

Cultural Practices Associated With the Making of Men among the Samburu and Turkana Communities

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Abstract:

Background:

This article is drawn from a the larger study on cultural expressions of masculinities and its effects on the educational processes using the case study of Maralal Mixed Day Secondary School in Samburu County, Kenya.

Methods: The study from which the article is drawn utilized a comparative case study. It was conducted at Maralal Mixed Day Secondary School in Samburu Central constituency in Ikuruto Division. The respondents of the study were 12 Turkana boys, 30 Samburu boys and 36 girls, giving a total of 78 student respondents; 3 education officials and 11 teachers (both male and female and inclusive of the principal and deputy principal).

Results: There are various cultural practices associated with the making of men among the Samburu and Turkana communities. These include initiation processes, oath taking, teachings during circumcision, change of attire, allocation of new responsibilities; and joining age-groups and generational lines.

Conclusions: The study established that both Samburu and Turkana boys are initiated into manhood. Though the processes through which this is done share similarities, they differ in certain ways. Further, the study findings clearly illustrate that boys learn to be men from other men in their society and that the lessons taught are acquired not from the school curriculum but from the “societal curriculum”.

Key Word: Age-groups and generational lines, Circumcision, Initiation processes, Oath taking, Samburu and Turkana.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Indigenous societies have rituals and ceremonies that mark a young males' shift to adulthood. Keen (2010) writes that in the primordial societies, becoming an adult man was a conscious and communal occasion that aimed at fostering a new sense of self. The rites of passage entail a lot of physical trials projected to diminish the attachments to boyhood and foster a rebirth to a new identity. A global perspective on the cultural processes of making of men explains that males go through differing cultural practices in their socialization. The study by Listverse Staff (2009) explains how the boys of the Algonquin Indian Tribe of Quebec were initiated into adulthood. A regional investigation done in North Africa, notably in Ethiopia's Harmar tribe shows that boys go through various cultural processes to become men; while Spartan youth on the other hand go through a cruel rite of passage known as *krypteia* (Brett & McKay, 2010). They go on to add that the boys of the Sateremawe tribe of the Brazilian Amazon too are taken through a painful process to be considered stoic men and be able to endure life's pains.

In Africa, boys are not considered to be men till various cultural processes are done to ensure proper boy transition to adulthood. The initiation ceremonies at times involve painful circumcision and or body scarification (Wong, 2016). According to Khumalo (2009) the Xhosa, Rwandese and Zambian boys are graduated to men by circumcision. Nationally, cultural practices associated with the initiation of boys are evident among many communities in Kenya. Although the details of the rites may vary contingent with the

community, the Meru, Gusii, Samburu, and many other communities circumcise their boys to graduate them to manhood (Finke, 2000).

II. METHODS

This article is drawn from a the larger study on cultural expressions of masculinities and its effects on the educational processes using the case study of Maralal Mixed Day Secondary School in Samburu County, Kenya.

Study Design: The study from which the article is drawn utilized a comparative case study.

Study Location: The study was conducted at Maralal Mixed Day Secondary School in Samburu Central constituency, Ikuruto Division.

Study Duration: May 2017 to September 2019.

Sample size: The respondents of the study were 12 Turkana boys, 30 Samburu boys and 36 girls, giving a total of 78 student respondents; 3 education officials and 11 teachers (both male and female and inclusive of the principal and deputy principal).

Sample size calculation: The whole school population was 250 students. It is from this target population that a sample of 30% was drawn.

Procedure methodology

After the relevant permission was received, the researcher proceeded to collect the primary data using observation checklists in the classroom setting. Questionnaires and interview guides were also employed. Additionally, secondary data was collected from the schools and communities' documents, records and other resource materials.

Statistical analysis

Quantitative data was coded and analyzed using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. Quantitative data analysis used statistical methods such as simple descriptive statistics, frequencies, percentages, bar graphs and pie charts. Qualitative data on the other hand was presented through verbatim and narratives; and inquiry conducted using content analysis methodology. The data was categorized based on its nature, such as verbal and behavioural data.

III. RESULTS

Gender distribution of the respondents

The majority of the study participants were boys (54%); while girls were 36(46%). This resulted from the fact that the research embarked on studying the concept of masculinities; that would be best established by sampling a population that had majority of boys rather than girls in the selected school. However, girls were included in the study as it was important to highlight that school was a major part of the gender and socialization process and the disparities between the boys and girls could not be discussed without an inclusion of girls. Nabiki (2014) writes that gender and education go hand in hand since they determine the performance differences between boys and girls. The researcher was also keen on gender equitable representation of all participants; hence, an inclusion of a considerable percentage of the girls.

Cultural practices associated with the making of men among the Samburu and Turkana communities

There are various cultural practices associated with the making of men among the Samburu and Turkana communities. These include initiation processes, oath taking, teachings during circumcision, change of attire, allocation of new responsibilities; and joining age-groups and generational lines.

Cultural initiation processes

Both Samburu and Turkana boys are initiated into manhood. As the study findings, the processes of initiation are different for the two communities.

The Samburu initiation processes

The researcher sought information on the initiation processes that the Samburu boys went through to become men. In establishing this, the study attempted to evaluate the concept of initiation as a process that marks the passage from childhood to adulthood through the use of questionnaires and interview schedules. The researcher inquired from students belonging to the Samburu community on the cultural processes they went through to become men. The findings are indicated in Figure 1. The results show that 98% of the selected Samburu boys in Maralal Mixed Day Secondary School went through an initiation rite called circumcision; that is given the name *Muratare e Layiok*. On the other hand, 2% of the selected Samburu respondents said that they had been circumcised. The circumcision ritual was subjected to boys who fell under the bracket of 14-15 years. The process gave the boys full membership status in the Samburu community. Through circumcision, the respondents attested to attaining the status of men and had the powers that the men in their community

possessed. The boys that were circumcised also said that they were given responsibilities and privileges such as marriage among others. These were termed as important stages in the making of Samburu men as one of the male respondents narrated.

