

**DIDACTICS OF ORALITY AND ITS STYLE IN ALTERNATIVE RITES OF  
PASSAGE AMONG THE ISEMBE PEOPLE OF MERU, KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Literature of  
Chuka University**

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## DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Declaration

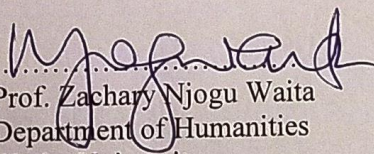
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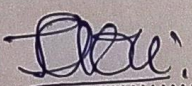
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### Recommendation

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to: my parents, Daniel M’Imirongo Kabuchia and Lucy Kalai, my husband Robert Mwenda Mujuri and lovely children Jotham Muriithi Mwenda, Yusuf Mutharimi Mwenda, and Emma Mukami Mwenda. The study is also dedicated to my siblings: Salome Ncororo M’Imirongo, Rachel Muthoni M’Imirongo, George Miriti M’Imirongo, David Thuraira M’Imirongo, Samuel Mwenda M’Imirongo, and Purity Karambu M’Imirongo.

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## ABSTRACT

This study set out to find out the relevance of the messages and styles in oral songs, narratives, and proverbs incorporated in Alternative Rites of Passage (ARP) ceremonies as a tool for communication among the Igembe people. Proverbs are identified for analysis because of their brevity, cautionary, summative nature, memorability, and ability to address diverse issues in different contexts. On the other hand, the transient and resilient aspects of oral narratives allow them to respond to emerging realities in the society. The flexibility and spontaneity of oral songs allow them to address diverse issues in the contemporary issues in the community. The study is guided by two objectives: to discuss the didacticism of messages in oral songs, proverbs, and narratives; and to analyse styles used in the genres. This research is based on the functionalist theory and is used to analyse oral genres of literature by looking at the functions they perform in the life of the society. The field research was done to collect raw data which was augmented with data collected from the library. The data was collected from the seclusion sites for girls and graduation ceremonies for the initiated girls and boys using participant observation method and video recording. There were 17 proverbs, 15 oral narratives, and 25 oral songs identified for this analysis. The instruments used were a video camera, pens, and books. Analysis of data collected establishes that despite the changes that have taken place in the society, Igembe people have significantly incorporated use of traditional oral art forms as a tool for communication in ARP ceremonies in the literate society just as they did in the preliterate society. Chapter four discusses transformative role of oral literature in ARP ceremonies. It also highlights virtues inculcated and vices castigated. The virtues include being: hardworking, forgiving, patient, contented, tolerant, prudent, obedient, empathetic, prayerful, focused, and God fearing among others. On the other hand, the main vices castigated are: thievery, abuse of drugs, sexual immorality, discontentment, laziness, greed, cruelty, naivety, selfishness, and indecent dressing. Finally, the traditions and beliefs of the Igembe people passed down to initiates are highlighted. They include: the social expectations and gender roles of men and women, knowledge about age groups, brotherhood ties, and traditional religious worship of the Igembe people. Chapter five establishes that the three genres use literary stylistic devices to enhance the delivery of the messages incorporated in them. The main styles used in the genres discussed are: mnemonics, parallelism, imagery, code-switching, repetition, symbolism, humour, euphemism, direct address, dialogue, elasticity, intertextuality, satire, ellipsis, direct address, personification, and hyperbole. Each of these stylistic modulations enhances the communication of varied messages to the initiates. Chapter six draws conclusions based on the study. First, the study affirms that use of oral genres and their styles is intrinsic and fluid in ARP ceremonies. Secondly, oral genres address issues affecting the initiates such as promoting good health practices, preservation of integrity and dignity of the youth, maintaining law and order by chastising vices, preservation of cultural values, practices, and beliefs of Igembe people. The study also demonstrates the dynamism of oral genres because they are innovatively and artistically composed and performed in order to address contemporary issues affecting initiates in an interesting and memorable way. Finally, the counsellors used to mentor initiates were of varied levels of education, professions, genders, and age. Oral literature is therefore seen in this study as a key to enhancing peace, gender, and economic empowerment of initiates with the central site being the ARP ceremonies.

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## **A LIST OF ACRONYMS / ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.
<b>ARP</b>	Alternative Rites of Passage.
<b>B.C</b>	Before Christ.
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on all Forms of Discrimination against Women.
<b>CHI</b>	Christian Hospital Initiation.
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child.
<b>DC</b>	District Commissioner.
<b>EAPC</b>	East African Pentost Church.
<b>ET AL</b>	Abbreviation for “et alia” which means “and others.”
<b>ETC</b>	<i>Et cetera</i> is a Latin phrase. “ET” means “and” <i>cetera</i> means “the rest”.
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation.
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus.
<b>ICFM</b>	Inter Fellowship Evangelical Church of East Africa.
<b>IEC</b>	Information Education and Communication.
<b>KCA</b>	Kikuyu Central Association.
<b>KSCDF</b>	Kenya Schools and College Drama Festivals.
<b>MCA</b>	Member of County Assembly.
<b>MP</b>	Member of Parliament.
<b>MYWO</b>	<i>Maendeleo ya Wanawake</i> Organization.
<b>NACADA</b>	National Authority for the Campaign against Alcohol, Substance, and Drug Abuse.
<b>NACOSTI</b>	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation.
<b>NEPHAK</b>	National Empowerment Network for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS.
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization.
<b>PATH</b>	Path Appropriate Technology Health.
<b>PCEA</b>	Presbyterian Church of East Africa.
<b>Rev.</b>	Reverend.
<b>STDs</b>	Sexually transmitted Diseases
<b>STIs</b>	Sexually Transmitted Infections.
<b>UN</b>	United Nations.
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund.
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund.
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background Information**

Before colonization of Africa, many communities passed down their traditions to successive generations through oral genres of literature. This was mainly done by grandparents who were tasked with the responsibility of transmitting the cultural norms to the younger generations. This was mainly done in the evenings and during cultural rites of passage ceremonies such as circumcision. Circumcision as a rite of passage from childhood into adulthood was highly honoured among African communities because it greatly impacted on the lives of the initiates. In African traditional societies, initiation affected the life of an initiate socially, economically, politically, spiritually, and psychologically. The mentorship and instructions given to initiates covered all aspects of the community.

After initiation, the initiate was considered mature and responsible enough to enjoy privileges that were a preserve for adults such as getting married, owning property, and getting leadership positions. When colonialists came to Africa, they introduced Christian teachings that were against many traditional practices that Africans were engaged in. The colonialists and the missionaries also introduced modern medical services and also enlightened the community on the dangers and the harm of some of the practices to the health of the individuals who took part in them. The Africans who received Western education and Human Rights Activists sought to fight the traditional circumcision practices because of the adverse effects it posed on the initiates. The missionaries, the elite, and Human Rights Activists sought a safer mode of initiating boys and girls from childhood into adulthood which resulted to the introduction of Alternative Rites of Passage (ARP) to replace the traditional circumcision.

Many communities in the world have always been influenced by oral literature because it reflects all aspects of the community. According to Ngugi (2003), literature is affected by the dynamism in the society as it responds to the contemporary emerging issues in different communities. The content of oral literature is determined by all the cultural, social, and economic changes taking place in all the facets of the lives of individuals in the society. Therefore, oral literature responds to the changes in the society so that it can fulfill the same roles it used to serve in the yestertide; that is,

as channel of cultural transmission across generations. Amphem (2003) says that initiates were taught the rules and the taboos of the community during initiation into adulthood. They were also given moral instructions with the hope that they would become responsible adults after initiation.

Different communities in the world embrace circumcision of both boys and girls. WHO and UNAIDS (2007) reports that one third of boys aged below fifteen years are circumcised all over the world. In Africa, 62% of the boys are circumcised. Boys in different communities are circumcised for different reasons such as to prevent STIs and HIV/AIDS infections. Other communities believe that it improves their sexual performance as well as hygiene. In addition, circumcision is a ritual that gives boys an opportunity to graduate into adulthood. The report by WHO (2009) for example indicates that males among the Maasai people of Kenya enter the warrior status after circumcision. On the other hand, an uncircumcised boy among the Xhosa of South Africa cannot find a girl to marry because he is viewed as a source of misfortune. Nyaga (1997, p. 49), avers that circumcision of boys among the Meru is a significant event in his life for after initiation, one qualifies to be a full member of the community entitled to certain rights not given to those not initiated. The initiate gains the right to inherit and own property and is allowed to marry. Traditionally, the boys from the Meru community were and are even today in some cases being circumcised by a traditional surgeon who does not use modern medical interventions like anaesthesia. Thus, the boys who underwent or undergo this traditional rite were and are respected by all members of the community because of their courage in enduring pain during circumcision.

According to Llamas (2017), female circumcision is practised in many parts of Africa, Middle East, and Southern Asia. Its exact origin is not clear. However many scholars believe that it originated from Egypt (present day Egypt and Sudan). The origin of female circumcision is affirmed by the discovery of mummies that had signs of having undergone female circumcision in the fifth century B.C. The practice then spread along the route of the slave trade. Female circumcision was reported in European countries in the 1860s. It was believed to be a cure for epilepsy and masturbation that led to hysteria. On the other hand, female slaves in ancient Rome were circumcised to deter them from sexual intercourse and from getting pregnant.

Female circumcision among the Kipsigis and Rendile in Kenya is carried out for cultural identity and as a rite of passage into adulthood.

A report by WHO (2008) indicates that girls' circumcision has been existing in many communities for a long time. The rite of passage gives the girls an opportunity to transit into womanhood and marriage life. The practice is passed over from one generation to the next by social norms that prohibit the individual girls and women affected to abjure the practice. Many campaigns by the anti girls' circumcision champions to enlighten the people affected about the hazardous effects of girls' circumcision; and efforts to root it out have not been fully embraced and the practice persists in many communities in Africa. The cultural practice persists and gets support from different communities for different reasons such as hygiene and the economic gains that those who perpetuate it get.

There has been resistance to circumcision of girls in many communities in Kenya. According to a report by Kenyatta (1938), girls' circumcision first came into the limelight in the mid 1920s and the existence of the cultural practice was reported in the press in London in 1929. There were arguments over who had control over the women's bodies in the mission settlements where Western education, religion, and social ideals conflicted with African cultural practices, beliefs, and social organization among many African tribal groups that embraced female circumcision. Girls' circumcision was supported by colonial government and the leading African political organization, the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA). On the other hand, the reformist forces in the British political system and Protestant Missions in Kenya opposed the cultural practice. The Kenyan government was pressured by the powerful protestant missions to illegitimize the practice for it adversely affected the health of the women and their dignity. The Church of Scotland excommunicated members who refused to abandon their daughters' circumcision. The initiative to end girls' circumcision was supported by the Kenyan government after the Protestant Missions and prominent feminist politicians exposed the adverse effects of the cultural practice on the women.

Henceforth, many different communities and organizations have come forth to support the resistance to girls' circumcision. Athaus (1997, pp. 130-133) argues that,

other African women's networks and organizations such as *Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization* (MYWO) in Kenya have also joined the campaigns against the girls' circumcision. MYWO has also been campaigning for the replacement of the traditional girls' circumcision with an Alternative Rite of Passage (ARP) that is not harmful to the girls.

There are campaigns to stop traditional circumcision of boys and girls as a rite of passage from childhood into adulthood in many communities in Kenya and beyond. Nyaga (1997, p. 89) adds that the traditional circumcision of girls among the Meru people has been going on for a long time alongside that of boys. Indeed, some parts of Igembe practise female circumcision as a way of preparing the girls for their future roles as wives. The cultural practice is supposed to transform the girl into a well-mannered and courageous individual as a result of enduring pain during circumcision. However, currently many girls in different parts of Igembe are abandoning the traditional girls' circumcision and instead are embracing ARP practices. Tenoi (2014) advises that although clipping is embedded in the Kenyan culture; there are other diverse humane rites of passage that a community can embrace.

In this context, ARP becomes the alternative to traditional initiation. Oral literature is aggressively used to campaign against traditional circumcision of boys and girls as the supporters for ARP advocate for Christian Hospital Initiation (CHI) for boys and *Ntaanira Mwari na Mugambo Mwana Athome* (circumcise the girl with the word of mouth so that she can pursue her education) for girls among the Igembe people. Therefore, ARP gives the initiated boys and girls, the opportunity to graduate into adulthood without necessarily undergoing pain and torture experienced during traditional circumcision.

During the ARP rituals and ceremonies in Igembe, the initiated girls are accompanied by female mentors who disseminate knowledge and life skills on: self esteem, good grooming, relationships, and reproductive health issues such as Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) during a seclusion period of one week. The girls are also taught virtues of womanhood such as housekeeping and cookery in a bid to prepare them to be responsible wives in future. The period ends with a joyous ceremony that is attended by all members of the community. During the graduation ceremony, the

initiated girls are engaged in singing, dancing, and dramatic presentations. Some guests are also invited to grace the occasion and advise the initiates. Some of them incorporate songs, proverbs, and narratives in their speeches. The songs, proverbs, and oral narratives performed during the seclusion period and on their graduation day do not only entertain but they also convey important information to the initiates. The genres of oral literature performed are usually presented in an artistic language. Hence, this study seeks to interrogate the significance of messages conveyed to initiates through these genres of orality and the styles used in the genres performed in ARP ceremonies because they have not been adequately researched on.

The constitution of Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2010, pp. 26-29) in chapter four (4) also implicitly supports ARP rituals for it advocates for the protection of every person (both males and females) from being compelled to observe, perform, or undergo any harmful cultural practice. Moreover, the constitution provides the right and freedom from torture, cruelty, and any inhuman or degrading treatment of every Kenyan citizen. Thus, many communities in Kenya are careful on how they initiate their boys and girls into adulthood lest they are accused of violating the law. Consequently, ARP for both girls and boys has become popular and more acceptable to different communities such as the Igembe people. Thus, ARP is viewed as the only alternative that can facilitate transition of youth from childhood into adulthood with minimal harm.

Igembe people are part of the Meru community in Kenya that is also taking part in the campaigns against traditional circumcision of girls by embracing ARP rituals. Through ARP ceremonies, the girls are enlightened on the cultural traditions, beliefs and practices that were also given to those who were traditionally circumcised during the one week's seclusion period which simulates the traditional healing period after the actual circumcision. Some of the speakers and mentors called upon to advise the initiates in seclusion and on their graduation day tend to use genres of oral literature as a channel for communication. Thus, use of oral literature in ARP among the Igembe people is an emerging phenomenon that allows oral literature to blend with contemporary practices.

Alternative Rites of Passage rituals for boys among the Meru people are getting support from the community mainly because of health reasons. According to Kanake (2007), the introduction of the Christian Hospital Initiation (CHI) of males in Meru as an ARP practice to substitute the traditional boys' circumcision was championed for by the Methodist church of Kenya. This started around 1969-1976 as a result of the Methodist church evangelical movement that rocked the Meru region then. The CHI is advocated for by the elite members of the community, health workers, Christians, and leaders because of the HIV/AIDS phenomenon. Kanake (2007) reports that:

The hospital style is more hygienic given the prevalence of deadly viruses like HIV/AIDS. This is in a bid to end the 'one field, one knife' tradition method of traditional circumcision that is detrimental to the health of initiated boys. With the loss of the benefits of traditional initiation, decreasing preservation of Meru customs will lead to serious disintegration of society because the structured learning of boyhood before and after circumcision ritual have maintained the Meru social order and created a natural harmony. (p. 199)

Presently, most boys are circumcised through CHI among the Igembe people and are kept in a common seclusion site such as a school or a hospital for healing. Their reintegration into the society from their seclusion site is accompanied by celebrations at their different homes, seclusion sites, and churches. It is in these venues that the promotion into adulthood of the initiated boys is celebrated by not only the members of the initiates' family but also the community. In Igembe South constituency, the ARP for the males is mainly done by the mainstream churches dominant in the area such as the Catholic Church (Amungenti Parish), Methodist Church of Kenya (Kiegoi Circuit), African Inland Church (Kijji), and the Anglican Church (Maua). Such programs are viewed as an attempt to fight the traditional mode of initiation that is still perpetuated in the region. Majority of the Igembe people embrace ARP rituals as the preferred mode of initiating their boys into adulthood because there is use of trained health personnel which minimizes risks of exposing the circumcised boys to health hazards such as HIV/AIDS.

