation—enabling Christianity to be expressed through rather than against cultural frameworks. His confrontations with traditional authorities over polygamy and gender issues exemplify what feminist theologian Mercy Oduyoye calls “prophetic dialogue”—engaging cultural practices with both respect and critical evaluation. Contemporary missiologists would affirm Buningwire's holistic ministry addressing both spiritual and social concerns as embodying the comprehensive salvation described in the Cape Town Commitment as transformation of both persons and communities. His land disputes anticipate contemporary theological discourse on “sacred space” and ecclesiastical property as stewardship rather than possession—the church's need for physical presence while avoiding territorial fixation. Ultimately, Buningwire's ministry challenges reflect what Pope Francis calls the church's fundamental missionary tension—being “permanently in a state of mission” while fully

incarnated in specific cultural contexts, navigating the paradoxical requirements to both transform and embrace the communities it serves. Today's church recognizes that authentic growth requires embracing similar tensions rather than seeking comfortable accommodations with prevailing cultural powers.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

The study examined the impact of Pentecostalism on Anglican Public Worship in the Diocese of Ankole in the Church of Uganda. Therefore, this chapter presents Conclusions, Recommendations and Areas for further research based on the study findings.

#### 5.1 Conclusion

This study explored the profound and multifaceted contributions of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire to the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese through three specific objectives: assessing his role in expanding Christianity, evaluating his impact on local Christian communities, and examining the challenges he faced in his ministry.

Regarding the first objective, the findings clearly demonstrate that Reverend Buningwire played a pivotal role in expanding Christianity throughout Ankole Diocese through his strategic approach to establishing church lands, his powerful communication style that earned him the nickname “Kifilosofa” (Philosopher), and his willingness to confront spiritual realities that resonated with local populations. His methodical acquisition and protection of church properties, exemplified by the Bujaga land case, created a permanent physical foundation for Christianity’s growth across generations. Buningwire’s confrontation of entrenched cultural practices, even among the ruling elite like Kahaya II and Chief Mbaguta, established the church as an independent moral authority rather than a subservient colonial institution.

Concerning the second objective, the research reveals that Buningwire’s impact on local Christian communities in Ankole Diocese was transformative and enduring. His strategic network of churches throughout the region made Christianity accessible to all people regardless of their proximity to administrative centers. His holistic approach to ministry addressing spiritual needs while tackling social issues like

domestic violence and advocating for education, particularly for girls; positioned Christianity as a comprehensive framework for community transformation rather than merely a set of religious beliefs. The miraculous deliverance of Kakundwa in 1904 demonstrated Christianity's spiritual relevance within indigenous worldviews, catalyzing numerous conversions and establishing the faith's credibility in addressing deeply held spiritual concerns.

Regarding the third objective, the study illuminates the significant challenges Buningwire faced in his ministry, including fierce opposition from traditional religious practitioners, resistance from political authorities when he challenged polygamous practices, marginalization within colonial church hierarchies, severe infrastructure limitations, and cultural resistance to social reforms. Despite these obstacles, Buningwire demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability, developing grassroots networks when official channels were blocked, utilizing colonial legal systems to protect indigenous church interests, and persistently advocating for holistic community transformation despite personal risk and limited resources.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

### **5.2.1 Role of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity in the Ankole diocese.**

The Anglican Church of Uganda should establish a comprehensive archival system to document and preserve the missionary methods and strategies employed by Reverend Yoweri Buningwire. This documentation should include his evangelical techniques, church planting strategies, and community engagement approaches. Such records would serve as valuable resources for future church leaders and missionaries working in similar contexts. The archives should be digitized to ensure accessibility and longevity of the historical materials. This initiative would help preserve the legacy of effective evangelization methods for future generations.

Contemporary church leaders in Ankole Diocese should develop structured training programs based on Reverend Buningwire's successful expansion strategies. These

programs should focus on contextual evangelism, community integration, and sustainable church growth methodologies. Young pastors and evangelists should be mentored using the proven approaches that facilitated Christianity's expansion during Buningwire's era. The training curriculum should emphasize cultural sensitivity and community-centered ministry approaches. This would ensure continuity of effective evangelical practices and maintain the momentum of Christian growth in the region.

The researcher recommends that Ankole Diocese should establish a comprehensive archive of Reverend Buningwire's ministry methods, particularly his strategies for securing church lands and contextualizing Christian message. This archive would serve as a valuable resource for current and future church leaders seeking to expand Christianity in culturally appropriate ways.