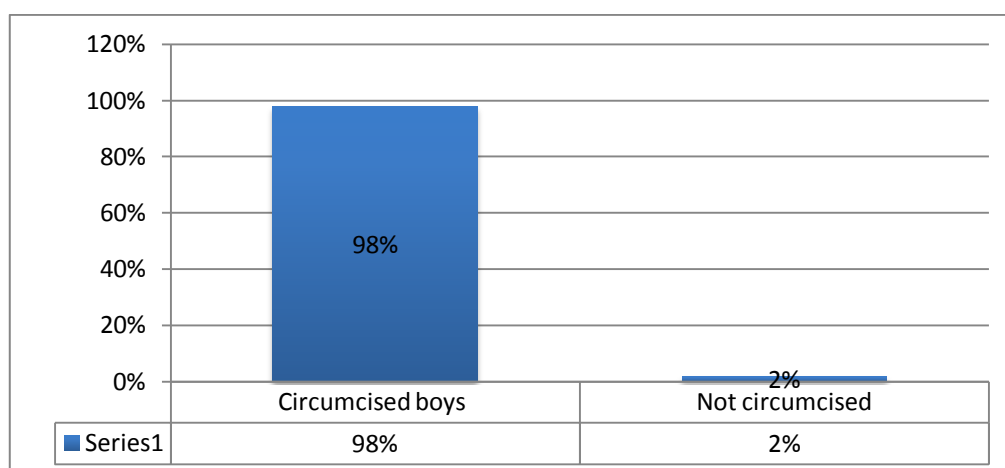


Figure 1: Samburu, Circumcised and Uncircumcised Boys

*“Circumcision made me a man. I am now given roles that men *do like engaging in sexual activities and getting married. I own cattle and can even go raiding. This was an important stage in my life.” (O.I: Leorso*, 21/10/2016).*

This finding is in line with Ogungbile’s (2015) study that established the process of initiation being considered essential in the transition into adulthood in African communities. Various communities had their own ways of making men and women such as the circumcision process. Essentially, parents wished that they would subject their children to these ritual processes so as to conform to the demands of the society. In this regard, the initiation into adulthood period is instrumental in shaping a person’s character. Sobania (2003) indicates that Kenyan communities embrace the culture of initiation such as circumcision of the boys as a ritual that marks the transition into adulthood. Through this process, the initiates are expected to conform to the behaviours they are taught, and even act as senior members of the society. The circumcision ritual among the Samburu, however, has many phases which shape masculinities. The first day of the circumcision, as the respondents narrated, began on the first night of the full moon with the initiate and other boys trekking overnight to fetch gum from a sacred tree in an enemies’ territory. This was meant to instill bravery into the novice that was expected of them after the circumcision rite as one of the male respondents acknowledged;

“Before we got circumcised, it was required of us to get gum from a sacred tree from our enemies’ land” (O.I: Leorso, 21/10/2016).*

The second day was marked by the return of the initiate and induction of the community’s customs and values which is done in seclusion. The third day involved blessing the house of the initiate. The initiate’s bed was also made in preparation of their return. On the same day, making sacramental sandals that the initiates would later wear was scheduled. Milk and water would later be obtained for the initiate’s seclusion period. Prior to the actual cutting ceremony on the fourth day, elderly men that are wrapped in blankets and carrying staffs stood some distance away from the initiate’s house. A group of young warriors who adorned traditional headdresses and their bodies decorated with war paints, stood at the side of the house singing songs similar to those sung in funerals. Some carried spears, arrows and others clubs. This ritual was meant to make the initiate brave even in the wake of such mockery from the older men (Magor, 1994). A sacramental cow skin was spread on the ground before the initiate’s door. As the warriors continued with their songs and chants, the teenage boy was brought out. Some warriors then made themselves fall on the ground as they screamed and shouted in pain. This ritual was staged to scare the boy who was to undergo the cut, however, the boy was not expected to succumb to the scares of the older men lest they were declared weak; hence, not fit to undergo the process. On the other hand, the women slowly moved out, as they were not required in the ceremony any more, while the men gathered outside the initiate’s door. The cow skin was blessed with milk and was laid on the ground. This act is emphasized by one of the female respondents from the Samburu community who indicates that women are not customarily allowed to witness the entire circumcision as their culture does not permit them. However, they are allowed to take part in some sections of it, like singing and dancing and preparing food for the ceremony.