Secondly, ARP is cherished among the Igembe people by many parents of the prospective initiates because it is cost effective. Unlike the traditional circumcision



where the initiate has sponsors also called “daytime fathers” and visitors who must be fed, in ARP ceremonies, it is only the initiate who is kept in a seclusion site with other initiates. The “daytime fathers” are only allowed to visit the initiates once in a while in order to check their healing process. There are also more costly rituals that accompany traditional circumcision of boys before the initiates leave their seclusion site in comparison to those who undergo ARP rituals. Thirdly, ARP is less time consuming for parents since the initiates remain in seclusion sites where they are taken care of without directly involving the parents in cooking and other technicalities.

Therefore, ARP is a reprieve to the parents who are engaged in professions that are time consuming. In addition, ARP initiates are taught most of what those traditionally circumcised initiates are taught to ensure that initiates that undergo ARP are also well inculcated into the traditions of the tribe just like their counterparts. The sessions in ARP are well organized and programmed and initiates are empowered with knowledge and life skills that prepare them to overcome contemporary challenges. This may not be applicable in traditionally guarded seclusion sites. Finally, the initiates who undergo CHI are more secure in their seclusion sites than those who are traditionally circumcised who are prone to bullying from young men initiated into adulthood earlier.

The people from Igembe form one of the linguistic groups of the Meru community. They are found in Meru County which is one of the 47 counties in Kenya. The Ameru ethnic group mainly resides in Meru County with the majority of them being Christians and a few of them being Hindus and Muslims. Macharia (1975) posits that the Meru people are grouped into nine dialectical categories: the Tigania, Igembe, Imenti, Miitine, Igoji, Mwimbi, Muthambi, Chuka, and Tharaka. Although the Meru people are fairly a homogenous community, each of the nine linguistic groups speaks its own dialect. The language spoken by the different groups is a reflection of the varied influences on them from their Cushitic and other Bantu neighbours. However, there is mutual intelligibility among all the Meru speakers.

There are different rites of passage rituals among the Meru people that necessitate particular ceremonies such as the birth of a child, naming of a child, initiation into

adulthood through circumcision, betrothal of a bride and her eventual wedding, burial, and recruitment into eldership or council of elders (*Njuri Nceke* group). Traditionally, the Meru people have a strong clan system that influences the decisions made by all families within a given clan. Nyaga (1997, pp. 26-43) points out that the Meru community performs certain communal rituals that bring people together. Nyaga adds that although the clan system has nearly disintegrated; the extended family still maintains a very powerful influence on the lives of the individuals in the family. The extended family still makes important decisions on behalf of each family member such as in marriage ceremonies and circumcision. Circumcision is a very important ritual in Meru culture where all members of the family and community are bound to come together and get actively involved in the ceremony. The reintegration of initiated boys and girls into the community is usually characterised by pomp and colour and there is a lot of feasting, singing and dancing that takes place. The new initiates are also advised by members of the extended family, religious leaders, and other members of the community through the speeches given. Sometimes, the speakers addressing the initiates use oral literature genres as a tool for communication in the ceremonies.

The foregoing discussion illuminates this study whose objectives are to investigate how styles in genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies are used to enhance communication of different didactic messages passed on to initiates.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Oral literature plays a significant role as a tool for communication in most African communities especially during cultural rites of passage. Traditional circumcision of boys and girls as a rite of passage into adulthood among the Igembe people of Meru County has in the contemporary times been replaced with ARP rituals, where oral literary genres feature as a means of educating the initiates. The didacticism of oral literature genres performed in ARP ceremonies and the significance of their stylistic devices has not been given much evaluation in terms of the purpose the genres and their styles serve in the initiation ceremonies. Therefore, this study seeks to interrogate the messages as well as the aspects of style used in the oral songs, proverbs, and narratives performed in ARP ceremonies.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to discuss the didacticism of the messages communicated to initiates and the significance of various aspects of styles used in oral narratives, songs, and proverbs performed in ARP rituals among the Igembe people.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study is guided by the following objectives:

- (i) To analyse didactic messages communicated to initiates through oral songs, proverbs, and narratives used when counselling them in ARP ceremonies.
- (ii) To investigate various aspects of styles in oral songs, narratives, and proverbs performed in ARP ceremonies.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

To achieve these objectives, the study is guided by the following questions:

- (i) Are the messages communicated to initiates through proverbs, narratives, and songs performed in ARP ceremonies didactic?
- (ii) What is the significance of the literary styles used in the narratives, proverbs, and songs performed in ARP ceremonies?

### **1.6 Justification of the Study**

Although some studies have been done on oral narratives, proverbs, and songs; none has discussed the didactic messages; or the significance of the aspects of style in the mentioned genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people. This study therefore seeks to discuss the didactic messages communicated to initiates. In addition, the significance of the stylistic devices of the genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies is interrogated to find out how they enhance the communication of different messages to initiates. The study therefore forms part of other studies that interrogate the role of orality in the contemporary society in cultural rites of passage practices. The study is expected to contribute to new knowledge with regard to how oral songs, narratives, and proverbs and their stylistic devices respond to modernity by being adapted and used in ARP ceremonies.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

Research for this study was carried out in three wards (Kanuni, Kiegoi/Antubochiu, and Akachiu) in Igembe South Constituency as a representative sample of the Igembe community of Meru County. The study discusses the didacticism of messages communicated to initiates through oral songs, narratives, and proverbs performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people. In addition, the study interrogates the significance of the stylistic devices used in the three genres of oral literature identified. There are 25 songs, 15 narratives, and 17 proverbs that are discussed.

### **1.8 Limitations to the Study**

Permission was not granted to the researcher to conduct the research in male seclusion sites as it is culturally unacceptable for females to access them. Hence, the researcher increased the data collection sites from the targeted 10 to 20 graduation ceremonies which were held in homes, churches, and seclusion sites for the initiated boys where all members of the community are allowed to freely attend. The increased sites escalated chances of the researcher collecting substantial data that is sufficient for this analysis.

### **1.9 Assumptions of the Study**

This study is guided by the following assumptions:

- (i) Oral songs, proverbs, and narratives are used as tools for communication in ARP ceremonies.
- (ii) Oral genres of oral literature performed in ARP rituals pass didactic messages to initiates.
- (iii) Literary styles in oral genres performed in ARP ceremonies reinforce the didactic messages communicated to initiates.

## **1.10 Definition of Terms**

<b>Alternative Rites of Passage</b>	Modern ways of initiating both boys and girls from childhood into adulthood. The boys are taken to a hospital and are circumcised by a medical practitioner. The girls are taken to a seclusion site where they are given cultural education through the word of mouth without taking part in the actual physical cut.
<b>Burning Ceremony</b>	The last ritual done to boys that have undergone traditional circumcision before they leave their seclusion site among the Igembe people.
<b>Christian Hospital Initiation</b>	Circumcision of boys in a hospital by a health worker. The initiated boys are then kept in a common seclusion site for healing and training.
<b>Daytime father</b>	A man who takes care of a circumcised boy while the initiate is in seclusion and later on by advising him the way a biological father (night father) would.
<b>Father</b>	A name used to refer to a young male child mainly to demonstrate fondness towards him, or to a servant of God in the Catholic Church or to God.
<b>Innovation</b>	Refers to the introduction of a new context or wording to an existing genre of oral literature to suit an occasion.
<b>Mother</b>	A name used to refer to a female child or young woman to show affection or intimacy.
<b>Seclusion</b>	The period a boy initiated into adulthood through CHI is isolated to heal and undergo training. During this period, the initiate is not allowed to freely intermingle with other members of the society till he is reintegrated into the society through a ceremony. It also means the isolation of a girl initiated into adulthood through ARP where she undergoes training and is not allowed to intermingle with other members of the society till she is reintegrated into

the society through a ceremony.

**Sister**

A title given to the ladies dedicated to the full time service of God in the Catholic Church.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Significance of Oral Literature among the African People**

This section presents literature review in various areas that are considered relevant to the study. The review discusses oral literature genres that serve to reveal the creativity of the society and how this creativity is utilized for educative purposes. Oral literature is generally used to preserve a community's knowledge and general cultural heritage and perpetuate it to the future generations. This is because oral literature is perceived to be part and parcel of the cultural heritage of many communities in Africa. While reiterating the importance of oral literature in Africa in inculcating cultural values that shape the character of the youth that ultimately enhances good relationship among them and the community, Sone (2009) opines that:

Oral literary forms such as stories, songs, proverbs and metaphors are used to guide moral choice and self-examination. They are a mirror for seeing things in a particular way. They serve as pedagogic devices, a significant tool for teaching values that guide children's concrete behaviour in society. (p. 162)

The significance of orality in any society in transmitting cultural aspects of a community to future generations and in promoting unity in the community is also reinforced by Mbiti (1969, p. 122) who points out that due to the influence of oral traditional African culture, ancient communities relied on different forms of oral speech, dramatic performances, rituals, and symbols to pass on fundamental community ideals, beliefs, principles, and values to the future generations. Initiations into adulthood ceremonies were characterized with awe and mystery that favoured communication of the piled up wisdom of the community including the principles of tranquil coexistence in the community to the young people. Mbiti further observes that oral literature was used in the preliterate society to pass cultural heritage of the community to future generations during initiation into adulthood ceremonies.

The instructional role of genres of oral literature in the preliterate society is also echoed by Wamitila (2002) who posits that oral literature is used for educating people in societies where literacy has not taken root. The people in those societies were able to pass on the values of society, their history, cultures, and their views from one generation to the next through it. Sone, Mbiti and Wamitila's contributions form the

spring board for this study that investigates the role of oral literature in modern times in edification of society and projection of societal norms, likes and dislikes, beliefs, and taboos. This is because even today, the literate society of the 21<sup>st</sup> century also uses oral literature genres in ARP Ceremonies among the Igembe people to pass down to the successive generations the desired cultural ethos of the community. Oral literature has proven overtime to determine people's opinions, attitudes, support or disapprove their views, reinforce, and negotiate the cultural aspects of people's community. Thus, through its performance in ARP ceremonies, oral literature also helps to define the identity of individuals and a community. It also helps to shape the character and behaviour of individuals in diverse communities since the youth learn from the older generations what is cascaded down to them through oral genres of literature.

The importance of orality to individuals and community in preserving history of a community is further projected by Finnegan (1970) who posits that African oral traditions serve as a reservoir of cultural heritage of any given community. According to the scholar, it is important to study people's oral literature so as to be able to tap people's past and transformations in the modern set up since oral literature is a medium through which people's values are transmitted. Finnegan's assertion of studying a people's cultural heritage of the past so that one is able to comprehend where they have come from and the society's transformations into the modern society helps a community to understand and preserve its diverse cultural heritage that existed in the past and the one practised in the present for future posterity. Finnegan's assertions resonates this study that seeks to highlight the role of orality in perpetuating cultural aspects of a community to future generations through oral genres of literature performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people in the contemporary times.

The pedagogic role of orality is emphasized by Akivaga *et al.*, (1982) who aver that oral literature plays an instrumental role in inculcating values and deterring vices that are ridiculed in the oral literature of given communities. Akivaga *et al.*, add that in the traditional society, there were no formal schools where the young would be taken to learn unlike in the modern society. Traditionally, the young people were guided in their behaviour and actions by social norms and values passed down to them through oral literature that acted as the vehicle for transmitting the collective social ethos of



the community. Through genres of orality, individuals learnt and differentiated what was good and acceptable from what was bad and undesirable. It was crystal clear to the individual that the future of the community and that of the society depended upon his/her understanding of the community's values, norms, and its social and political institutions. Thus, what the community detested was satirized through oral literature genres.

The foregoing review on the role of orality in the preliterate society in shaping the character of the community members acts as a stepping stone for this study that seeks to interrogate the role of oral narratives, songs, and proverbs performed in ARP ceremonies. It does this by demonstrating that even in today's society with formal education; orality is still indispensable for it plays a key role in socializing initiates into the norms of their society in ARP rituals among the Igembe people just as it did in the preliterate society. It does this by castigating and deterring vices evident among individuals in the community as the initiates are being initiated into adulthood.

The importance of studying a society's oral forms helps one understand diverse aspects of one's community as is illustrated by Finnegan (1970), who points out that the study of a community's oral forms helps one to appreciate a society's fears, hopes, aspirations, philosophy, and aesthetics which are the totality of its life. Finnegan's assertion is significant to this research because it suggests that the orality of a community reflects all aspects of a community including their ambitions and what they treasure as a people. This study is also interested in the educative messages passed on to initiates through the oral genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies such as to encompass the fears, hopes, aspirations, and philosophy of the Igembe community.

The significance of orality as a carrier of a specific culture of a given community at all times is affirmed by Chesaina (1991, p. viii) who asserts that oral literature is "an expression of culture and therefore it should not be seen in isolation from its social context." Chesaina adds that oral literature is passed across generations and can still be informative to the contemporary society just as it was during the traditional historical periods of our ancestors. Finnegan (1970, p. viii) adds that "the wisdom articulated by the materials of oral literature can go a long way in building a healthy

culture for contemporary Africa”. Therefore, oral literature can be utilized in modern times to shape the destiny of a community by advocating for practices and beliefs that promote the wellbeing of a society.

The importance of oral literature in enhancing communication of messages to an audience is also pointed out by Bukenya *et al.*, (1997, Introduction, para. 2) who say that “oral literature makes communication lively, deeply meaningful, and easy to remember”. Therefore, when oral genres of literature are used as a tool for communication in ARP ceremonies, educative messages passed on to initiates through them is more memorable than if plain language is used.

Genres of oral literature are used not only to entertain but to promote harmonious coexistence of individuals in a community at all times as they address any conflicting emerging issues that may need to be communicated in a variety of contexts. Bettelheim (1984) suggests that historically, oral literature is meant to instruct, entertain, and convey some moral theme or truth to the audience. This is because the oral traditions of a community reflect the truth that has always guided individuals and groups in the community on how to relate with each other harmoniously. They are a life force which can be manipulated in order to control an individual’s behaviour and ultimately that of the community. This study echoes the views of Bettelheim on the importance of oral literature in influencing and controlling the behaviour of individuals because it illustrates how orality is used to shape the character of the initiates in the contemporary society. In addition, the research demonstrates that most of the genres of oral literature performed are embroidered in order to address the contemporary concerns of the society such as castigation of problematic vices common among the Igembe people.

The flexibility of orality and its response to issues in the contemporary society is reaffirmed by Orina *et al.*, (2014, p. 200) who point out that oral literature is not a preserve of illiterate peasants as usually perceived; but it is a unique form of art that is resilient and responsive to emerging issues in the dynamic society. The assertions of Orina *et al.*, that oral literature adapts to changing social circumstances in modern times resonates one of the objectives of this study that investigates the didactic messages communicated to initiates through oral genres in ARP ceremonies among

the Igembe people which is a modern phenomenon. Oral literature used in ARP rituals highlights how the elite in our modern society use genres of orality to empower initiates with knowledge and skills that help them overcome challenges they face in the contemporary society. Thus, by studying oral literature used in modern times in cultural ceremonies such as ARP, one is able to examine how orality aptly responds to the changes and needs of the society in different times.