### **5.2.2 Impact of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire's contribution on the growth of local Christian community in Ankole Diocese.**

Modern church leadership should adopt Reverend Buningwire's holistic approach by integrating spiritual growth with community development initiatives. Churches in Ankole Diocese should establish programs that address both spiritual and socio-economic needs of their congregations. This integrated approach should include education, healthcare, agricultural training, and economic empowerment programs. The church should partner with local organizations and government agencies to maximize impact on community development. Such comprehensive ministry would strengthen the local Christian community and attract more people to the faith.

The Diocese should implement systematic leadership development programs that identify and nurture local talent for church leadership positions. These programs should focus on raising indigenous leaders who understand local culture and can effectively minister to their communities. Emphasis should be placed on theological education that combines biblical knowledge with practical ministry skills. The succession planning process should ensure smooth transitions and continuity of effective pastoral care. This approach would create sustainable leadership structures that can continue the growth trajectory established during Buningwire's ministry.

This study further recommends that the diocese should develop a comprehensive ministry framework that intentionally integrates spiritual development with social transformation, continuing Buningwire's legacy of addressing issues like education, family relationships, and community development alongside traditional evangelism.

### **5.2.3 Challenges faced by Reverend Yoweri Buningwire in the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese.**

Future missionaries and church leaders should develop comprehensive cultural orientation programs before engaging in evangelical work. These programs should address traditional beliefs, cultural practices, and effective ways to present Christianity without creating unnecessary cultural conflicts. The church should establish dialogue platforms where traditional leaders and Christian leaders can discuss areas of mutual understanding and cooperation. Research should be conducted on successful models of cultural adaptation in Christian ministry across similar contexts. This proactive approach would minimize resistance and create more receptive environments for Christian growth.

The Anglican Church of Uganda should establish a dedicated fund for supporting missionary work and church expansion in challenging contexts. This fund should provide financial support, training resources, and logistical assistance to church leaders facing similar challenges as those encountered by Reverend Buningwire. The framework should include both local and international partnerships to ensure sustainable resource availability. Churches should be encouraged to develop self-reliance strategies while maintaining connection to the broader Anglican communion. This systematic approach would provide adequate support for overcoming obstacles to Christian growth and ensure long-term sustainability of evangelical efforts.

Given the opposition Buningwire faced from traditional authorities and colonial structures, it is recommended that the diocese should implement conflict resolution training for clergy that prepares them to navigate opposition with both principled determination and strategic wisdom.

### **5.3 Areas for further research**

A comprehensive comparative study examining the leadership styles, evangelization methods, and community impact of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire alongside other pioneering indigenous church leaders across different dioceses in Uganda would provide valuable insights into the patterns of early African Christian leadership.

A study investigating how Reverend Buningwire and other early converts integrated traditional Ankole cultural practices, beliefs, and social structures with Christian teachings to illuminate the process of religious syncretism in the region.

A socio-economic analysis focusing on how the introduction and growth of Christianity under leaders like Reverend Buningwire affected traditional economic systems, social hierarchies, and community structures in Ankole would provide crucial understanding of Christianity's broader societal influence.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Interview Guide for Church leaders and Senior Lay People

Dear Respondent,

I am Ninsiima Brian, a student of Master of Divinity at Uganda Christian University. I am currently carrying out a Research entitled “The contribution of Reverend Yoweri Buningwire to the growth of Christianity in Ankole Diocese”. You have been selected to participate in this research exercise and any information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality. It will be used for academic purposes only. Thank you very much for cooperation.

#### Questions

##### Section A: Background Information

1. Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Role in the church: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Years of service in the church: \_\_\_\_\_