“Women are not allowed to go witness the entire ceremony of circumcision of the boys. However, they take part in various ways like cooking for the initiates, singing and dancing to make the process lively” (O.I: Nashipai, 21/10/2016).*

This finding presents a clear understanding of the patriarchal structure of the Samburu community that places women at a lower status than men, by mostly according them mostly domestic roles and ones that do not elevate their statuses to that of the men. As part of the process of preparing the initiate for the cut, he was treated roughly and was not supposed to show any signs of fear or restlessness. This was meant to instill bravery, aggressiveness and strength in the initiate (Fratkin, 2011). He was forced and mocked severally to sing the circumcision song (*Lebarta*) that was meant to remind him not to bring dishonour (*nyilet*) to their family by fretting about the circumciser's knife. The initiate would then be stripped off the sheepskin he wore before and was laid on the ground with elders holding him. Some of the elders poured milk and water over his body. The circumciser who is usually adorned in tattered black coat, *lamuratani*, moves, squats between the boy's legs and cuts the foreskin in four slices. Despite the pain, the boys were not expected to cry or show any signs of pain, for fear of being called cowards or even be compared to a woman. It is also important to note that in the Samburu community, showing signs of cowardice were considered feminine (Fratkin, 2011; Spencer, 2013). In less than a minute, the boy is circumcised. After the operation, the novice was expected to drink blood from a white cow which was selected by the *Morans* who were standing outside the compound. This marked the last day of the operation that lasted four days. After the ceremony, the novice was blessed by elders and painted with ochre. His legs were tied with strips of lion skin. This was a way of teaching the novice to be courageous and brave just like the lion, as well as face challenges in their lives with a strong heart. One of the participants observed that;

"After circumcision, we drank blood as a sign of covenant with our community. Our elders blessed us and gave us the mandate to engage in activities of the men." (O.1: Lechipan*, 21/10/2016).

The novice's parents' house would then be adorned with cedar and olive branches, which signified that the novice was brave and courageous during the ceremony. Later in the day, warriors and women in their traditional costumes joined in the celebration with singing and dancing. In the meantime, the initiate was taken into a hut that they had built before the circumcision. This hut would facilitate the seclusion period. Whilst in seclusion they were taught how to become *Morans* and were expected to take part in various ceremonies after the circumcision. Among the ceremonies include the *Ilmugut* of the arrows where the novices are expected to build a large settlement and slaughter an ox/ goat and enter into a bond with the moral values of initiates like not eating meat seen by married women (*menong*) as observed by Spencer's (2013) study.

It can be deduced from the outcomes of this study that women are not as respected as their male counterparts since they do not command respect. This is supported by Spencer's (2013) findings signifying that in the Samburu community, the initiated men had to act like their fathers and avoided being around women that were seemingly not of their caliber; creating a gap between them so as to command respect from them. This contrasts with the societal acceptance to respect elders; irrespective of their gender. However, such rituals transit boys to moranhood. Moreover, this ritual was meant to make the *Moran* act like an adult, be responsible and avoid associating themselves with children. It is also prohibited for the Moran to drink milk; but in the company of his age mates. The novice makes this vow to his mother. After these vows the novice is allowed to wear red ochre on his head and his body is decorated. After the ceremony, the boys were expected to be independent and were taught to keep the initiation rituals a secret especially from the women.

The study established that circumcision is a key ritual that marks the transition of Samburu boys from childhood to adulthood. The finding agrees with Maitland (2011) who describes circumcision as the removal of the foreskin; and a painful process that involves bleeding as a sign of covenant between the initiates and their community. The respondents also intimated that circumcision is an important part of a community's culture since they were circumcised according to their culture's demands. Favazza's (1996) study is also in line with this study as it focuses on the process of circumcision among the Samburu community and how a lot importance is attached to the practice. Most importantly, besides the removal of the foreskin, the circumcision process created various forms of masculinity expressions on the initiates such as bravery, aggressiveness, responsibility and respect amongst others.

The Turkana initiation Processes

The study also sought to find out the initiation processes that the Turkana undergo as a passage from childhood to adulthood. The results are presented in the following Figure 2.

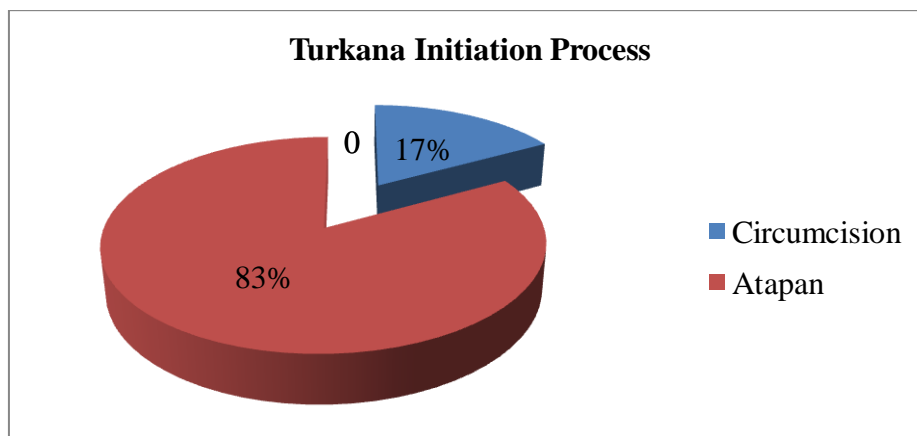


Figure 2: Initiation Process (Atapan Ceremony) Vs. Circumcision among the Turkana

From Figure 2, 83% of the selected respondents from the Turkana community said that they did not go through circumcision to become men while 17% indicated they had been circumcised. The boys instead noted that they went through an initiation process that does not involve the removal of the foreskin like their Samburu counterparts. The initiation ceremony was given the name the *Atapan* ceremony. Among the Turkana respondents that attested not to have been circumcised, three respondents said,

“... I don't know the cut that is carried out by others..., not us, Turkanas” (O.I: Ewoi*, 21/10/2016).

“...Circumcision is betraying my culture; the Samburu, Maasai, Somali and Pokot circumcise to look modern...” (O.I: Lomenenen*, 21/10/2016).

“...Circumcision is foreign; it was not here before. Besides I fear mockery if I get circumcised, especially when we visit common places like the rivers, while bathing...” (O.I: Akuja*, 21/10/2016).