Genres of oral literature are used for socialization and enjoyment. The younger generations learn how to behave in different circumstances based on the knowledge inculcated in them through genres of oral literature performed to them and from the environment they are growing up in. In the olden days, genres of oral literature were performed to entertain and at the same time educate the audience. Bukenya *et al.*, (2008) reaffirms that oral literature plays a fundamental role in entertainment and socialization among other functions. Similarly, genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies are expected to be captivating to the initiates so that the messages encompassed in them and are being passed on to them can be imprinted in their minds permanently.

### **2.1.1 Research on Proverbs**

Proverbs are a genre in oral literature. They are used in formal or informal situations and are freely integrated in speech without any warning or introduction. Elders and adults usually make use of proverbs in their speeches during casual conversations, public meetings, social gatherings, and social activities such as in ceremonies and rituals. Adults in leadership positions such as preachers or teachers guiding and giving instructions to the youth mainly use proverbs as a sign of wisdom. The use of proverbs by the elders and those in leadership positions is affirmed by Okpewho (1992, p. 230) who points out that “age and experience put them (elders) in a better position to understand the full implication of the wisdom and truth contained in the proverbs and so are able to impart these to younger members”.

Many scholars have defined proverbs in different ways. Each of these definitions brings out salient features of proverbs that make them suitable and effective for use as a tool for communication. Miruka (1994, p. 47) describes a proverb as “a brief statement full of hidden meaning that is accepted and used by a community as an

expression of truth or wisdom”. On the other hand, McKenna (1974) describes a proverb as “a way in which society warns its members of the dangers of life.” This definition focuses on the role of proverbs in warning deviants in the society. Miruka and Sunkuli (1990, p. 75) define a proverb as “a terse, compact, pithy statement of popular wisdom accepted as an expression of truth”. On the other hand, Mieder (2004, p. 3) defines “a proverb as a short generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed, and memorial form and which is handed down from generation to generation.” Cuddon (1984, p. 537) also refers to a proverb as “a simple and concrete saying popularly known and repeated, which expresses truth based on common sense or the practical experience of humanity”. Finnegan (1970, p. 393), adds that a proverb is “a saying in a more or less fixed form marked by shortness, sense, and salt and is distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed”. Finally, Alagoa (1968, pp. 235-242) defines proverbs as “pithy sayings of the wise, which constitute personal and general historical experiences of those who perform them”.

The fundamental features of what a proverb is from the above definitions are that proverbs are: brief, simple, are accepted by the society as a means of expressing the truth, morals, views, and knowledge of the folk, have hidden meaning, are compact, fixed, are based on common sense of the personal and historical experiences of humanity, and are handed down from one group to the next. Each of the features of proverbs made and still makes the genre a viable tool for communication in the olden days and in the contemporary society. Their brevity and simplicity make them memorable and easy to use. Adults, leaders, and elders in different communities used them in the olden days and even today because they have hidden meaning. Thus, the elders are able to use proverbs to communicate sensitive and coded messages to the audience without embarrassment. Proverbs are generally accepted by the users and audience because people are able to identify with them for they reflect their experiences, views, attitude, truth, and wisdom. Therefore, the genre remains resilient and transcends across different generations because proverbs are generally acceptable, relatively invariable, and reflect that which is deemed to be the truth held by the community. All these features of proverbs entice different speakers to use them while counselling initiates in ARP ceremonies in the contemporary society.

Proverbs have varied uses depending on the intentions of the speaker, nature of the message being passed on, social context, and the audience that is expected to interpret the underlying meaning communicated through them. Miruka (1994) posits that proverbs are effective for commenting on situations, describing, or summing up discussions. Proverbs can also be applicable in highlighting the nature of events. Hence, proverbs are effectively used in expressing the perceptions of the speaker towards a given phenomenon. In doing this, proverbs are interposed with axioms and authority since they are objective truths aimed at guiding human conduct and experience. This aspect of proverbs is exploited by those in leadership positions as it gives them authority and makes their speeches captivating to listen to. In addition, when used in rituals such as in ARP ceremonies, proverbs summarize the knowledge, attitudes, and skills imparted to the initiates in a few emphatic words.

The significance of proverbs as a tool for moulding and regulating the behaviour of the youth is further projected by Kuzwayo (1998, p. 14) who says that a proverb is used to rectify behaviour where a child may be left with a proverb to decode and engage in self reflection. Boating (1983, p. 332) also points out that a proverb conveys a particular message in a manner that allows the child to reflect on its probable meanings. Therefore, use of proverbs becomes an indirect way of teaching and it does not have rules that can jeopardize the learning. The gentle and unintrusive use of proverbs to correct any unacceptable mannerisms or to warn the youth about an imminent danger allows smooth interaction between the speaker and the listener. The foregoing discussion about features of proverbs illuminates this study that discusses how genres of orality such as proverbs are surreptitiously used as a tool for communicating pedagogic messages to initiates in ARP ceremonies.

Speeches that have proverbs interwoven in them are usually captivating to listen to. Wabara (1992) affirms that proverbs enrich a speech by making it stirring and powerful; thus motivating the audience to agree with the perspectives of the speaker. The long sessions that initiates listen to different speakers handling diverse topics especially in ARP ceremonies require use of proverbs as one of the tools for communication to ensure that the initiates remain entertained and attentive during the sessions. The significance of proverbs as a tool for training initiates among the

Kalenjin community in the past and in the contemporary society is also echoed by Chesaina (1991) who postulates that:

Education is a major function of the Kalenjin proverbs. In a traditional Kalenjin setting, proverbs are used both formally and informally in socialization of the youth during their initiation into adulthood...the didactic value of Kalenjin proverbs is not confined to the African traditional era. Most of the values enshrined in the proverbs are as relevant to the contemporary cultures as they were to their ancestors' cultures. (p. 26)

Chesaina adds that during typical conversations, Kalenjin proverbs are integrated into dialogue to illustrate key points or to make the dialogue lively. In the same manner as the Kalenjin community, the Igembe people use proverbs in their conversations because they are enjoyable to listen to and are didactic. Chesaina's contribution on the role of proverbs during initiation resonates one of the objectives of this study that interrogates styles in oral genres of literature that are used as medium of communication in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people.

Some proverbs are generally humorous and interesting to listen to. They are therefore used by many speakers to spice up their speeches when discussing varied topics. This aspect of proverbs is echoed by Miruka, 1994 p. 45) who avers that proverbs are mainly integrated in speech to enhance the aesthetic appeal of speeches. The elders incorporate them in their speech because their experiences are deemed to be wider and are regarded "as the custodians of knowledge about the community's mores and norms". This feature of proverbs is important for this study that discusses the styles of oral genres that make them a viable tool for communication in ARP ceremonies. The training of initiates in seclusion is usually carried out by people who are meticulously chosen by those in charge of programs in the ARP seclusion sites. It is only those deemed to be knowledgeable and well anchored in the cultural ways of the community that are appointed to carry out the daunting task of mentoring the initiates. Most of them use proverbs and other genres of literature to spice up their speeches so that they can be interesting to listen to.

The importance of proverbs as a custodian of a society's cultural norms and practices is further elaborated by Ohwovoriele (2009) who posits that a proverb is used to transmit culture and its study can give an objective view of the people's customs and

traditions, their guiding philosophy, their critique of life, moral truths, social norms, and values. It expresses the wisdom of the people and offers a speaker a channel to project and fulfill a wide range of socially acceptable goals. Ohwovoriole's contribution is important to this study because one of the key goals of initiation among the Igembe people is to pass social values and norms of the community to the initiates.

The foregoing discussion depicts the features, aesthetic value, and the requisite functions of proverbs in the society as a medium of transmission of a society's: cultural values, virtues, norms, beliefs, wisdom, and truths from one generation to the next. Its use as a tool for communication resonates one of the objectives of this study; to analyse the styles and didacticism of oral genres of literature (proverbs) performed in ARP ceremonies.

### **2.1.2 Scholarship on Oral Songs**

An oral song is one of the long genres of orality that is significantly performed in many communities in Africa for various purposes and in different occasions. Most of the songs sung during ritual ceremonies are not only entertaining but pedagogical in nature. Some of the songs reflect different cultural aspects of the community. Kipury (1983) asserts that songs and oral poetry are an essential component of the life of many communities in Kenya. Songs and dances usually accompany many rituals as the occasions demand. The songs usually embody the beliefs, values, and philosophy of the people.

On the other hand, some songs teach different genders on how to relate with God and with each other in a morally acceptable manner. Other songs teach the youth to be principled and disciplined. The educative value of songs sang during initiation into adulthood ceremonies is affirmed by Kenyatta (1965) who observes that songs and dances connected with initiation are performed by Agikuyu people of central Kenya. Traditionally, during the period of singing and dancing, the boys and girls were not allowed to have sex for this would hinder them from having a direct contact with their ancestral god and could lead to misfortune during circumcision. The songs sang by relatives and friends conveyed messages on sexuality. This gave the girls a chance to acquaint themselves with rules and regulations that controlled the social relationships

between men and women in their community. Mwaniki (1986) also asserts that one of the purposes of songs and dances performed during circumcision of boys and girls among the Embu people is to pass sex education to the initiates. The role of songs in guiding people on how to relate sexually is also pointed out by Bukenya *et al.*, (1996). According to Bukenya *et al.*, circumcision songs and dances acquainted the young people with the rules and regulations that governed social relations between males and females. This study also investigates the role of circumcision songs performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people in passing on messages to initiates that prepare initiates to be responsible as far as their sexual matters are concerned.

Songs are also used to pass on to future generations the norms and expectations of the society. Chesaina (1991, p. 25) asserts that Kalenjin songs “are part and parcel of the people’s way of life, a means of expressing their worldview and maintaining a cultural direction through transmitting the society’s values, and attitudes”. Chesaina adds that songs are significantly used among the Kalenjins to ingrain the norms of the community in the youth and adults. The songs sang during initiation also warn young people against immoral behaviour and castigate those who have goofed. Through the songs therefore, initiation helps cleanse society of social ills and this indirectly contributes to the maintenance of discipline and order. When ritual songs and dances are performed, they also have a physiological and psychological therapeutic impact on the participants. The use of songs in ARP rituals is common within the Igembe community; just like it is among the Kalenjins. In both communities, songs are sung for entertainment and to pass cultural values and attitudes. In addition, virtues are extolled and vices condemned in a bid to shape the character of the initiates.

The significance of songs among the Meru people in preparing initiates to be well versed in the ways of the community is highlighted by Nyaga (1997, pp. 98-104) who points out that songs are integrated into the context of traditional circumcision rituals among the Meru people for different reasons. These include: to illustrate how the boys are eager to get circumcised; or to express sadness due to the fear that circumcision might be stopped or postponed; to advise initiates to be orally upright, brave as well as to respect one’s parents. The aim of the songs was to instill morality as they get prepared to handle the responsibilities of being community warriors in the traditional society. All these songs were traditionally and even in the contemporary society sang



at different times from the time the initiates are being prepared for circumcision, after circumcision, and till the time they leave seclusion. In addition, the songs form part and parcel of entertainment and solidarity building among members of the community brought together during this period. On the other hand, songs sang during traditional girls' circumcision encourage them to tolerate pain. The foregoing discussion lays a foundation for this study that interrogates the educative value of songs performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people.

In some communities, songs are also used to enlighten the youth about their gender roles and statuses in a society. Kobia and King'ei (2009, p.128) explains that some of the traditional initiation songs among the Igembe people are used to inculcate gender roles. Through the images used in the songs, women are devalued in spite of the crucial role they play in social and economic lives of the Igembe people due to the societal attitudes and beliefs of the people. The significance of songs in preparing initiates for their future roles as adults during circumcision rituals is also echoed by Makila (1978) who points out that the songs sang in circumcision ceremonies among the Babukusu people of Kenya communicate the privileges, opportunities, and the new responsibilities of the initiates as adults since circumcision marks their entry into adulthood. This study goes a notch higher to investigate the educative messages the songs inculcate among initiates in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people in the contemporary society in addition to the traditional gender roles and statuses.

Songs are also used as a valuable tool in guiding the young people on how to behave in the society. According to Ocharadson (1961), the Kipsigis of Rift Valley of Kenya sing different initiation songs during circumcision period to promote good morals among the initiates. The role of songs in communicating the expectations of the society from the initiates is discussed by Mapana (2013) who postulates that songs sang during the circumcision of boys and girls among the Wagogo people of Dodoma, Tanzania serve different purposes. These include: to mask the sounds of agony of girls being circumcised so that the small girls attending the ceremony are not deterred from undergoing the same process in future; to console and comfort the initiated girls who experience a lot of pain during the operation; and to encourage them to embrace the process because it is necessary for healthier bodies. On the other hand, the songs are supposed to camouflage the pain and the screams made by the boys being

circumcised from being heard by women because men are not expected to exhibit any sign of cowardice. In addition, the songs are supposed to educate girls on the importance of respect especially when talking to their parents. The songs also entertain and mobilize the community to come together to celebrate culture since it is performed every year.

The value of songs during rituals as a channel for socialization and instruction is also projected by Ajuma (1997) who says that songs are an integral element of traditional rituals such as birth, naming ceremonies, initiation, and weddings. Bukenya *et al.*, (1996, p. 15) also note that oral songs facilitate socialization, rally people together during social gatherings, meetings, and in social ceremonies. During rituals such as initiation and marriages, songs are used to pass hidden messages or to reach out to those involved as messages are cleverly and subtly passed. The religious songs are used for supplication and paying homage to God while didactic poetry is used for teaching and instruction especially during weddings and initiation ceremonies. The literature review of Bukenya *et al.*, and other scholars mentioned earlier in this discussion highlight the significant role of songs during rituals. Thus, the thematic concern of the oral genre of literature (songs) lays a foundation for this study that investigates the didacticism of songs performed in ARP among the Igembe people.

Songs are used in many communities to address emerging issues and gender roles. This is highlighted by Waita (2003) who observes that oral literature performed by the Gikuyu community from Central Kenya plays a crucial role in gender socialization. It is also used to communicate change and innovations in the politics and governance of Kenya. In addition, it is used to demonstrate how oral literature responds to HIV/AIDS epidemic by helping the people to conceptualize the disease and devise ways to protect themselves from it. The knowledge about roles of songs among the Gikuyu people acts as a backdrop to this study for it also highlights how oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people is used to socialize the initiates on their gender roles and enlighten them about emerging issues in the society such as diseases that are transmitted through traditional modes of initiation into adulthood practices.

The flexibility of songs in response to the changes in the society is echoed by Musembi (2014, p. 1) who examines the evolutionary thematic changes that are addressed via circumcision songs over the years and their alignment with social change among the Akamba community. Musembi mainly attributes the changes to the influence of education, economic situation, religion, Western culture, and technology. Musembi's discussion on the thematic changes in the context of circumcision songs for boys echoes the objectives of this study that discusses the didactic value of messages and significance of styles used in songs performed in ARP rituals for girls and boys among the Igembe people.

The contributions of all the scholars in the foregoing literature review lay a foundation for this study by highlighting the fundamental roles of songs in different ceremonies and communities not only as a channel for cultural transmission but also as a tool for shaping and moulding the character of the youth. The songs also tackle gender roles, emerging issues, and changes in the contemporary society. This study interrogates the didactic messages conveyed to initiates by oral genres of oral literature (songs) that use different different styles to enhance communication.