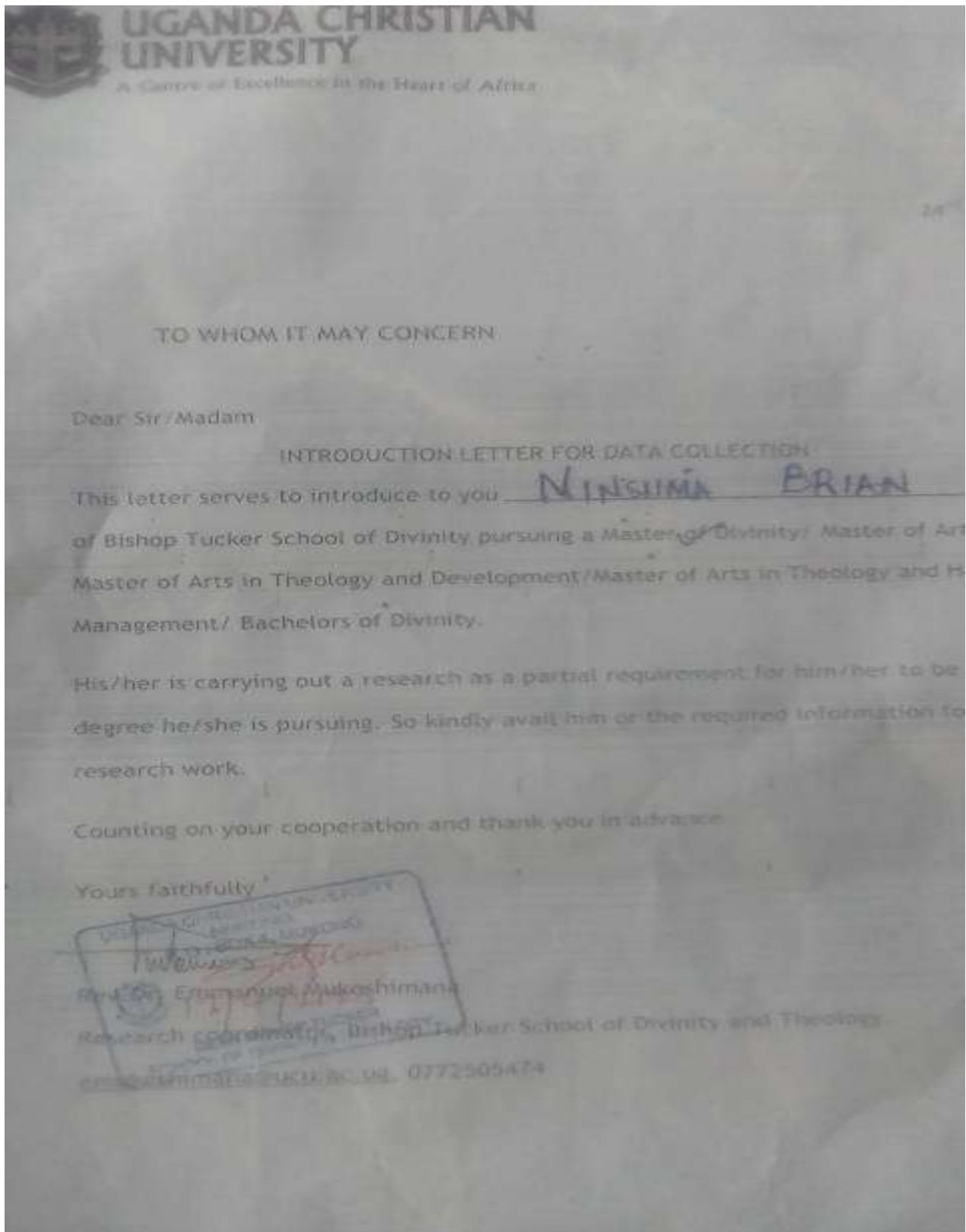
##### Section B: Rev. Buningwire’s contribution to the growth of Church

6. In your view, what were the key roles played by Rev. Yoweri Buningwire in the expansion of Christianity in Ankole Diocese?
7. Can you share specific programs, activities, or initiatives he led that contributed to the spread of the Gospel?
8. Were there any notable leadership styles or strategies he used in ministry that influenced growth?
9. How would you describe his relationship with fellow clergy, church elders, and the community?
10. In what ways has Rev. Buningwire’s ministry left a lasting impact on the Christian community in this diocese?

11. Are there any Christian institutions (schools, health centers, etc.) linked to his efforts?
12. Have any of his teachings or initiatives shaped the spiritual life or moral standards of Christians in Ankole?
13. What challenges or opposition did Rev. Buningwire face during his service?
14. How did he address or overcome these challenges?
15. How do you think these challenges shaped his legacy or approach to ministry?
16. What lessons can current and future church leaders learn from the life and ministry of Rev. Yoweri Buningwire?
17. Do you believe his legacy continues to influence the Diocese today? In what ways?

**Thank you for your time and insights.**

Appendix B: Introductory Letter



# Appendix C: TURNITIN REPORT



## Ninsiima Brian Dissertation

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