The respondents indicated that circumcision was termed as a foreign practice and would lead to them betraying their culture and attract ridicule from community members. The Turkana pointed out that they went through a brief process of initiation known as *Atapan* ceremony. The respondents explained that the boys that were set to undergo the *Atapan* ceremony are special ones; to mean those whose fathers had paid their mothers' full dowry. The father of the initiate is obliged to kill a bull (*emong'*) for his wife before the ceremony begins. When all these rituals are completed successfully, the initiate is permitted to go through the ceremony. Before the ceremony, the initiate is considered a small boy who cannot wear the blue mud cap that is worn by men. He can also not carry the famous *ekicholong'* which is the Turkana hand- held seat and spear. Moreover, the initiate cannot take part in activities that are done by men like raiding other communities, let alone getting married. One of the respondents said,

“...Before the *Atapan* ceremony, one cannot take part in activities done by men like raiding and getting married...” (O.I: Ng'asike*, 21/10/2016).

The rituals associated with *Atapan* ceremony are however instrumental in the making of men among the Turkana. Upon maturity, the boy's father informs the elders; who then determine where and when the initiation will take place. A godfather is then drawn from the elders and takes the role of the initiate's father to guide him throughout the process. The father must provide an ox, gifts like beads, spear and a cow skin that acts as a blanket for the ceremony. The initiate is also given a chain of coloured stones to wear on his neck, a knife and leather sandals, *ng'amuk*. A Turkana respondent noted;

“...When we get to the age of initiation, our fathers inform the elders to start preparing for the whole session...” (O.I: Adinga*, 21/10/2016).

The women such as the initiate's mother and the wife of the godfather are given the role of preparing the food for the ceremony. One of the female Turkana respondents said they normally prepare food for the initiates, dance and make the ceremony colourful. She said,

“...During the initiation ceremony, we sing, dance and prepare enough food for the initiates and all the men involved in the ceremony...” (O.I: Amanikor *, 21/10/2016).

The quote indicates that men and women play varying roles during the *Atapan* ceremony. These are aligned to the gender role plan of the community as Omolo (2010) explains especially with regards to making crucial decisions in the society where the women are side-lined completely. On the day of the ceremony, the elders gather round the men's tree (*ekitoeang'ikiliok*) and the women are again not welcome in this session. The godfathers and the elders sit in a different place from the men's tree but later move towards them singing and dancing war songs. This is meant to motivate the initiate to be brave and prepare him for his new life after initiation. Keen on their domestic roles, the mothers bring oil and milk, but keep their distance. The elders continue with their chat as they sniff tobacco while the younger men cut branches that would be used as a table

for roasting meat as well as gather firewood for roasting the meat. The first born son of the eldest elder takes his spear, kills the bull and a young boy collects the blood in a container to be taken later. The initiate is smeared with meat and blood by the elders and the godfather; at the same time, the elders bless him and wish him a long life in his endeavours. The meat is then roasted, the eldest elder tastes it and gives some to the initiate who receives it, chews it and spits to their chest as a way of receiving blessing and wishing themselves well. The remaining bones are then crashed by the initiate using stones like their mothers did, to mark the end of their childhood and the onset of a new life. From then on, they are considered adults. They are given the spears and they lift them up to show the onlookers, to signify that they have become warriors. After the ceremony, they leave their father's home and head to their godfather's place. On their way, the initiate is ordered to break a green branch, a symbolic act that shows the beginning of a new life after the initiation ceremony. He stays with the godfather and is expected to act like a child who knows not his surroundings. He should ask names for everything around him (Finke, 2000, 2003). This act signifies that he has now become a new person. The following morning, he is stripped naked, an act that is expected to make the initiate brave and bold. After the stripping, the person he was in the previous years is considered non-existent and should never be mentioned. In the meantime, there is a rush to get everything that the boy owned before initiation. Thereafter, he is given new items indicative of the new status. In view of this, one respondent noted;

"...After the initiation ceremony, we acquire new dressings; we wear blue mud caps, we get a new pair of sandals, a blanket, a spear, a staff and a stool ..." (O.I: Josh*, 21/10/2016).

This new form of dressing and items makes the man demonstrate and show his new status. The mud cup signifies that the young man has become an elder, a blanket to shield him from cold, a spear to show his ability to defend the community, a staff and stool to symbolize that he has become a respected elder. Thereafter, he is expected to express masculine attributes such as responsibility and protectiveness. At the end, the godfather takes the young man to his paternal home, bringing along goats which are the only property he owns. The boy's mother who welcomes his "new" son home by sprinkling him with water mixed with milk; thus, making him 'acceptable' in his native home. He brings the newly acquired goats and mixes them with his father's. A ceremony is performed in the mother's hut and a he-goat is slaughtered in his honour. The god father leaves after the ceremony and his departure marks the end of the initiate's link with his paternal home. He can now start his own family and own animals at will. A respondent noted that;

"...after the initiation ceremony, we become adults, we can leave our homes and start our own families and a new life altogether..." (O.I: Lukas*, 21/10/2016).