### **2.1.3 Scholarship on Oral Narratives**

One of the long genres of oral literature is narratives. Oral narratives are stories that are usually narrated in prose form to a given audience with an intention of passing a moral lesson to them as well as for entertainment. Communities have their own narratives passed down from one generation to the next. These narratives usually reflect all aspects of a community such as historical experiences, traditions, beliefs, practices, values, and the philosophy of the given community. Okpewho (1992, p.163) affirms that oral narratives are not just renditions of people's history but the totality of their ethno history.

Oral narratives can be used by narrators to address contemporary and emerging issues in the community because oral narratives are not fixed but can be innovately embellished to accommodate new and diverse ideas. This is affirmed by Finnegan (1970) who explains that oral narratives are not usually conservative because it is not possible to hand down folktales through successive generations in a word-perfect form. According to Finnegan, verbal flexibilities of oral narratives empower creative

narrators to embroider a narrative so that they can respond to contemporary issues as well as suit the needs of the audience and occasion. Finnegan's concept of embroidering narratives is echoed by Maxamed (2005, p. 4) who posits that "stories can be made relevant through embroidering of old storylines and motifs to adapt to new concerns and contexts". Maxamed adds that a skilled oral artist can use elements of tradition and legendary characters in oral narratives to link the past and present especially in dynamic contemporary societies.

Finnegan and Maxamed's argument that artists can embroider a traditional oral narrative to address modern issues and suit modern occasions resonates one of the objectives of this study that seeks to discuss educative messages passed on to initiates in ARP ceremonies in an effort to equip them with knowledge and life skills that correspond to the challenges experienced by the initiates in the contemporary society. Embroidering of oral narratives is also inevitable because most of the mentors and counsellors who handle the initiates in ARP ceremonies are educated and are of middle age. The young mentors manipulate known narratives in such a way that they reflect their view of the world and their response to the changes evident in their environment and that of the initiates they are mentoring.

The dynamism of oral narratives is illuminated by Chesaina (1991, p. 20) who argues that oral narratives are based on typical human experiences of a given community. Their predominant themes usually depict the perspective of a given narrator and that of his or her community and the manner in which we interpret the worlds around shapes the type of stories we share with the youth about the culture in which we are growing in. Oral traditional songs of the Kalenjin community embody their cultural heritage and values. In the same way, the Igembe community has a unique culture and values that are replicated in their oral narratives that the older generations narrate to initiates during ARP ceremonies. Thus, by studying the oral narratives performed in the ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people, one is able to understand the community's values and attitudes towards life in modern times.

The significance of oral narratives in shaping the character of people is reflected by Abiola and Gikandi's (2004) arguments that, oral narratives are passed across generations mainly through the word of mouth. Abiola and Gikandi add that

performers and audiences of these folktales never lose sight of their moral value, whether they advocate for patience, punishment of greed and selfishness, or merely explain the themes in the folktale. The significance of oral narratives in shaping the character of young people in societies is reinforced by Akanbi (2014) who posits that among the Yorubas, narratives are used to teach children moral values. He adds that the basis of a story is the moral values the storyteller desires to pass. Similarly, the mentors who use narratives while training initiates in ARP ceremonies also tailor their narratives in such a way that those narratives address the needs of the initiates.

Oral narratives usually mirror the virtues embraced in a community. According to Halima (2015, p. 8), the folktales of the Idioma people are used to instill values among their children. The narratives reflect the kind of values the community treasures such as courage, discipline, moral uprightness, and hardwork. Mbiti (1966) also suggests that people's folktales mirror different aspects of the people's way of life: their activities, sorrows, fears, and their response to their environment. The assertions of Mbiti and Halima on the role of narratives in societies form the backbone of this study that discusses the role of oral narratives performed in ARP ceremonies in moulding the character of initiates and reflecting all aspects of life that affect lives of initiates among the Igembe people.

Oral narratives are innovatively adapted by different narrators to respond to emerging issues in the community. Opondo (2014, pp. 120-121) affirms that Postcolonial, global, and modern situations have greatly impacted on the African oral narrative. The introduction of a narrative as an item to be performed on stage in the Kenyan Schools and College Drama Festivals (KSCDF) has enhanced the performance and functional aspects of oral narratives. The scholar adds that with literacy and media across world societies, oral narratives have shown their adaptations to contemporary, contextual, thematic, and structural demands. The assertions by Opondo that oral narratives are adaptable to contemporary issues are of interest to this study that discusses how styles in oral narratives, songs, and proverbs are adapted and used in ARP ceremonies which is a contemporary phenomenon to address emerging issues in the society.

The innovativeness of narrators of oral narratives enables them to use oral narratives to pass on moral lessons to future generations as they address the contextual issues

affecting the contemporary society. Orina *et al.*, (2014, p. 200) reaffirms this assertion when they suggest that orality is an art form that serves across generations and societies because of its resilient nature. Modern orators are able to surmount the limitations of memory and become responsive to contemporary realities. The issues that are echoed in a story usually depend on the existing worldview of both the society and the narrator. When a performer embroiders a story, the performer puts into consideration the values and beliefs the audience holds. These assertions resonate the objectives of this study that discusses the styles in oral genres and didactic messages passed on to initiates in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people through narratives that are coined and embroidered to mirror experiences, realities, and challenges of the Igembe people.

Oral genres of literature are also used to socialize people on their gender roles and statuses that conform to the expectations of different communities. This kind of socialization helps the newly initiated boys and girls to fit in the normative pattern of their community with few incidences of friction. Consequently, peace and harmony is promoted in that community. Wanjiru (2015) posits that oral narratives, songs, and proverbs are used among the Gikuyu people to socially construct gender roles and statuses. Some values in the community are inculcated among women through the three genres of oral literature as women are prepared to take up their gender roles in the society. Similarly, this study also discusses the messages in songs, narratives, and proverbs performed in ARP ceremonies that perpetuate among other things, gender roles and statuses to initiates among the Igembe people.

In the foregoing discussion, it is evident that oral narratives play an integral role in the society. The genres are used to pass on cultural norms, inculcate virtues, and to reflect the fears and attitudes of the people to the future generations. In addition, they socialize people on the societal expectations, gender roles, and statuses. This is achieved by embroidering, embellishment, and coining of oral narratives to reflect the concerns and worldview of each community. Thus, the review of oral narratives discussed acts as a spring board for this study.

## **2.2 Styles in Genres of Oral Literature**

During performance of any genre of orality, there is an interaction between a performer and an audience. Each performer uses his or her unique style of performance depending on his or her oratory skills, circumstances of the audience and the nature of message one intends to communicate. Different features of style are unique to some specific genres of oral literature while others cut across several genres of oral literature.

Bukenya et al. (1996, p. 34), explain that style is the variation in which information is organized to embody or create an artistic quality and enthusiasm exhibited during its performance. On the other hand, performance refers to the interaction between the artist and the audience through the use of rhythmic language and non-verbal body movements such as facial expressions, gestures, mimicry, dance, and rhythm. It also entails use of voice and tone by each character in order to depict a desired image and maintain suspense. Sometimes during an oral performance, the audience may participate by singing, clapping, chanting, and engaging in a dialogue with the actor. The interaction between the performer and the audience gives an oral performance life and spirit which creates a spectacular performance that entertains the audience. The engagement of the audience in different ways highlighted above breaks monotony of narration, sustains the attention of initiates, and consequently enhances retention of messages communicated to them when used in genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies.

Each aspect of style used in any performance of a genre of oral literature plays a significant role in enhancing the performance of the genre and in delivering a given message to the audience. Finnegan (1970, p.13) stresses the significance of aspects of style in oral genres in aiding communication of varied messages to the audience by asserting that the “full appreciation must depend on analysis not only of the verbal interplay and overtones in the piece, its stylistics structure and content, but also of the various detailed devices which the performer has at his disposal to convey his product to the audience”. Chesaina (1991) adds that oral literature is a literary art that depends on the creative use of language and relies on a combination of language and performance as its medium of expression. Thus, one needs to analyse the language

used and interpret the actions of the performer so as to fully comprehend the message being communicated in different contexts.

Although most genres of oral literature have shared aspects of style, each genre of oral literature has specific literary characteristics which distinguish it from other genres. Proverbs have their own distinguishing features that enhance their effectiveness in communication. Jegede (2008, p. 182) affirms the uniqueness of proverbs by saying that “proverbs are a dynamic mode of discourse with unique identity”. Chesaina (1991) points out that most proverbs appear in form of short precise statements. In other words, word economy through use of poetic license is used to facilitate quick communication and emphasize the urgency of the conveyed advice. Bukenya *et al.*, (1996, p. 48) also add that a proverb is brief and is used mainly because of its clarity in expressing figurative comment on any situation. The syntax in proverbs is simple and thus easy to comprehend. The brevity of proverbs is achieved through different ways. Nyembezi (1954, p.13) avers that economy of wording in proverbs is achieved through elision where whole words or vowels are left out for the sake of rhythm. Therefore the brevity and simplicity of proverbs make it easy for both the speakers and the audience to easily recall the proverbs used and messages encompassed. These aspects of proverbs make them a viable tool of communication during ARP ceremonies.

Another feature of proverbs that make them a viable tool for communication is pointed out by Herzog (1936) who says that proverbs are so flexible that the same proverb can be used to give advice, instruction, or warning; and is cited in contexts that are far removed from the original application. The flexibility of proverbs allows speakers to use one proverb in diverse circumstances to communicate different messages in a unique and memorable way. This implies that the meaning of a proverb can never be divorced from the contexts of their usage.

It is important to analyse the language used in any proverb in order to comprehend the message passed on through it. The significance of language used in proverbs is pointed out by Okojie (2004, p. 2) who says that “proverbs epitomize a people’s language showing not just wit, humour, wisdom, but life experiences; and hence, it is the major medium of expression of the aged and the wise”. Chesaina (1991) adds that



the strength of proverbs depends on the choice of language used in order to leave a vivid impression and hence communicate the intended message effectively.

Proverbs are generally highly figurative. The nature of proverbs is further explained by Finnegan (1970) who says that the elevated use of imagery in proverbs makes them memorable and thus can be used to address different issues in varied contexts. On the other hand, Miruka (1994, p. 44) adds that proverbs contain folk wisdom and usually make use of imagery that is characteristically bold, short, graphic, and memorable. Some proverbs commonly employ imagery such as metaphors, similes, and symbols for clarity. Bukenya *et al.*, further add that proverbs communicate convincingly on a situation through use of accurate imagery that is drawn from flora and fauna (plants and creatures), people's habits, customs, occupations, beliefs, social and political institutions, and other forms of oral literature.

Some proverbs are memorable because they are derived from familiar images and circumstances from the environment and usually allude to things and places in the society. According to Miruka (2001, pp. 55-56), proverbs make use of imagery and allusions that depict oral graphics of literature. The allusion and imagery used in many proverbs may refer to names of people or places. The names get associated with the circumstances that the proverbs refer to and hence gain a duality. In other words, the names are realistic and they also belong to the world of fiction. The factuality of those names hint at the probable historicity of the proverbs (the fact that the events may have actually happened).

Miruka further adds that metaphors and similes are used as features of style in proverbs, songs, or narratives. He posits that in a metaphor, two different things are directly compared by calling one thing the other that it cannot literally be. The things that are compared are usually different from each other because they do not have any related physical characteristics. By comparing an event, object, or place to another, the metaphor can reveal new qualities of the original by creating mental images or pictures in the minds of the audience. In addition, they express or state a universal truth; some of them are culturally bound in their imagery and thus will reveal to us more about their culture and environment.

Miruka (2001) further explains that a simile is a figure of speech where one thing is compared to another using words of comparison such as “like” and “as...as”. This style helps to create mental pictures of the things being compared. When imagery and allusions are used in oral genres performed in ARP ceremonies, they help the speakers to communicate to initiates more clearly than plain language would. The initiates are able to get mental impressions of what is expressed and the message communicated to them is likely to stick in their minds.

Some genres of oral literature such as proverbs, narratives, and songs are interesting to listen to because they make use of mnemonics. According to Burke *et al.*, (2002, pp. 435-439), mnemonics refer to use of sound effects that make an expression pleasant and memorable especially as a result of the rhythm and musicality in it. Mnemonics may be demonstrated by use of alliteration, rhyme, assonance, consonance, or ideophones. Burke *et al.* further explain that assonance is a repetitive vowel sound or their combination in words that come after one another or are together in a statement. Miruka and Sunkuli (1990, p. 5) explain that alliteration refers to the “repetition of similar consonant sounds usually at the beginning of words that follow each other or are close to each other in the same line in a poem or a short fixed form”. Bukenya *et al.*, (1996, p. 48) reaffirms the significance of mnemonics in proverbs when he says that the use of alliteration, rhyme, and rhythm make proverbs memorable. The aspects of style in proverbs that enhance memorability of messages communicated to the audience resonate one of the objectives of this study that discusses how different styles in genres of orality enhance communication of messages in ARP ceremonies

Parallelism is one of the structural features of proverbs that make them a viable tool for communication. Miruka and Sunkuli (1990, pp. 68-69) explain the meaning of parallelism “as the use of balancing units: expressions, episodes, characters, etc in a story, poem, proverb etc, especially for purposes of comparison, contrast, and qualification”. Parallelism is used particularly in sounding very serious warnings especially in cautionary proverbs.

Some aspects of style in proverbs allow verbal participation of the audience. This ensures that the performance of proverbs is interesting and memorable particularly

when used by speakers addressing initiates in ARP ceremonies since the sessions are usually long and can thus be tiresome. Miruka (1994, pp. 62-63) points out that use of ellipsis is evident in speech where there is a tendency to fill one part of the proverb and to leave the second part to be completed by the interlocutor either loudly or softly. This allows the audience to participate in the performance of proverbs and thus makes the interaction between the performer and the audience highly conversational.

An oral narrative is one of the genres of oral literature that has unique aspects of style that characterize its performance. Chesaina (1991) suggests that oral narratives have stylistic techniques that make their performance memorable and effective in communicating the desired messages to the audience. These include use of: dialogue, repetition, animal characters, and suspense among others. Repetition of actions, events, or dialogues may be used for emphasis or for clarity. On the other hand, dialogue is used as a tool of characterization. It also punctuates the narration, hence making the narration of a narrative interesting. When repetition is used in ARP ceremonies, the message communicated to the initiates is emphasized and becomes memorable to initiates. Repetition is used in proverbs, songs, and in oral narratives. Animal characters are used to symbolically represent human characters and their behaviour. Symbolism allows the narrator to communicate sensitive messages in a subtle way without causing embarrassment to the audience or narrator by directly addressing personalities or issues. If a dialogue is incorporated in oral songs and narratives performed in ARP ceremonies, it makes the performance highly conversational and hence helps to alleviate boredom. Consequently, the message communicated becomes unforgettable to initiates.

Narratives are usually structured in such a way that they address diverse issues the narrator wishes to tackle in an interesting and memorable way. The role and structure of narratives in communication is explained by Opondo (2014, p. 119) who points out that “the length, structure, and content of oral narrative gives it a complexity that addresses a variety of the needs of the orate communities. These include entertainment, instruction, caution, and presentation of an ideology”. Thus, good storytellers are able to manipulate the story line and content of their narrative in order to meet their needs.

Okpewho (1992) avers that various narrators creatively employ use of a variety of styles to make performances of narratives interesting. Okpewho (1992) adds that:

It is in the storytelling performance that we see the maximum use of innovation and manipulation to make the narration more vivid and convincing {...} the performer must accompany the words of the tale with the appropriate face and body movements to illustrate such things as fear, anxiety, delight, and behaviours of various characters in the tale. (p. 45)

There are diverse features of style used in a song that make it a suitable tool for communication. Obote (1997) points out that a song like any other form of art exists in a language other than that of ordinary speech. It is a language that is heightened, patterned, and padded with images, symbols, allusions, and many other stylistic features, all intended to make it communicative and entertaining. The argument by Obote is significant to this study since the study also discusses how styles in genres of oral literature are used to enhance effective communication of various messages passed to initiates in ARP ceremonies.

