

# Rites of passage essay

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



A rite of passage is a ritual event meant to mark a transition stage from one's given status to another (Rabin 65). For example, these stages in life can be; coming of age, marriage and puberty. Specifically, our culture practices include circumcision as a transition stage of moving from childhood to an adult. It is unique because it is only done to boys. Girls are exempted since it might cause bad diseases in their private parts. In this process, one is tested of courage, fearlessness since the whole process takes place in the broad day light under the watch of the elders.

When boys attain the fifteenth year of their life, they inform their parents that they want to get circumcised. After their parents' consent, they are given hens to take to black smith in order to make a bell for them. One then moves around dancing while inviting relatives and friends to the occasion after the circumcision date has been set. Two days to the circumcision day, one makes an oath to his father that he must get circumcised come what may. On the eve of the circumcision day, the person to be circumcised is sent to his uncle's place. Here a bull is slaughtered and one is given pieces of meat to take back home. The individual is not allowed to stop anywhere even if it is raining till you reach home. At the separation stage, the boys are taken to the river side and their body is smeared with mud. At times, they are taken to their father's or grandfather's grave as sign of giving respect for the dead (Rabin 165). After blood smearing, some special grass is put on one's head as a symbol of being connected with the ancestors and also that he is ready to face the knife.

One is made to stand in a special place called *etiàng`i* as the circumciser cuts the foreskin. The person performing the operation should not recognize

the presence of the crowd lest he cut himself during the process. After the circumcision, the process of incorporation takes place. This process involves teaching the initiates and informing them of their responsibilities in the society (Rabin 85). The circumcision stage marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. During the ceremony, one is blessed to grow rich and generous (Rabin 95). To me and my age mates whom we underwent with this process together, it was somehow fun and at the same time painful. We were elated since we became adults entitled with roles of providing security to the society.

In conclusion, the main aim of the whole process is to make the initiates aware of the process and prepare them mentally. Some of the initiates end up refusing if they are not prepared well because of the pain involved in it. After the process, the rules given are aimed at molding the youth as well as make them morally upright to lead a good lifestyle (Rabin 24). Participants see this process as extremely important since it is the only way of being recognized as an adult. Additionally, it gives one a chance to marry and take care of the wife and children in an organized manner.

## **Works Cited**

Rabin, R. Benefits of Circumcision Are Said to Outweigh Risks. New York: New York Times. 2012. Print.