This initiation ceremony elevates the status of the "new" man, gives him power to dominate other boys who have not gone through the ritual, and even gives him a greater space in the society. These narrations of the *Atapan* ceremony concur with the thoughts of Fitzpatrick, Bewer and Firestone (2009) who opine that boys in the Turkana community go through an initiation process that does not involve circumcision that is; removal of the foreskin from the boy's penis. Finke (2000-2003) also writes that by virtue of the Turkana not practising circumcision, they consider themselves superior to their neighbours, among them the Samburu. The author further notes that their neighbours continually despise the Turkana as they have continued to shun the practice of circumcision, which they term as inescapable. Two of the selected Turkana boys indicated that they underwent circumcision. This however goes against the Turkana beliefs and practices of making of men and they elicit negative emotions from novices. In view of this, one of the respondents said;

"I was circumcised though I feel bad for betraying my culture and what my parents taught me... I wanted to be like those of other tribes and minimize mockery..." (O.I: Nakulei*, 21/10/2016).

Another respondent emphasized that;

"There is no circumcision in Turkana community but note that some young boys have started embracing this culture due to modernization." (O.I: Ewoi*, 21/10/2016).

This implies some Turkana boys undergo male circumcision. On inquiring further, it was noted that most of the boys that go through circumcision are the ones that have migrated from their ancestral homes and embraced modernization like schooling and even appreciate the role of health officers in safe circumcision. This however, may not be regarded as a rite of passage. In this regard, Springwood (2007) argues that factors like modernization have seen many people abandon their wayward forms of culture such as not circumcising the young male adults. With modernization, many people have been made conversant with the benefits and advantages of circumcision; hence, raising the number of circumcised boys in such communities. Other factors like health concerns come into play as far as Turkana circumcision is concerned. Many boys in the pastoral communities such as the Turkana are slowly getting educated with issues of HIV/AIDS caused by lack of circumcision; hence, have adopted the practice (World Health Organization, 2009). With time, it is expected that the numbers of circumcised Turkana boys will rise exponentially, thanks to education and massive campaigns on the need for male circumcision to such communities.

From the foregoing, it is noted that the Turkana boys who undergo the *Atapan* rite of passage are expected to display masculine attributes. These include: arrogance, bravery and aggressiveness especially to

other communities that view them as uncircumcised and forcefulness after they are given the mandate to carry spears.

Oath taking

The study sought to find out if oath taking during circumcision/ initiation was part of the respondents' becoming men. The researcher found out that both Samburu and Turkana boys undergo oath taking as a means toward manhood.

Oath taking among Samburu boys

The study results indicated that 89% of the respondents in the Samburu community took oaths during the circumcision process. Another 11% indicated that they did not take any oaths during and after circumcision. Based on the findings, this was an indication that the Samburu boys were aware of the importance of oath taking during the circumcision process. Three of the respondents noted that;

"Yes. I took an oath after I was circumcised... I was not to reveal my community's secrets to our enemies." (O.1: Letiwa*,21/10/2016).

"Yes, I was forced to take an oath by my elders especially after I successfully went through the initiation process, those who feared the process did not take the oath." (O.1: Pukose*, 21/10/2016).

"Yes, it was a colourful ceremony that was full of dancing and celebration after having acquired new statuses. I became a warrior, and was told that my role would be to defend my community at all times especially in times of crisis..." (O.1: Lesiamato*, 21/10/2016).

The responses clarify that the oaths taken include not revealing the community's secrets, vows to be loyal to their community and to protect the community whenever need arose. From a masculinity' interpretation perspective, it was expected that the novices would display the attributes of aggressiveness that would allow them to protect their community after circumcision. This can be discussed using the dominance aspect of the Connell's theory of masculinity. They were also expected to be loyal to their community as well as respect their elders. These study findings relate with Ferraro and Andreatta's(2017) research indicating that oath taking during the Samburu community circumcision process serves the purpose of joining the initiates with their community, by encouraging them not to reveal the secrets of the community handed down by the community elders.

Oath taking among the Turkana boys

The researcher sought to find out if the Turkana respondents took an oath in the course of their initiation. The study results revealed that two of the selected respondents (16.7%) indicated to have taken an oath during the initiation ceremony. Another 83.3% said that they did not take an oath during/after the initiation process. The two respondents, who alluded to taking an oath, indicated that despite having not gone through circumcision like their Samburu counterparts, they took an oath after the *Atapan* ceremony, as an indicator of their transition into adulthood. Nanok (not his real name) explained that,

"Yes. I took an oath to show that I had now become a man, and would be given privileges like marrying. I swore not to let out the secrets of my community to others and defend our people like real men did..." (O.1: Nanok*, 21/10/2016).

One of the respondents said;

"I did not take any oaths after the Atapan ceremony..." (O.1: Jonah*, 21/10/2016).

The narratives above indicate that while some of the Turkana youth who had undergone the *Atapan* took oaths, others did not. This implies that not much emphasis was put on taking oaths after the *Atapan* ceremony. Those who did so emphasize their new role as men after initiation. During oath taking, they swore not to tell the secrets of their community and to defend their community at all costs. These findings are in line with the views of Likaka and Muia (2015) who expound on the role of culture among the pastoral communities. The authors note that oath taking is one of the rituals the new warriors/initiates have to go through before becoming men. The authors further explain that oaths are administered by elders after which the initiates are blessed. It is also important to note that the oaths taken enforce the masculinities constructed; hence, expressions of the same in different settings such as the school, church and in the society in general after the different initiation processes.

Teachings during circumcision/initiation

The study sought to establish the teachings that the Samburu respondents received in the course of circumcision. The Table 1 below shows the findings.