The structure of a song makes its performance and delivery of the message encompassed in it easy and effective. Chesaina (1991, p. 34) is of the opinion that most songs are short but their performance time is stretched through repetition. Burke et al., (2002, p. 437), note that repetition is the recurrence of a mood, idea, sound, word or a line or lines in a poem. It mainly helps in the establishment of mood and themes. If used in a song, it could be the recurrence of a line or a stanza. In either case, it is supposed to be significant to the overall text. This style is important as it helps to emphasize the message passed on and aids its memorability. It also makes it easy for one to learn the song on the spot and hence everybody can easily participate in the singing. Repetition in songs is a crucial style in ARP ceremonies since participants can learn the song easily, get entertained and messages repeatedly communicated become memorable and beneficial to the initiates. Repetition may also occur in other genres such as oral narratives where it is used to emphasize the message being communicated by the narrator to the audience.

Most songs are elastic and spontaneous. According to Miruka, (1994, p. 85), elasticity refers to the expansive aspect of songs and spontaneity refers to the ability of songs to

incorporate new matter extemporaneously. Therefore, since the text is not fixed, it may be shortened or lengthened depending on the requirements of the moment by the performer. The lengthening is done by repetition of certain lines or by inclusion of other ideas. Miruka adds that an oral performer takes into account his or her audience and uses it as a source of reference by including their names and other things observed during the performance. The spontaneity and elasticity of songs is aptly and conveniently utilized to address emerging issues in the contemporary society in ARP ceremonies. This is because most of the songs performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people are performed in a different cultural and time setting from which they were originally performed. Hence, new materials are incorporated while utilizing the expansive aspect of songs so as to address issues affecting the lives of the initiates.

Miruka (1994, p. 84) further suggests that some songs have a call and response structure which facilitates orderly participation of various people in the performance. This attribute of performance is significant in songs sung in ARP rituals for it allows the audience or initiates to be part of the performance. Consequently, they all enjoy the singing and any messages communicated through the songs become more memorable to them than it would have been if they were just listeners. This style is particularly used in *Kiretheretie* or *Kirarire* songs that are performed in ARP ceremonies. The songs are usually very long and the soloist is at liberty to manipulate the song the way he or she desires. The audience's only role is to respond as guided by the soloist. This style also enables the soloist to delve into varied issues as he or she deems necessary since the role of the audience is just to respond accordingly as he receives cues from the soloist. Thus, the soloist who acts also as a teacher is able to pass educative messages to the initiates who also sometimes participate in the singing.

One of the aspects of songs that make them useful in various occasions is elaborated by Kabira (1987), who posits that a song is the most flexible genre in oral literature. It is easy to accommodate new ideas or words and fit them into song without altering the structure, rhythm, or body movement involved. The flexibility of songs makes them the most responsive genre to everyday life's changing circumstances. The observation about songs by Kabira forms the backbone for this study that seeks to

assess effectiveness of styles in communication of didactic messages passed on to initiates through songs and other oral genres performed in ARP rituals.

Some stylistic devices are used in more than one genre of literature. Burke et al. (2002, p. 429) posit that hyperbole or exaggeration is used as a style in proverbs, songs, or narratives in order to create a shocking effect. This consequently makes the listener think about the message communicated in them more deeply. In addition, an oral artist may also use exaggeration to ridicule any unacceptable behaviour. The message passed across through use of hyperbole becomes memorable to initiates. This information illuminates this study that interrogates the significance of styles used in oral genres performed in ARP ceremonies.

Symbols and imagery can also be used in the three genres of orality discussed in this study. Miruka (1994) says that, use of symbols and other imagery helps to communicate the intended message indirectly but clearly without causing unnecessary offence to the person to whom the message is aimed at. Barnet and William (2014, p. 136) add that a symbol is an image that is loaded with meaning which is not “simply literal and does not just stand for something else; it is both itself and something else that it richly suggests”. Symbolism and imagery aid different speakers to comment or talk about something decently which would have otherwise sounded vile. This aspect of orality is important when used in genres of orality performed in ARP ceremonies since different speakers can use them to discuss issues that would have otherwise been considered a taboo.

Gitumbi and Njuguna (2007, p. 62) point out that satire is a style used in different genres of oral literature to criticize human weakness or folly in a humorous way. It is mainly used to target people in authority, institutions, religious groups, or ordinary people. Through it, an artist is able to correct deviant individuals in the society without hurting the subjects. Satire is mainly achieved through irony, imagery, sarcasm, hyperbole, and humour. The style is significant to this study for it is instrumental in ARP ceremonies if one wants to criticize a certain vice evident among the young people or characters in narratives with a view of correcting a vice visible among initiates.

Other aspects of style used in oral genres of literature encourage mental engagement of the audience. According to Bukenya *et al.*, (1996), rhetorical questions are asked by a speaker during a performance but the questions do not demand an answer. They are posed to make people ponder over the issues raised, to produce some effect, or to make a statement. Rhetorical questions can be an essential attribute of any genre of oral literature in provoking the minds of the audience to carefully consider the issues being discussed hence sustaining the attention of the audience. This is a crucial aspect of style of oral literature used by mentors when guiding initiates in ARP ceremonies and it helps initiates to internalize issues discussed during the mentorship sessions.

Humour as an aspect of style is used in almost all genres of literature. It is used to relieve tension, make a performance interesting, and entertaining. According to Miruka (1994), humour makes a piece of communication irresistible to its audience whether this humour is intended by the speaker or is incidental. Humour may arise from words, images, or just the context of usage. Humour is significant for it vitiates boredom during a storytelling session. This consequently enhances retention of messages communicated to the audience. Humour is also necessary as it entertains the initiates especially where they are expected to be attentive for long counselling sessions such as in ARP ceremonies.

Euphemism is mainly used in oral songs and narratives. Kinnavy and Warriner (1993, p. 498) define euphemism as “the uttering of disagreeable or unpleasant things in an indirect manner”. It involves one using gentler words to avoid embarrassing or hurting others. This feature is significantly used in genres of orality performed in ARP ceremonies as it helps to camouflage communicated to initiates in the presence of an audience that is varied in terms of gender and age. This is because communication of some of the messages in simple and direct language may sound vulgar and offensive to such an audience.

Code-switching is a performance style commonly found in multilingual communities. It is a common phenomenon in contemporary times in most Kenyan communities due to infiltration of Western education, intertribal marriages, and integration of different linguistic groups due to migrations and settlements in different geographical settings. Gal (2008) and Gysel (1992), note that code-switching is used to fulfill a certain

linguistic gap or conceptual gap of the speaker. In addition, code-switching is used by different people because of other different reasons. According to Li Wei (1998, pp. 156-176), code-switching is used due to extralinguistic factors such as setting, relationships between participants, community norms and values, topic and political, societal and ideological developments influencing a speaker's choice of language in a conversation. This implies that a topic under discussion in one language may have certain ideas that can be best explained in another language as a result of lack of an equivalent word or explanation in the main language being used.

Myers-Scotton (1995, p. 57) adds that people may also be involved in code-switching consciously and purposefully to express affiliation and solidarity with a particular group. The foregoing discussion foregrounds this study since code-switching is inevitable especially in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people where Western formal education, intertribal marriages, and migrations have influenced the language(s) spoken by the residents of people of Igembe. Many of the initiates speak different languages such as the indigenous *Kimeru* language, *Kiswahili*, English, or any other first language of the speaker living among the Igembe people.

Genres of oral literature usually borrow a lot from the environment and members of the community. Gitumbi and Njuguna (2007, p. 72) reaffirms that local idioms are borrowed expressions from one's local community that are incorporated into different genres of oral literature. These expressions are understood by the community as serving as idiomatic expressions. Local idioms are mainly used to add local flavour, variety in literature, and make their performance interesting to listen to. This study finds the use of local idioms in genres of oral literature performed in ARP rituals of great significance since idioms help initiates to understand messages passed to them in a better way.

Gitumbi and Njuguna further note that direct address is used by literary artists where the speaker's actual words are given. Direct address is used in order to vary the perspective from which the persona tells the poem or may want to share in the persona's feelings and thoughts more intimately. Direct address is usually denoted by use of opening and closing quotation marks. This style is used in oral songs and narratives. The use of direct address in ARP ceremonies facilitates intimacy between



the speaker and the initiates. The messages passed to initiates are thus taken more seriously by the recipient since he or she is directly addressed by the speaker.

Each of the three genres of oral literature that this study analyses are performed using different styles discussed above. Each of the styles is significantly used to enhance performance and delivery of the intended message(s). Some of the features of style are used in more than one genre of oral literature. These styles make the performance interesting and the messages communicated to initiates more memorable. Other styles enable the audience to participate in the performance of the genre of oral literature. Therefore, the foregoing discussion on review of styles in oral narratives, proverbs, and songs is fundamental to the discussion on the effectiveness of styles in oral genres used as a tool for communication in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people.

### **2.3 Alternative Rites of Passage**

Many traditional communities value rites of passage rituals for they give individuals who undergo them an opportunity to be admitted into other more privileged statuses and to enjoy certain rights not accessible to them before. Many African societies have embraced several rites of passage such as circumcision which gives one an opportunity to transit from childhood into adulthood. Mbiti (1969, p. 122) posits that initiation into adulthood rite of passage is critical to the individual and community development as it helps the individual to grow and develop into a responsible and dependable adult. Circumcision is usually performed according to prescribed social rules and customs and has great educational role. The occasion of initiation often marks the beginning of acquisition of knowledge that is not given to those not circumcised.

Mwaniki (2015) affirms that circumcision is an important rite of passage and those who have been initiated into adulthood through it are usually highly respected. The young people look forward to undergoing circumcision because those initiated are also given the rights to own property, get married and procreate. Wafula (2006) opines that circumcision of boys is one of the most revered rite of passage in African traditional societies. Although Western civilization has had a tremendous impact on the rite of passage, some of its core elements have remained intact. Mbiti, Mwaniki, and Wafula's views lay a foundation for this study that discusses among other things

the significance of messages communicated to initiates in ARP ceremonies and the impact initiation rite of passage has on the initiates.

Importance of circumcision as a rite of passage into adulthood is further echoed by Were (2014) who says that circumcision among the Bukusu from Western Kenya marks an individual's acceptance as a full member of the tribe. While the initiates are in seclusion healing, the secrets of the society and other issues pertaining to being productive members of the community are imparted. After seclusion, the initiates are believed to have new personalities and are prepared to handle matters such as procreation and other responsibilities that come with the state of adulthood. Akivaga *et al.*, (1982) also posit that circumcision is a very important ceremony in communities that participate in it because it is a channel that one must pass through before being initiated into adulthood. Anybody who shuns circumcision is looked down upon and is rejected in the society and is treated like an outcast. This study benefits from the foregoing discussion because the study seeks to evaluate the messages communicated to initiates through use of oral genres of literature performed in ARP ceremonies. The study interrogates how the messages prepare the initiates for responsibilities of adulthood.

Traditional circumcision as a rite of passage into adulthood faces many challenges. WHO (2009, p. 217), points out that traditional circumcision of males in many communities in Africa is a horrifying human experience because boys are operated without anaesthesia by a traditional surgeon. Many deaths occur as a result of dehydration, blood loss, shock, induced heart failure, or septicemia. Other boys get penile amputations and sometimes develop other health complications as a result of the botched circumcision. Similarly, the traditional circumcision of girls also referred to as Female Genital Mutilation has also been going on alongside that of boys in many African countries. According to Shell-Duncan *et al.*, (2006, p. 6), the term Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) was adopted to replace circumcision of girls at the third Conference of the Inter Africa Committee on "Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children" in 1990 and is now used in WHO and other UN documents to emphasize the contravention of pertinent human rights involved. This knowledge is important to this study that explores among other things the role of

messages incorporated in oral genres performed in ARP ceremonies in the fight against traditional circumcision.

In a bid to protect young boys and girls from health challenges associated with traditional circumcision, many societies in the world are campaigning against traditional circumcision through legislation. Fogg (2014) affirms that the South African constitution has put laws which forbid circumcision practices that are harmful or violates the rights of children. Similarly, the Constitution of Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2010, Chapter Four {Bill of Rights}, pp. 26-29) protects each of the Kenyan citizens against any exposure to harmful cultural practices or being forced to undergo any harmful cultural rites of passage such as circumcision against one's will. Such rites of passage include FGM which has no established health benefits to the females who undergo it and traditional circumcision of boys that exposes the health of the boychild to danger. Other campaigns against traditional circumcision are spearheaded by educationists, political leaders, religious groups, and human rights groups such as *Maendeleo ya wanawake* in Kenya. Quite a number of mainstream churches among the Igembe people and other parts of Kenya have also put a spirited campaign against traditional circumcision of both boys and girls by supporting and empowering ARP as the better option for initiating boys and girls into adulthood.

International communities have not been left out in the fight against traditional circumcision. According to Lightfoot-Klein (1991, pp. 43- 44), a number of initiatives have been advanced by different governments to deal with FGM. Missionaries, colonial administrators, and different governments have tried to tackle the problem of FGM with minimal but gradual success in those societies that embrace it. WHO (2005) reports that international interventions have played a pivotal role towards eradication of FGM through signing of a number of treaties to establish conventional standards by acknowledging fundamental rights that require governments to make decisions and act so as to ensure FGM is also entrenched in treaties such as "The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women" (CEDAW) and "The Convention on the Rights of the Child" (CRC) (WHO, 1998). According to UNICEF (2005c, p. 29), FGM practice is also constitutionally prohibited in many countries such as: Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Uganda, Chad, Mali, Kenya, and Niger.

Many communities in Africa have embraced ARP programs for boys and girls to replace the traditional circumcision accused of exposing the youth to health hazards. WHO, (2009) explains that in Kenya, there is a hospital initiation program for boys that is organized and done by church organizations and hospitals. Some of these churches include: the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (Chogoria hospital), Methodist Church of Kenya, MCK Kaaga Synod Men's Fellowship, and the Inter Fellowship Evangelical Mission (ICFEM) of Western province, Bungoma (Luhyia).

On the other hand, Parmar and Walker (1993) explain that, there are changes in the approach of tackling FGM in many communities across the world. Instead of using just legislation to deter girls and communities from embracing FGM, the communities involved have resulted to provision of information, education, communication, campaigns, and use of innovative methods such as music, theatre, and films. Walker and Parmer add that provision of information ensures that the girls not physically initiated through the cut are also initiated into the traditional ways of their community through ARP just like those circumcised physically. The ARP training eliminates alienation and discrimination of girls not circumcised by providing them with an alternative way of transiting into adulthood. The views discussed in this literature review lay a foundation for this study that endeavours to find out the strategies that communities have embraced to help them win the war against traditional circumcision such as use of genres of oral literature as tools for communication in ARP ceremonies.

Other communities in Africa have also embraced ARP for girls. Namulondo (2009, p. 37) also opines that female and male elders of Sabinu community in Kapchorwa in Uganda protest against FGM by bringing together their daughters of suitable age to be kept in seclusion for one week. During seclusion, they are taught their gender roles, issues pertaining to family life as parents, and about their traditions. Information on good grooming, reproductive health, communication skills, housekeeping, self-esteem, and overcoming peer pressure are also passed to initiates. This is followed by celebrations in the community which constitute feasting, singing, and dancing to affirm the girls' transition to their new statuses and roles as adults. Namulondo adds that, such an approach recognizes the importance of the cultural values attached to the traditional FGM rituals and teachings and the need for them to be maintained. ARP

rituals symbolically mark the girls' initiation into adulthood as full-fledged members of the community thereby honouring the community's cultural values. The above discussion is significant to this study that aims at finding out how orality features as a tool for communicating didactic messages to initiates in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people.

Protest against hazardous circumcision practices through campaigns are bearing fruits in many countries in Africa. Ansorge (2008, pp. 3-7) confirms that about 89% of women and girls had undergone FGM by 1990 in Sudan. This reduced to 70% in 2006 (UNFPA, 2007 p. 39). The decline is attributed to the campaigns that have been going on in the country to promote abandonment of the practice. The abolition program includes Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) whose main aim is: to change attitude of people towards FGM by creating awareness about the negative health implications of FGM; teaching about human rights, training alternative income generating activities for circumcisers, introduction of other rituals, and improving anti-FGM legislation. Ansorge adds that important personalities in Sudan are involved in the campaigns to eradicate FGM. They include head teachers of schools who are trained to campaign against the practice. In addition, men are also used because they are the key decision makers in the society. These men pledge to support their daughters to stand firm against FGM. The men also publicly declare that they would marry the uncircumcised women. The declaration minimizes the discrimination and alienation of uncircumcised girls in the community.

Several communities in Kenya are also involved in campaigns against traditional circumcision rites of passage by advocating for ARP rituals. Teno (2014) reports that among the Maasai community of Kenya, Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) such as Safe Kenya with the support from local members of the community have also developed an ARP program whereby the girls are allowed to experience all the aspects of the traditional ceremony but do not undergo the actual cut. The initiated girl get shaved, milk is poured on her thighs and is given a bracelet. When she reappears again, she has a traditional headdress symbolizing that the girl is now recognized as a woman. This validates her identity as part of the community. According to the research by Teno, the churches, NGOs, and the government of Kenya have supported ARP for the girls in many Kenyan communities because they

believe that there are more humane rites of passage that entire communities can embrace to initiate the young girl into adulthood without necessarily being cut. Packer (2005) argues that alternative campaigns against FGM must be maintained and the teachings about the importance of traditional cultural values should be sustained. According to Chege (2001, p. 89), ARP offers the girls an opportunity to be declared in public to have made a transition into adulthood in a socially acceptable way. This subsequently reduces the perceived social disapproval of those not circumcised and reinforces public acceptance of their new status. The report by Ansorge, Teno, Chege, and Packer acts as a spring board for this study that investigates the significance of didactic messages communicated to initiates and their styles in oral genres of literature performed ARP rituals for both boys and girls among the Igembe people.

#### **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

This study uses the Functionalist Theory to analyse the didacticism of messages and styles in oral songs, narratives, and proverbs performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people. Functionalist theory is useful when ascribing functions to the chosen genres.

Malinowski (1944) is one of the proponents of functionalist theory. He emphasizes the importance of studying social behaviour and social relations in their natural and cultural contexts via participant observation. The principle concept of Malinowski's theorizing involves comprehending a particular item by acknowledging its role in the contemporary operation of that culture. Since ARP is a cultural practice, the argument of Malinowski is significant and is used to discuss the role of the ARP ceremonies and the genres of oral literature performed in such rituals.

He further suggests that culture is essentially a fundamental tool by which man is put in a position to tackle concrete, particular problems that face him in his environment in the course of satisfaction of his needs. He also points out that culture is a system of objects, activities, and attitudes in which every part exists as a means to an end and the various elements are interdependent. From the dynamic point of view as regards the type of activity, culture can be divided into a number of aspects such as education, social control, economics, and systems of knowledge, beliefs and morality and also

modes of creative and artistic expression. Malinowski also adds that communal activities are significant towards having a cohesive society. The theory is significant to this study in the discussion of how oral genres and their styles performed in ARP ceremonies are artistically performed to pass messages to initiates that are significant in promoting virtues that deter vices that cause disharmony among members of that community.

Malinowski (1944) further asserts that institutions are necessary for continuity of life and the normalcy of a given organism or an aggregate of organisms as species. The scholar affirms that culture is always core to the fulfilment of organic needs. His assertions guide this study in the analysis of the role of ARP ceremonies and the specific messages communicated in ARP rituals and how the messages are crucial to the element of social control of the behaviour of the young people by moulding the character of the initiates so that their behaviours can be aligned with the normative pattern of the Igembe community. The myriad of problems facing the initiates that interfere with the health of individuals and the cohesiveness of the community such as drug abuse, immorality, watching of pornography, and radicalization are some of the thorny issues discussed in ARP ceremonies that the theory helps to illuminate.

Radcliffe-Brown (1952) suggests that human beings are vital units that are interconnected in a multi-contextual way through varied social relations into an integrated whole. Like the biological organism, the continuity of any given social structure is not damaged by alterations in the units. Although individuals may exit the society by death or other means, other individuals enter it. Therefore, the continuity of a community is maintained by the process of social life, which consists of the activities and interactions of the individual human beings and organized groups into which they are united. The social life of a community is thus the functioning of the social structure. Any persistent activity is important for it plays a role in the social life as a whole and thereby contributes to the structural continuity. The view of Radcliffe-Brown is significant to this study when discussing how oral genres and their styles are used to campaign for change to replace traditional initiation into adulthood practices that expose initiates to health hazards in preference for less harmful ARP rituals that mimic most of the beneficial teachings offered traditionally. The cultural teachings

offered in ARP ceremonies ensure the continuity of the cultural values of the community as one entity even with the demise of the traditional circumcision practice.

Durkheim (1895) is a functionalist who postulates that social order and social structure are important because they constrain individual selfishness. However, he notes that as societies evolve, people also become more individualistic. Thus, maintaining social order becomes a problem for the society. His desire is to ensure that the modern societies are harmonious and orderly. He believes that there is a social structure that is made up of social norms and values and that people's behaviour is moulded by the system of norms and values that they are born into. The social structure is external to the individual and constrains the individual's ways of acting. He added that individuals are naturally selfish and the society needs to have something bigger by teaching them standards of acceptable behaviour (moral regulation), in order to control and restrain their selfish tendencies so as to ensure that societies have a sense of social solidarity.

Both moral regulation and social solidarity rely on effective socialization of individuals into the wider society. Socialization is the process whereby individuals learn the norms and values of a society. Durkheim argues that solidarity and moral regulation are achieved in different ways. If people have shared experiences or reality and same goals and are closely reliant on one another, moral regulation and social solidarity are easily achieved (solidarity based on similarity). The arguments by Durkheim illuminates this study that investigates how ARP rituals and oral genres and their styles performed in ARP ceremonies socialize the initiates; and communicate values and norms that promote unity and selflessness in the society. Patriarchy is also a social structure that regulates the relationship between men and women that is highlighted in ARP ceremonies through the genres of oral literature performed in such ceremonies. Cohesiveness is thus achieved when the initiates undergo the same training and teachings when they are being initiated into adulthood through ARP rituals.

According to Kuper A. and Kuper J. (1985, pp. 322-324), functional analysis is used in social sciences to inquire why particular features of a system persist by locating them in the wider system. By doing so, a function is ascribed to that practice or item.



Functionalism is also a form or method of studying the life of a society by examining the functions or roles performed by anything practised in that society. It also looks at the way in which these functions help to ensure the survival of the society. Kuper's views are important to this study by guiding the discussion and analysis of oral literature genres performed in ARP by looking closely at the functions the genres of orality perform to ensure the survival of the society that is threatened by hazardous traditional circumcision practices of both girls and boys. In addition, Kuper's assertions lay a foundation for the analysis of how the messages communicated to initiates in ARP equip the youth with life skills that help them combat social ills that threaten their existence such as drug abuse and immorality that lead to transmission of incurable and deadly infections that can lead to extinction of communities.

Talcott (2005) stipulates that a society works like a body of a human being and institutions in a society are comparable to organs in a body with each performing specific functions that are necessary to ensure normal functioning of the whole body. He argues that each and every part of a society should be identified and associated with its role towards the maintenance of the whole. Talcott is further interested in identifying the role of institutions in a society in ensuring social order and how it is maintained in that society.

According to Talcott, institutions promote value consensus (agreement around shared values). Secondly, Talcott argues that for order to exist and persist in a society, institutions should be committed to common values. Some of the most important shared values include: a belief in the work ethic and in meritocracy. According to Talcott, belief in the work ethic and in meritocracy is important to contemporary society because work ethic ensures people value working instead of lazing around and meritocracy means people believe that hardwork should be rewarded. Talcott also argues that education integrates individuals into the wider society by providing individuals with a sense of belonging and identity to the wider society. Talcott adds that education does this through teaching a shared history and language. The contribution by Talcott about work ethic and meritocracy lays a fundamental foundation for the study that highlights how oral genres are used in ARP ceremonies to offer cultural education and life skills to initiates in seclusion in a bid to equip them and socialize them in the ways of the community involved. Among virtues inculcated

are those that promote justice and virtue of hardwork. With a common ARP ritual and having followed the same training and socialization, the initiates tend to have a shared identity that promotes harmonious coexistence of individual's in the same society.

In addition, Talcott's advocacy for social order attained through the same training is significant to the study when discussing how oral genres and their styles are used to deter vices in the society. The deterrent of vices is done in order to ensure amicable relationship among members of a society is attained. Talcott believes that societies have functional prerequisites (are things that a society need in order to survive) just like people require certain things in order for them to function properly. Talcott postulates that four needs required for the survival of a society are: adaptation, goal attainment, integration and latency. He posits that the needs of the society should be prioritized before the needs of the individual.

The first need involves adaptation which constitutes procuring the means to achieve valued goals by providing the physical necessities of an institutional life. Talcott's argument on adaptation is a key concern of the study that interrogates how ARP rituals are being adapted by contemporary societies to slowly replace traditional initiation into adulthood rituals that threaten the survival of initiates by exposing initiates to health hazards. The theory is also relevant in analysis of how oral genres that were traditionally used as a tool for communication and are now adapted and innovatively used to address contemporary problems that were not prevalent in the olden days.

The second problem that faces a society is goal attainment. This means, there is need to set goals for human behaviour and also to determine the means by which these goals can be achieved. The goal of every community is to have responsible and independent adults. The argument of Talcott is important in the analysis of virtues inculcated and vices castigated in the initiates that ensure initiates are socialized well enough to understand the dos and the donts of their community so that initiates can coexist with others peacefully.

Thirdly, there is need to integrate people so that they can feel that they belong to a given community. One way of achieving the integration is by giving people

something common to hold on to such as values and beliefs. The ability of an institution to integrate its people successfully is vital for its continuation and internal harmony. The promotion of ARP through genres of oral literature ensures that the initiates attend the same training and socialization where the same values, traditions, and beliefs are instilled in the initiates as they transit into adulthood. This enhances unity among the initiates and families when different family members come together to celebrate their initiation into adulthood from childhood.

Fourthly, there is need for latency to be found in the society. This involves development of social control mechanisms that serve to manage tensions, motivate people, and resolve interpersonal conflicts within the institution. In this respect, Talcot's contribution is fundamental to the study in the analysis of the social benefits of genres of oral literature in ARP rituals that promote and inculcate virtues, communal cultural values, and the history of the community that enhance unity as a result of having shared experiences and beliefs.

Although functionalism theory has many benefits as it highlights the merits of items found in a community, the theory fails to look at the dysfunctional aspect of certain items that still persist in the society. The theory professes that repetitive behaviour has a function because it is repeatedly embraced by the community. However, some aspects of culture may continue being practiced in a community even though they do not benefit the members of the society which contradicts the premise of the theory. In this context, the traditional rite of passage still persists in many communities yet; the practice adversely affects those who undergo it. Some of the genres of literature performed in circumcision ceremonies propagate social cultural change that impacts the society negatively. This includes but not limited to embracing patriarchal roles and statuses.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Location of the Study**

This research was carried out in Akachiu, Maua, and Kiegoi /Antubochiu Wards in Igembe South Constituency, Meru County (See Appendix XIII).

#### **3.2 Research Design**

A qualitative research design was used in this study. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), a qualitative research involves description. It seeks to analyse the culture and behaviour of humans and their groups from the viewpoint of those being studied. In this research, flexible and interactive strategy such as participant observation was relied upon. Through participant observation, the researcher got an opportunity to create a rapport with the study respondents. The researcher observed and sometimes participated in the performance of the genres of literature being studied. The strategy gave the researcher an opportunity to collect data from the field and interact with the performers. Effective participation in the activities performed allowed the researcher to immerse herself in the target participants' environment by observing and listening to them so as to comprehend their goals, traditions, problems, and motivations. The themes and styles that emerged from genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies were noted. The design also allowed primacy of data where the researcher and the researched genres of oral literature interacted freely leading to the generalization of concepts which are a product of the research. This was done so that the data collected, mirrors the experiences of the society being focused on to ensure it is reliable and valid.

#### **3.3 Target Population**

There are 17 proverbs, 15 narratives, and 25 songs that were collected for analysis. The genres of oral literature were performed by counsellors of varied genders, professions, and educational backgrounds who were mentoring initiates in the seclusion sites for girls and in ARP graduation ceremonies for the initiated boys and girls. Some of the songs collected were performed by the girls in seclusion sites and during their graduation day to entertain visitors who attended the ceremony.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size**

The study used purposeful sampling method to choose genres of oral literature performed in seclusion sites for girls and the graduation ceremonies for both the initiated boys and girls. Twenty graduation ceremonies for initiated boys and three seclusion sites for girls and their graduation ceremonies were identified for collecting data for analysis. Thereafter the researcher visited the selected sampled sites so as to collect data. Several narratives, songs, and proverbs were collected but a few that offered data that the researcher was interested in were identified and selected for analysis. There were twenty 25 songs, 17 proverbs and 15 narratives that were selected.

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

The study used an audio-visual camera, a smart phone, pens, and note books for collecting and recording data.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedure**

Research permit was sought from Chuka University and thereafter from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). The Research Permit from NACOSTI was presented to the Meru County Director of Education and Meru County Commissioner for permit to carry out the research in Meru County. Research permit was given to the researcher to proceed on to the field where the Alternative Rite of Passage (ARP) ceremonies were taking place. Further permission to collect data was verbally sought from the organizers of the ARP seclusion centres that are organized by churches. The respondents were explained to the purpose of the investigation. Verbal permission to collect data from different homes where graduation parties were held was also sought from parents of the initiated boys and girls.

The researcher collected data from ARP seclusion sites for girls and their graduation ceremonies held in churches and school compounds, where the initiates were in seclusion by videotaping the sessions where different speakers were talking to the initiates. Data was also collected from different homecoming celebratory ceremonies held in the churches and homes of the newly initiated boys by videotaping different performances, participating and observing the proceedings of the different sessions

being undertaken. The data collected from the field was used to argue the data collected from the texts in the library and internet.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

The raw data collected was recorded in the language it was originally performed in. The languages used were *Kimeru*, *Kiswahili*, or English. The data was then written down using the language it was performed in and was later translated into English language which is more universally accessible. The translation was done to ensure that people from outside the geographical area of the local dialect also benefit from the information gathered. The translation was done carefully to ensure that the nearest equivalence in meaning is retained.