Table 1: Teachings during Initiation Process of Samburu Boys

Teachings during circumcision/initiation process for Samburu	Frequency	%
Teachings on a man's roles in the community	22	73%
Teachings on the values, belief's and cultural practices of your community	30	100%
Teachings on the respect for authority especially respect for elders regardless of your gender	29	97%
Teaching on responsibility and appreciating the elders in the society	27	90%

The findings imply that the Samburu boys went through various teachings and were equipped with knowledge on their responsibilities during and after circumcision. In relation to this, one of the respondents indicated that,

"...during circumcision, we are taught about our expected roles and responsibilities like defending the community from attacks, since we have become Morans." (O.1: Lenokula *, 21/10/2016).

Another one noted that,

"...I was taught about the values, beliefs and practices of the community..." (O.1: Lekidayo *, 21/10/2016).

Others from the community said;

"...I was taught how to respect authority especially elders, regardless of their gender..." (O.1: Kasaine *, 21/10/2016).

"I was educated on how to be responsible and helpful whenever, required of me..." (O.1: Leshore *, 21/10/2016).

"I was taught the art of selflessness, even when resources are limited, we were taught to share..." (O.1: Saimanga*, 21/10/2016).

These quotes explain that the Samburu were taught different values that were considered important in their community. These teachings were imparted verbally and through the use of songs. A good example is that of the Samburu initiates who sang the *Lebarta* song during the circumcision process. Through the song, they were taught different values such as bravery and perseverance which they expressed after the initiation process. The respondents (Lesirma&Lelelit) respectively (not their real names) quoted the following excerpts of the *Lebarta* song that they recited during circumcision.

"...*Surualaiimpurronieki! Na mapikNyileti*" (I will not bring you dishonour) (O.1:Lesima*, 21/10/2016).

"...*Eipurromalenglaingok pee limulaiyeniokwet...*" (O.1:Lelelit*, 21/10/2016).

(The bulls rumbled loudly to disown the boy who shied away and I will not bring our cattle dishonour)

Information from the excerpts of the song, indicate that expressions of bravery, vigour and strength are recited by the Samburu boys and these are expected to be expressed in different contexts after the circumcision process such as in school. These findings are in line with the work of Spencer (2013) who explains that, as the Samburu initiates are being circumcised, they are supposed to sing the *Lebarta* song and not show any sign of pain even when the circumcision process takes so long (Spencer, 2013).

The study sought to establish the teachings that the Turkana respondents were taught in the course of initiation.

The Table 2 shows the findings.

Table 2: Teachings during Initiation into Adulthood

Teachings during circumcision/initiation process	Frequency	%
Teachings on your roles in the community	11	91.67%
Teachings on the values, belief's and cultural practices of your community	11	91.67%
Teachings on the respect for authority especially respect for elders regardless of their gender	5	41.67%
Teaching on responsibility and appreciating the elders in the society	6	50%

The respondents from the Turkana community attested to having gone through various teachings during initiation. 91.67% indicated that they were taught their roles in the community. Some of these roles include defending their community, taking part in development, providing care and protection to their families amongst others. An addition, 91.67% were educated on values, beliefs and cultural practices of their community. Another 41.67% attested to having been taught on the respect for authority especially respect for elders regardless of their gender. A 50% said they were taught how to be responsible and appreciate the elders in the society.

These responses underlie the fact that during initiation, boys are given various teachings that are meant to assist them in adulthood as affirmed by Likaka and Muia's (2015) work. The initiate is taught to stand with the community whenever there is a conflict, making the initiate not recognize the need for reconciliation especially in cases of conflicts. The ability of the teachings to inculcate values of the community, however, cannot be ignored.

Change of attire

The study sought to find out if after initiation, the initiates dressed differently. From the responses, the study established that the kind of attire changed after the initiates transitioned into adulthood. Major changes in dressing among the Samburu initiates include traditional headdresses, painting of heads and bodies with red ochre; paired with carrying of spears. One of the Samburu respondents informed the researcher that;

"...circumcision makes a man, a man, and since I became a warrior, my dressing also changed. I painted my head, body with red ochre and carried a spear...(O.I: Lesima, 21/10/2016).*

As indicated earlier in the process of making men in the Samburu community, it was noted that the Samburu had their attire changed after the four days of the circumcision process. Through this system, the masculinities created and expressed by the Samburu boys can be drawn from the new dressings that the initiates acquire. By virtue of carrying a spear, the boys felt that they domineered over others, and took it as their responsibility to defend and protect their community at all times. These findings can relate to Connell's theory of masculinity that helps understand the hierarchies of masculinities. From the theory, it is arguable that the status of males changes within different social and cultural settings. For the case of the Samburu men, circumcision elevates their status from boyhood to manhood. In addition, the circumcision does not only come with removal of foreskin, but also with adornment of new dressing. This then reinforces the masculine attributes of bravery and superiority after the circumcision ritual. The study established that the Turkana initiates too adorned differently and that the attire held certain significance. Asked on the change of attire after the *Atapan* initiation ceremony, the respondents indicated that after the process they adorned differently since they had become men. One of the respondents informed;

"...after the Atapan ceremony, we wear blue ochre mud hats placed on our heads. We also carry spears ..." (O.I: Ewesit*, 21/10/2016).

These sentiments can be backed up by the description of the cultural processes of the making of Turkana men. After the ceremony, the initiates adorn the blue ochre mud hats. This is one of the major changes that the initiates acquire after the ceremony. They are also allowed to carry spears unlike wooden sticks they carried prior to the initiation ceremony. These findings are in agreement with the thoughts of Springwood (2007) who accounts for the transition of Turkana boys before and after the initiation process. The author argues that after initiation, the Turkana boys remove the red, yellow or purple mud caps and wear blue ochre mud ones that are officially worn by the men elders of the community. The blue mud caps signify that the novice has become an elder; hence, the ability to defend his community. The sentiments expressed by the Turkana respondents expose the centrality of culture in the shaping of masculinities and manhood. Connell's (2005) theory of masculinity helps understand how the initiation process makes the Turkana men present hegemonic masculinity. In addition, it is evident that the Kenyan constitution recognizes culture as the foundation and cumulative civilization of the Kenyan people and Nation (Kenyan constitution, 2010). Unfortunately, such men live under the constraints of their culture and at times even fail to enjoy what the society provides especially if it does not fit the masculine attributes of their society (Likaka and Muia, 2015).