The data that merited the objectives of the study was analysed and organized in different chapters. Chapter four focuses on the didactic value of messages communicated through oral proverbs, songs, and narratives performed in ARP ceremonies. The fifth chapter highlights the significance of different stylistic devices used in the three oral genres. Finally, chapter six focuses on the conclusions and recommendations made for further study. The data collected from the library, internet, and the field was collaborated. Conclusions were drawn and recommendations given based on the findings.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

According to May (1997) ethics refer to the moral codes that are followed while doing research. The ethical morals are binding and they also remind us of our responsibilities to the people being researched on. According to May (1997), it is important to treat sensitive information given to the researcher by the respondent confidentially. This confidentiality should always be respected unless there are good reasons to do otherwise. Mugenda (2003) adds that one should seek permission from parents and guardians if one uses vulnerable groups to collect one's data. For the purposes of this research, organizers, and groups dealing with Alternative Rites of Passage and parents of the initiates were assured by the researcher that the data collected was going to be used for the research purposes only. The initiates were also informed that they would be videotaped during the ARP ceremonies and consent was

sought from their parents and guardians to do so. All the respondents were informed that they could withdraw from the research if they wanted to.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**DIDACTICS OF ORALITY IN ALTERNATIVE RITES OF PASSAGE**  
**AMONG THE ISEMBE PEOPLE**

**4.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the educative value of messages passed on to initiates through oral narratives, proverbs, and songs performed in ARP rituals among the Isembe people. The first subtopic of the chapter highlights transformative role of oral songs, narratives, and proverbs as far as traditional initiation of boys and girls into adulthood is concerned. The second subtopic discusses the role of oral literature in inculcating virtues among the initiates in ARP ceremonies. The third subtopic highlights castigation of vices abhorred and deterred by Isembe people. The final section highlights gender roles and statuses, traditions, philosophies, beliefs, and practices of the Isembe people perpetuated to the initiates. The chapter concludes that the three genres of oral literature prepare initiates by equipping them with life skills and knowledge of the cultural norms and practices of their community. As a consequence, this helps them fit in the society as mature, dependable, and independent individuals.

**4.2 Transformative Role of Orality in Alternative Rites of Passage**

The Isembe community has devised an alternative way of protesting against traditional modes of initiating their girls and boys into adulthood by embracing ARP ritual which has less harmful effects on the health of initiates; and which still prepares them to be responsible members of the community. The campaign against traditional circumcision practices is carried out through use of songs, narratives, and proverbs performed in ARP ceremonies. Currently, there is an intense onslaught against girls' circumcision also referred to as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) spearheaded by churches and community leaders entitled *Ntaanira Mwana na Mugambo Mwana Athome* (circumcise the child with the word of mouth so that she can pursue her education). In addition, there is resistance and protest against traditional boys' circumcision among the Isembe people in preference to Christian Hospital Initiation (CHI) for boys as an alternative way of initiating their boys into adulthood. The campaigns to completely abandon FGM and traditional circumcision of boys are advanced through the use of songs, proverbs, and narratives. This is done during counselling sessions while the initiated girls are in seclusion and on the graduation day ceremonies for both boys and girls initiated through ARP and CHI rituals.



Song no.1, *Asifiwe* (Be praised) sang by initiated girls calls for cultural change from destructive physical circumcision of girls to the ARP organized by the churches that is done orally. This is a Christian song that alludes to the Christian religious faith but is embellished and adapted to campaign against FGM practices. Talcott (2005) believes that a society needs to embrace adaptation to ensure its survival. Thus, the oral song is adapted to suit the need to educate the initiates, the importance of embracing ARP which has more health benefits than clinging to traditional practices that threaten the wellbeing of initiates and survival of the society. The moral message of the song is that the traditional girls' circumcision mutilates the girls who undergo it. On the other hand, the new Christian way of initiating girls into adulthood (ARP) that is supported by the church and is done through counselling is safer:

**Audience:** Be praised, in the church I will go  
To have my daughter initiated there,  
The Bible will be read to her,  
**Audience:** I do not want my daughter  
To be mutilated.

Similarly, song no. 2, *Wananiambia nitahiriwe* (They are telling me to get circumcised), sang by initiated girls also forms part of the girls' resistance against FGM. The girls assert that they do not want to be coerced into being circumcised in order to please anybody since the practice is archaic and has no benefits to them:

**Soloist:** They are telling me to be circumcised  
And I am not used to it  
...  
**Soloist:** Circumcision is an ancient practice  
And today, it is useless  
I cannot get circumcised because of you.

Song no. 3, *Ni mapambano na tohara* (It is a fight against circumcision of girls) is sung by initiated girls to call for solidarity from the uncircumcised girls in protesting against forced FGM. Apparently, among the Igembe people, women are compelled by their husbands or in-laws to get circumcised so that they can be socially acceptable in the families they get married to. The uncircumcised girls who are derogatively referred to as *nkenye* are also considered to be immature and dirty. In addition, in the traditional society and even today, there are some parts of Igembe whereby the girls that reject FGM are usually ridiculed and alienated during social gatherings and

ceremonies. For instance, an uncircumcised woman is prohibited from cooking and preparing gruel for the traditionally initiated boys in seclusion during traditional rituals such as “the burning ceremony”. A husband of an uncircumcised woman is heavily fined if she defies such norms. In addition, if a man married to such a woman attends the traditional rituals and ceremonies, he suffers a similar kind of mockery by other men. This ridicule pressurizes such a man to force the wife to be circumcised so that he is acceptable among his age-mates. Therefore, the girls initiated through ARP echo their sentiments of total rejection of the FGM practice through the song. Their optimism to triumph against the FGM practice resonates in the song when they sing:

**Soloist:** It is a fight against girls’ circumcision uu

...

**Soloist:** All of us have to fight it

**Audience:** And we will triumph.

Song no. 2 and no. 3 also act as a social commentary of the sentiments of the Igembe people who feel that girls have their democratic right to choose whether they want to be circumcised without any external coercion. UNICEF, (2005b) reports confirm that FGM is one of the ways that a society controls women by perpetuating normative gender based roles that are unfair and hazardous to females. The songs thus help the initiates to mobilize other women together as one formidable force to say “No” to the obsolete and oppressive practice that is indirectly perpetuated against them by men.

Song no. 2, *Wananiambia nitahiriwe* (They are telling me to get circumcised) is performed by initiated girls to advise other girls to shun FGM. This is because they feel that FGM is an antiquated practice that reduces the sexual libido of those circumcised rendering them sexually undesirable. Ahmadu (2000, pp. 283-312) affirms that, FGM is believed to restrain sexual desires of the circumcised women. This ultimately ensures the women’s faithfulness to their spouses. It also deters errant sexual activity that is considered deviant and unethical. In The girls’ words, they want to resist FGM because they do not want to suffer the fate experienced by those circumcised before them. The girls sing:

**Soloist:** Circumcision is an ancient practice and  
Today, it is useless and I cannot get circumcised

...

**Soloist:** And those others who got circumcised

...  
Are now not appetizing (sexually appealing).

Circumcision of girls among the Igembe people is viewed as a precursor to marriage because immediately after FGM, the girl is considered an adult and ready for marriage. In this regard, song no. 4, *Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya* (Today's Kenya is a new Kenya) that is performed by girls initiated through ARP appeals to other girls to embrace education rather than FGM that would ultimately hinder them from progressing in life. In addition, the circumcised girls are reminded that they would not be relevant in the contemporary society if they accept to be circumcised. The circumcised girls are ridiculed in the song and are said to be "foolish, witches, wayward, and dirty." On the other hand, the uncircumcised girls are applauded for being educated; and as a result, they can acquire lucrative professions like being doctors and teachers. This contrast is meant to impress upon girls to reject FGM and embrace ARP which is glorified:

**Soloist:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls  
**Soloist:** Those who have been circumcised are fools  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls  
**Soloist:** Those who have been circumcised are witches  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those circumcised are crooked  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls  
**Soloist:** Those who are circumcised are not clean  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls  
**Soloist:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those circumcised are not educated  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya  
It does not want circumcised girls  
**Soloist:** Those circumcised are not educated  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

...  
**Soloist:** Those not circumcised are doctors  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

...  
**Soloist:** Those not circumcised are teachers  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

The message in song no. 5, *Tuthame tuinthe* (Let us all migrate) by Kirema Masharufu persuades girls to comply with the current technological development in the world by shunning FGM that is metaphorically referred to as “analogue” in preference to ARP that is equated to being “digital”. Thus, the song is expected to change the attitude of the uncircumcised girls so that they can loathe being circumcised which is viewed as an old-fashioned cultural practice (analogue) and instead to embrace ARP (digital) that is more fashionable and acceptable in the contemporary society:

**Soloist:** Let us all migrate ii,  
**Audience:** Let us all migrate ii  
**Soloist:** From being analogue  
**Audience:** To being digital ii

Song no. 6, *Weru nibuejire* (Light came) is performed by Thirindi Mitiine and is used to remind girls that female circumcision is unlawful. The song persuades the uncircumcised girls to resist the practice through prayers and education. According to the song, FGM is being rejected because women “have seen light” or are now enlightened. The metaphor of “seeing light” refers to those who are enlightened on the harmful effects of FGM and have since then rejected the practice. On the other hand, those who are still embracing FGM are “living in darkness” and are therefore retrogressive. The song also reminds those who perpetuate the atrocious practice that it is illegal to do so. The girls sing:

**Soloist:** Light came to our village and it shone and it told  
Women that circumcision of girls has been banned  
.....  
**Soloist:** Let them be banned using seminars and women  
will progress.

Song no. 7, *Ntaano cia nkenye* (circumcision of girls) performed by Ura MCK women group choir motivates the uncircumcised girls to aggressively resist FGM because it exposes them to diseases. The health hazards associated with circumcision enumerated in the song include: risk of contracting diseases such as tetanus, AIDS, and hepatitis. In addition, one may encounter difficulties during childbirth such as bleeding that can result to death. The report by UNICEF (2005a) concurs with the sentiments echoed in song no.7, that FGM is still practised in many parts of the world even when the perpetrators know its harmful effects because those who depart from the cultural practice are intimidated, condemned, and shunned in the community:

**Call:** Diseases are there called AIDS and tetanus,  
Hepatitis is a viral infection and it is a  
Killer disease, I would be annoyed if you got  
AIDS after enthusiastically having gone  
To be circumcised.

...

**Response:** You girl, when things go haywire when  
You reach maternity, delivering, the pain  
is unbearable, you chose this yourself,  
To be circumcised, you will get tetanus,  
Bleed all the blood you have. You are at a  
Risk of severe infection and haemorrhage.

The fact that the fight against FGM can only be won if the girls themselves stand up for themselves and blatantly say “No” to anybody persuading them to get circumcised is echoed in song no. 7, *Ntaano cia nkenye* (Circumcision of girls). The song is performed by Ura Methodist Church Women Group Choir on the graduation day of initiated girls. The rude and sarcastic response by the girl being told to be circumcised in the song no. 7, “School girl, if you are told to be circumcised, tell your mothers, I am very sorry mother” implies that the girls will have to be firm and assertive in rejecting FGM whose devastating effects are expounded such as overbleeding during childbirth and getting infected with diseases during circumcision. The resistance and subversion of young girls against forced circumcision by their parents is a pointer to the change and transformations taking place in the society with the empowerment of the girl-child. The girls are now in a position to voice their decision as far as FGM and use or misuse of their bodies is concerned. This could be attributed to enlightenment of children in the contemporary society where they are more informed about their rights in school and through media than ever before. Therefore, there are escalated chances of winning the war against the practice since the girls are

enlightened and are ready to fight back those who enforce and perpetuate the harmful cultural practice:

**Call:**

School girl, if you are told to be circumcised  
Tell your mother, “I am very sorry mother”  
God, I pray you help mother to realize  
The hazardous effects of girls’ circumcision.

The climax of the campaign against FGM is achieved through song no. 8, *Mutaani urirwa nuu?* (Circumciser, who will tell you?). The song is performed by initiated girls to curse the female circumciser because she indirectly interferes with the career progression of girls. The girls singing the song use rhetorical questions to inquire whether those involved know the damage they cause to the girls they circumcise. The initiated girls curse the circumciser to demonstrate their hatred and resistance against FGM:

**Soloist:** Circumciser who will tell you?  
The cursed one, who will tell you?

Song no. 9, *Mbirira mutaani akuunje kiruunya* (Tell the circumciser for me to pack the circumcising tool) is a cultural song performed by initiated girls. Since FGM is already outlawed, the song pleads with the community as a whole to inform the female circumciser to pack her tools of trade referred to as *kiruunya* because FGM is outlawed. She is also metaphorically told to “cut her nails short” or rather cautioned to trend carefully as far as perpetuating the illegal practice is concerned. The girls also inform the circumciser that they are opposed to what she was doing to them against their wish:

**Soloist:** Tell the circumciser for me to pack her *kiruunya*  
Because we have abandoned the circumcision of girls } } x2

**Response:** Tell the circumciser for me to pack her *kiruunya*  
Because we have abandoned the circumcision of girls } } x2

...

**Soloist:** *Yi riirii* we have rejected it in our place  
**Audience:** *Yi riirii* we have rejected it in our place } } x2

**Soloist:** Tell the circumciser for me to cut short her nails,  
The circumcision of girls has been rejected in our place. } } x2

The campaign against FGM is elevated further through song no. 10, *Njiira ni ijiili* (There are two paths/roads) performed by Mzalendo Mithika. The song encourages the initiated girls to make firm and wise individual decisions that are of benefits to them as far as initiation into adulthood is concerned. The song is coined by the speaker with an aim of summarizing the message to the girls that they are the ultimate determinants of whether FGM will continue or end in their community. This is because without the input of the initiates, the struggle against FGM would be futile. Hence, the girls are advised to chart their own destiny as advised by the mentors during the ARP training sessions. The speaker also warns the girls against being circumcised secretly contrary to their mentors' advice. When he says in the song that "there are two roads", he implies that the girls have two choices in life, to fight FGM or embrace ARP. Thus, he reminds them that the power is in their hands and the choice was theirs as far as survival of FGM in the community is concerned:

**Soloist:** There are two roads my friend,  
**Audience:** You choose which one you want to follow,  
 The roads are two my friends,  
 Choose the one you want to follow. } x2

Song no. 11, *Ni nkenye ikumurika* (It is the uncircumcised girls who are shining) is performed by initiated girls to laud the beauty of girls who are not circumcised. It is an implicit way of deterring the uncircumcised girls from getting circumcised. Through commendation of those not circumcised and scoffing those circumcised, the song highlights glaring differences between those that are circumcised and those that are not with the intent of influencing girls to choose not to be circumcised. The word "shining" is also used to metaphorically mean prospering or doing well in life:

**Soloist:** It is the uncircumcised girls who are shining.  
**Audience:** It is not the uncircumcised girls who are shining.

Song no. 12, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) is performed by Jeremiah Gitonga to advocate for Christian Hospital Initiation as the preferred Alternative Rite of Passage for boys. The singer does this by deriding the "burning ritual" alluded to in the song that is done during the traditional circumcision of boys. The song ridicules "the one who burns" involved in "the burning ritual" performed

by those circumcised traditionally because of being indecently dressed when performing the burning ritual. The singer ridicules those who still cling to such traditional rituals of circumcision because they “walk naked”; something viewed as an uncouth and unacceptable behaviour in the contemporary society. The singer also emphasizes that he was going to sing *Kiretheretie* and not *Kirarire* even before he starts singing the song. This turn of events is meant to disassociate the singer of the song from the traditional version of the song (*Kirarire*) sung by those he satirizes.

Traditionally circumcised adults among the Igembe people have always looked down upon the boys circumcised in hospitals. Because of this hatred and rivalry, those who embrace CHI steer away from anything associated with traditional circumcision. That is why those who embrace traditional circumcision are disparagingly referred to as “those who walk naked”. The use of the figure of speech of “day” and “night” in reference to the song implies that those singing the version done at night (*Kirarire*) are backward and the ones singing the version sung during the day (*Kiretheretie*) are progressive. The use of a contemptuous tone and the choice of words, “those who walk naked” to describe their indecent or scanty dressing amplifies the view that the practice is considered inappropriate and unbecoming. The words and tone used are also meant to deter other boys from participating in the traditional rituals. It is also notable that the song is culturally supposed to be sung during the “burning ceremony” that is controlled by the *kamuithania* (the one who burns). This *kamuithania* is the one that is scathingly referred to as “the one walking naked on the road” by those opposing the traditional circumcision:

**Soloist:** If you walk naked with those  
People going about while naked  
You are ruining the honour  
of being circumcised .