Allocation of new responsibilities to initiates

The study assessed the allocation of new responsibilities after the circumcision/initiation process. The findings are presented in the Table 3.

Table 3: Allocation of New Responsibilities to the Samburu Initiates after Circumcision

Responsibility	Frequency	Percentage
Joining other men in high risk adventures like cattle rustling	15	50%
Fighting cattle raiders	12	40%
Marriage	15	50%
Owning assets	3	10%

The multiple responses in the Table 3 are indicative that the majority of the Samburu respondents scored very low in responsibilities like owning assets like livestock (10%). Another 50% and 40% indicated that they took up responsibilities such as marriage and fighting cattle raiders respectively. Additionally, 50% indicated that they joined other men in high risk adventures like cattle rustling. This implies that circumcision is meant to prepare Samburu initiates for different roles in the society as aforementioned. The study findings are in line with the thoughts of Jónsson (2007) who indicates that transition of boys into adulthood whether through initiation (such as circumcision) comes with many responsibilities.

Table 4: Allocation of New Responsibilities to Turkana Initiates after Initiation

Responsibility	Frequency	%
Joining other men on high risk adventures like cattle rustling	11	91.67
Fighting cattle raiders	10	83.3
Marriage	6	50%
Owning assets	11	91.67

The allocation of new responsibilities to Turkana initiates is depicted on Table 4. The findings indicated that majority of the Turkana respondents scored very highly in responsibilities like having assets like livestock, joining other men on high risk adventures like cattle rustling and fighting cattle raiders at 91.67%, 83.3% and 91.67% respectively. Privileges such as marriage scored 50%. These findings show that initiation of boys into adulthood leads to acquisition of high statuses as well as allocation of new responsibilities. The “new” men must live up to the societal expectations as they have to take up the new roles allocated to them as per their culture. In the society, therefore, it is expected that the men will automatically assume duties in the public sphere like owning property and leadership amongst others.

Joining age-groups and generational lines

The study looked at age-sets and generational lines as a key process of becoming a man in the Samburu communities. Asked about the existence of age groups in the Samburu community, the respondents indicated that they belonged to age groups that include; *Likiashami*, *Lmooli*, *Lkiroro*, *Lkishiili* and *Lkimamaki*. The findings are further presented and discussed in the subsequent sections. From the findings in Table 5, 90% of the Samburu respondents reported to have social structures that were based on generational lines and age groups. They indicated that they have five age groups, which determine the status an individual is assigned in the community. They said (13.33%) that they belonged to *Likiashami* when they were young children, *Lmooli* (46.67%) when they were initiated and *Lkiroro* (30%) after they were initiated. They further explained that they hoped to join the *Lkishiili* (40%) and *Lkimamaki* (30%) in future, age groups that included the junior and senior elders. These sentiments were affirmed by one of the respondents, who noted, “...after circumcision we joined the warrior group as we had become Moran. (O.1:Lesima*, 21/10/2016).

Table 5: Age-Groups of the Samburu

AGE-GROUP	COMPOSITION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
<i>Likiashami</i>	Young childhood	4	13.33%
<i>Lmooli</i>	Warriors/new youth	14	46.67%
<i>Lkiroro</i>	Former warriors	9	30%
<i>Lkishiili</i>	Young elders	12	40%
<i>Lkimamaki</i>	Elders	9	30%

These findings are in line with Wolcott (2003) who writes on the existence of the pre-mentioned age groups in African communities and even gives roles on the different levels of the individuals in each age set. This stratification into age groups was created in a bid to mobilize the men into identity groups and to govern their lives in all spheres. This form of stratification contributed to the construction and reinforcement of masculinities since it is in these age groups that the men in the different groups were socialized and learned how they were expected to behave. The men in the older groups were perceived to be superior and are the ones that took senior positions in the society as they had become full elders. The boys in the warrior group and the former then hoped to successfully meet the demands of their groups through displaying masculine attributes such as bravery, aggressiveness, loyalty and even hard work for them to transit to the next group. Membership in the

Samburu community is, therefore, entrenched in these age sets that enforce masculinities created after the initiation process. The men who have been initiated into adulthood would now foster leadership, exercise authority and others given the role of protecting the society. It is also important to highlight that the names of these age groups were selected by prophets in conjunction with the male elders (Spencer, 2013). The transition from one stage of the age group to another is imperative to the Samburu youth. From the childhood level to the subsequent stages, the rite of circumcision was the key determinant at the initial phase to the transition from one stage of power and authority.

On the other hand, the study looked at age-sets and generational lines as socialization agents of becoming men in the Turkana community. The findings established that majority (91.6%) of the Turkana community initiates do not have rigid age groups but focus on totemic alternations (*moieties*). In this regard, Wolcott (2003) explains that the Turkana are not focused on their age sets and age groups and confirms that they focus on 'moieties'. These 'moieties' are said to be different from those of their fathers. Of essence, these moieties are non-unilineal and non-exogamous but are based on boys' rivalry groups. The Turkana boys then seek to be in winning moieties; hence, expressions of superiority, dominance and rivalry among others. One of the boys stated;

"... After initiation, we seek to be in groups that win in community raids, so as we can be linked to prowess and success..." (O.1: Yepaini, 21/10/2016).*

IV. DISCUSSION

The study findings of the Samburu and Turkana initiation ceremonies established that the two go through differing rite of passage to manhood processes. While the Samburu boys go through the actual process of circumcision, the Turkana boys go through the *Atapan* initiation ceremony. Despite the initiation ceremonies being different in their unique ways, the bottom line remains that each community initiates their boys into adulthood. Those who go through these rituals become men with specific attributes, characteristics and responsibilities. For the case of the Turkana, being a man builds an attitude that makes one perceive himself as physically superior to other men and women. One of the Turkana boys indicated;

"...it is important for a Turkana man to be seen as strong and brave for them to be seen as superior to other men..." (O.1: Narumbe, 21/10/2016).*

In addition, the Turkana expressed attributes of aggressiveness and always thought of conflict and fighting as a way of showing their prowess. This is backed up by the assertion of Turkana boys that they had no problem with high risk adventures like raiding. Moreover, the Turkana presented the attributes of being hard, tough and manly and remain as the dominant power who can engage in conflict generally. As the aforementioned verbatim stated, being a man must involve power, strength and be ready for war. This emphasizes the domineering nature of the Turkana novices. The Turkana men also presented physical strength which they indicated differentiated them from the women. This physical strength makes them be able to go to war and fight battles.

On the other hand, their Samburu counterparts presented masculine attributes of strength where they were expected to take charge of situations in their community. For instance, they were expected to be warriors after initiation, a status that expects them to take charge of their community especially in the event of an attack. This meant that they ought to be willing to die for their community in the course of defence. The Samburu novices were also expected to present the masculine attribute of power through being the dominant figure. They ought to be the provider, a breadwinner who would provide and care for the women in the case of marriage and family. Samburu masculinity was also exemplified by being at peace with themselves and having the feeling that they were expected to protect people that were close to them. Feeling that they successfully protected such people made them feel at peace and heroes in their own ways. In addition, the Samburu expressed the masculine characteristic of strength through being able to protect and care for a family or who they were given authority over, being a mere patriarchal figure. Some of the boys also presented attributed of mental dominance in relation to their female counterparts. This meant that they could do better in many activities that required intellect than their female counterparts.

For the Turkana boys, masculinity is based on a stereotypical, hegemonic view that visualizes man as (1) the provider, (2) aggressive, (3) domineering through physical strength and force. It is arguable that this understanding of masculinity is an out-dated conceptualization of masculinity. However, the Turkana boys seem to embrace the same understanding that a typical man must be aggressive and dominate over others. Conflict, for them, is indeed an unavoidable part of the domination process. Based on Connell's theory of masculinity, this can be defined as hegemonic masculinity that is formed through legitimacy of patriarchy. The Turkana boys are likely to claim their authoritative status through institutionalized power that exists in the society. For instance, the men have natural physical strength to act over a woman (Connell, 2005). On the other hand, the Samburu visualize masculinity as having strength. This form of strength can be exemplified in taking part in physical acts not necessarily the ones that can lead to physical confrontations that assert their dominance, but

ones that make them brave and willing to protect other members of the society. These boys present attributes of being the provider that ensures those closest to them never lack a thing. This can also be discussed under Connell's hegemonic masculinity that defines a man's status through their ability to successfully achieve the social demands.

The discussion also shows that men's lives hinged a lot on their societal dictates and expectations. The study observed that even when the new initiates would wish to alienate themselves from the cultural constraints, they are left with no option but to follow the society's demands of culture through the new responsibilities assigned to them. This is in indeed debauched, since it minimizes the chances of the boys to think independently. Nonetheless, the boys also benefit from the new responsibilities, as they are socialized to be responsible, an aspect that is fundamental in life. The study, therefore, underlies that the circumcision of the Samburu boys is a ritualized process that comes with new responsibilities due to the new statuses of the initiates. Connell (2005) indicates that masculinity is then a gendered phenomenon that defines how a man comes to be defined. With the new acquired responsibilities, Connell's (2005) theory explains that the men then acquire a privileged category within the patriarchal system in the society. Since circumcision is a symbolic ritual that suggests that boys have successfully gone through cultural socialization into manhood, it is expected that they will begin new lives with new status and responsibilities. It is, however, important to highlight that the gendered implication of circumcision initiation has also been challenged since the women are slowly entering into "spaces" that were previously dominated by men. This study explored the circumcised Samburu boys in a classroom setting to establish how the initiated boys behaved towards female teachers in the classroom. Culture is, however, not static but dynamic and changing especially with the contact and interactions with different cultures as well as technological trends (Connell, 2005).

V. CONCLUSION

The study findings present evidence to the effect that both Samburu and Turkana boys are initiated into manhood. Though the processes through which this is done share similarities, they differ in certain ways. Further, the study findings clearly illustrate that men learn to be men from other men in their society. The lessons taught are acquired not from the school curriculum but from the "societal curriculum". This makes the boys define masculinity in relation to other men in their realm like their fathers, elder brothers, uncles and elders. This then clearly depicts that the boys were conversant with masculine power being enforced on them through relations with other men. Moreover, the findings, therefore, validate Connell's (2005) theory of masculinity which explains that men portray what their culture has imparted to them. Therefore, when the Turkana and Samburu boys go through the process of becoming men, they transform into new beings (men), hence their participation in the educational processes also change.

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