Audience: Yes

Song no. 13, *Bwana asifiwe* (Lord be praised) is sung by Ms Karambu and Ms Kathao to campaign against traditional circumcision of boys by exposing the hardships and mistreatments the traditionally initiated boys undergo on the day of their circumcision. Whereas the boys initiated through CHI are taken to the hospital for initiation and afterwards are taken back to their seclusion sites in vehicles, those



traditionally circumcised have to walk back to their seclusion site. This happens despite the pain of the operation and even during unfavourable weather conditions. The ones who escort those initiated through CHI are further extolled in the same song for having decorum as they wash their hands and eat peacefully using spoons as CHI is usually a private affair. However, those escorting the traditionally circumcised boys are satirized because they scramble for food. This is because traditional circumcision among the Igembe people is a public affair that is done in the open fields. After the operation, the circumcised boys are escorted by a multitude of traditionally circumcised adults as they sing obscene songs. Food is also served in the initiates' homes and sometimes those escorting the initiates scramble for the food served to them because of the high numbers of the visitors.

It is this disorderliness witnessed in traditional circumcision ceremonies that the singers are mocking. The performers further add that they have already migrated from such “analogue” rituals (traditional circumcision) and have embraced “digital” (CHI) as the preferred mode of initiation. The song further applauds those who embrace CHI and are compared to being digital for they are guided using the word of God (the Bible). However, this is lacking in those traditionally circumcised. Thus, the song implies that those who embrace CHI are civilized, something that is lacking in those still practising the traditional mode of initiation into adulthood. The defamation of the traditional circumcision practices depicts a community that is at crossroads because it has been infiltrated by colonialists' tendencies that look down upon African cultural practices and anything brought by colonialists (Christianity and Western practices) is viewed as the voguish thing to be aped. The song indirectly persuades the boys not yet circumcised to reject traditional circumcision practices and instead embrace CHI as depicted in the song 13:

**Chorus:** Praise the Lord, I will go to hospital  
 And be circumcised well  
 The newly circumcised boys of Jesus  
 Will come by a vehicle *alleluya*  
 Praise be to the Lord, I would not  
 Want my child harassed while running about } x2

**Soloist:** Being forced to run up and down, I tell you ee  
 We will sit down nicely and our hands will be washed  
 And we will eat with spoons, I tell you.

**Soloist:** We migrated from the traditions of Meru

**Response:** We migrated a long time ago  
**Soloist:** We migrated from those types of circumcision  
**Response:** We migrated a long time ago  
**Soloist:** We are now digital.

...

**Soloist:** We came to the church  
**Response:** We migrated from there a long time ago  
**Soloist:** Under the guidance of the Bible  
**Response:** We migrated from there a long long time ago  
**Soloist:** We migrated from the traditions of Meru

Song no. 14, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day), is used by Ms Thirindi to campaign against FGM. The song is an inversion of the *Kirarire* (That which is sung throughout the night) song that is traditionally performed during the “burning ritual” of boys who have been traditionally circumcised. However, *Kiretheretie* is recreated and modified from *Kirare* so that it can be used to campaign against FGM by informing the girls that, FGM is an illegal and useless cultural practice that should be abandoned. Through the song, the initiated girls are encouraged to focus on education that is profitable to them rather than FGM. The use of direct address while talking to the initiated girls makes the message intimate and memorable in the minds of the initiated girls whom the singer fondly calls “mother” as demonstrated below:

**Soloist:** Wuui ii! My “mother”, let me tell you  
what I want to tell you, I attended  
the initiation of girls (ARP) and I was told  
Circumcision of girls is useless

...

**Audience:** What I want to tell you my child is that  
You should go to pursue your education.

Similarly, narrative no. 1, *Kamwali na atonong’ina* (A girl and her brothers) narrated by Ms Gladys Muthoni encourages the initiated girls who have embraced ARP to be resilient in their resolve to fight FGM. In the narrative, a girl has three brothers who love her very much. She requests them to climb a mountain so that they can get for her: a golden tree, basket, and water. Each of the brothers tries but fails to get them because they do not follow instructions given to them by the seer. However, the girl succeeds in getting them for herself by remaining focused and climbing the mountain as per the instructions given to her by the seer. The narrative is used in this context to explain to the girls in seclusion that it is important to pay attention and heed to the

advice given to them by their teachers (compared to the seer) if they want to succeed in life. This is because in life, the girls are likely to encounter people who would ridicule and lure them into accepting to undergo FGM later in life; just as the siblings trying to climb the mountain to get the golden items get distracters as they ascend to the mountain top.

However, if the girls ignore the pro FGM people and purpose to only follow the instructions given to them by their mentors and teachers during training while they are in ARP seclusion, they would end up being prosperous and famous like the girl in the narrative. The initiated girls are also encouraged to be of great impact to the community just as the girl in the story is. When this girl climbs successfully to the top of the mountain, the people who had earlier on died in their attempts to get the golden water, tree, and basket are resurrected. Thus, the success of the girls in life will similarly have a positive impact in the community if they resist FGM and pursue their education.

Narrative no. 2, *Kamwari na aari baria bataani* (A small girl and the circumcised girls) by Dr Kinanu Ntalala spurs the initiated girls to embrace ARP. The coined narrative depicts how the traditionally circumcised girls among the Igembe people are traditionally supposed to relate with the uncircumcised girls. In the narrative, the newly circumcised girls are supposed to walk on a single file with their heads bowed down as a sign of respect. No uncircumcised girl is supposed to come face to face with them, cross their path, or intermingle with them in any way when walking in a single file after leaving their seclusion site. The fact that no uncircumcised girl dares to cross their path for fear of dire consequences from the community proves that the traditionally circumcised girls are held in awe. In a traditional setting, the circumcised girls are regarded as brave, responsible, and mature adults ready for marriage.

On the other hand, the uncircumcised girls are viewed as too puerile, cowardly, dirty, and immature to be married. However, the turning point for those uncircumcised girls resisting FGM is marked when the group of uncircumcised girls in the narrative are led by one small girl to intermingle with the circumcised girls. They do this while derisively laughing at the circumcised girls. From that day henceforth, the uncircumcised girls got the impetus to fight FGM since their actions were never

punished. The challenge motivated the girls initiated through ARP to resist and fight FGM so that they can bring change to the society that continues to embrace FGM even when it has obvious devastating effects to the girls.

Proverb no. 1, *Ugeta arusine utitii* (Do not attend wedding ceremonies where you are not invited) by Ms Karambu is used to caution girls who have undergone ARP against getting involved in traditional circumcision rituals of either boys or girls where they are treated as “outsiders” or intruders. Among the Igembe people, those who are traditionally initiated into adulthood perceive those initiated through ARP as social outcasts, not worthy to be incorporated in their affairs. It is in this regard that the traditionally circumcised are considered to be “insiders” and can therefore scheme against those who have embraced ARP. Thus, the proverb helps the girls know their boundaries as far as relating with the others in the society is concerned in order to avoid antagonism amongst community members. The proverb therefore, promotes harmony in the society just as Durkheim (1895) points out that; societies depend on reliable socialization of individuals into the larger society for social solidarity to exist. Socialization is perceived to be the process whereby individuals learn the norms and values of a society. Through the proverb, the initiated girls are therefore trained to respect social norms by not intruding into cultural activities that they have not been initiated into as this can trigger conflicts and tension in the society.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that oral literature genres are used to fight cultural practices that are harmful to the community as echoed by Malinowski (1944) who postulates that; culture is an instrumental apparatus by which man can use to help him combat the problems that he faces in the environment in the process of satisfying his needs. In this context, songs, narratives, and proverbs that are part of culture, are adapted and used in ARP rituals to fight harmful traditional circumcision practices. They do this by highlighting the psychological and physical health hazards that the traditional initiation into adulthood practices expose the initiates to as they propose ARP as the better option because it has minimal demerits. Thus, oral literature performed in ARP plays a central role in the creation of awareness of the detrimental effects of traditional circumcision of boys and girls as they campaign against it.

### 4.3 Inculcation of Virtues in Alternative Rites of Passage Ceremonies

Oral songs, narratives, and proverbs performed in ARP ceremonies are used to inculcate virtues among the initiates of the Igembe community. It is the obligation of each society to ensure that it brings up virtuous generations of people who are able to conform to the dictates of their society. If this is not done, then the society risks having a conflict between the young and old; and the rift can cause disharmony in the community. The socialization of the young people can be achieved by instilling in them the desirable values, beliefs, and philosophy that the society upholds when the young people are being initiated into adulthood. Thus, ARP rituals provide the necessary structure and oral genres of literature are the channel through which the virtues and values of the Igembe people are perpetuated from one generation to the next.

Being judicious is a valued aspect of one's character among the Igembe people because a person with such a virtue is able to make realistic decisions that can safeguard one from trouble. Proverb no. 2, *Ugeetania na mpunduka ukaunduka yayo* (If you befriend a person with crooked ways, you will also become crooked as he or she is) is used by Ms Karambu Mururu to advise initiated boys on the need to be prudent while choosing friends. This is because one's acquaintance influences one's character either in a positive or negative way. Hence, there is need to caution the youth against bad company. On the other hand, a good person influences one to be altruistic. The same message of being discerning when choosing friends is echoed in proverb no. 3, *Uti mwamba na mutegeri* (There is no difference between a thief and his/her accomplice) that is used by Mr Robert Mwirigi to warn the initiated boys against befriending people with questionable integrity. This kind of friendship can negatively influence the initiates' character or even make one doubt their integrity since they are associated with the crimes committed by their friends. The Igembe people are of the opinion that one's friends determine one's character.

The initiated boys are further reminded to be perceptive when choosing friends. The demands of life usually compel people to befriend other people since no man is an island. This is illustrated by proverb no. 4, *Uti mbiti iti munyanya wayo* (There is no hyena that has no friend of its own) that is performed by Pastor Julius Kaunyangi. In this context, the initiated boys are reminded that they should be ready to meet and

interact with all kinds of people from different parts of the country when they join secondary school. The friends they meet would either be morally upright or wayward. However, it is imperative for the initiated boys to be wary and choose whom to befriend; because if one agrees to befriend a bad person that is metaphorically being compared to a hyena, then the person should not be shocked if they are betrayed by the same person. Among the Meru people, the hyena is mainly used in oral narratives to symbolize a treacherous being that is usually associated with greed, selfishness, and cruelty. This means being insightful when choosing friends is mandatory if one desires to evade trouble with his friends in life.

Being discerning when choosing friends is reiterated in narrative no. 3, *Kaana kamwe* (One child) by Bishop Alice Mutuma that is narrated during the graduation ceremony of boys initiated through ARP. The exemplum is used by the speaker to accentuate the need for one to be wary of the people one associates with. In the narrative, a young boy refuses to wear a pant and shoes while going to school because his friends are not wearing the same. Instead of the boy being happy and enjoying the privilege and the comfort of wearing the attires that other children could not afford, he chooses not to wear them so that he is acceptable to his friends. The moral lesson is that if one befriends mediocre people, one would consciously or unconsciously ape their crooked or mediocre ways so that one can fit in their company. Therefore, one should be wise and endeavour to intermingle with wise people who can positively influence one.

Narrative no. 4, *kaana kaagi nthoni* (The mannerless child) by Bishop Alice Mutuma is narrated to the initiated boys and their parents on their graduation day. The narrative reminds the initiates that actions have consequences; and therefore, there is need for initiates to have self-discipline and self-control even when their parents fail to instill values in them. In any case, it is the initiates who would face the consequences of their own mistakes. In the narrative, a woman has a son whom she loves very much. However, the woman is so overprotective of the son that she does not allow her husband to punish him when he commits any offence. The woman used to malign the husband in presence of the son when the husband was not around. With time, the son lost respect for the father and even started to beat him up. One day, the son beat his father until he died. The boy is arrested and sentenced to death in a court of law for fatally assaulting the father. The mother of the boy loses a husband to death

and her son, to imprisonment. The moral lesson of the narrative to the initiates is that, our actions have repercussions irrespective of the many excuses that one may give.

The boy in the narrative no. 4 accuses the mother for not training him to respect the father. However, this does not set him free from the long arm of the law. Through the narrative, the initiates also learn that there is rule of law in the world and everybody is held accountable for his or her own felonies. The narrative therefore demonstrates how oral narratives can be used to inculcate self-discipline by castigating ignorance, irresponsible parenthood, violence, disrespect, and cruelty to one's parent. The plot of the narrative is carefully crafted to pass the moral lessons to the initiates where the child who errors is punished for his wickedness. The mother is equally punished for being irresponsible. In addition, the narrative cautions the initiates to mend their evil ways lest one day they pay for their wickedness, just like the son who beats his father did. The mother also gets her share of punishment by being widowed and becoming childless for bringing up her child irresponsibly. The narrative also implicitly prepares the initiates to be responsible fathers when they are of age lest they get themselves in the precarious situation like the one the parents of the boy in the narrative no.4 gets into.

Narrative no. 5, *Mwekuru na mukure wawe* (A woman and her husband) narrated by Gladys Muthoni to the girls while in seclusion teaches about morality and marriage life. The narrative emphasizes the need for girls to be tolerant and altruistic; the attributes of a good woman from the point of view of the Igembe people. In the narrative, a woman gets married to a man younger than her. The couple works hard and becomes wealthy. The man decides to marry a more beautiful and younger woman than his wife. One day, the man brings his young wife home with an intention of humiliating the first wife. The first wife who is God fearing welcomes them so warmly that the second wife is ashamed of the husband who used to mistreat his first wife. The second wife consequently decides to desert him out of guilt consciousness. The man later repents and apologizes to his first wife in the presence of a congregation in the church where the lady is an active member paving way for the family reconciliation.

The moral lesson inculcated in the initiated girls in narrative no. 5 is that, one should be tolerant, humble, forgiving, and patient in marriage just like the first wife is until her husband reconciles with her. On the other hand, women should be empathetic towards each other, just as the second wife is mindful of the plight of the first wife. When she realizes that the first wife is being mistreated on her account, she leaves the husband and the first wife redeems her marriage. The man's failure to keep the two wives implicitly criticizes the viability of polygamous marriages in the contemporary society among the Igembe people.

The need for people to be kindhearted and empathetic to the plight of others is emphasized in proverb no. 5, *Ukinjiira baangi mariinya iinjaa ya manene na ya manini, niuntu noowe kuu* (As you dig trenches for others dig deep ones and shallow ones, for you may end up falling in one of them) that is integrated in narrative no. 5. The proverb is incorporated in the narrative to emphasize the fact that all those who wish and plan wicked things against others would one day suffer the consequences of their own actions. The man in the narrative is humiliated when his second wife deserts him; just as he had planned to humiliate his first wife earlier on, while in pursuit of the more vibrant and younger woman. The reason why the man in the narrative takes the second wife home is to humiliate the first wife whom he claims looks old and ugly. He does this by showing off his new young wife who unfortunately embarrasses him by deserting him. The moral lesson in the proverb is that, the evil things you do to others would one day come to haunt you. In other words, the traps you set up for others may one day ensnare you and lead you to your own destruction as it happens with the man in the narrative.

Narrative no. 5, *Mwekuru na mukure wawe* (A woman and her husband) narrated by Gladys Muthoni depicts the challenges of marriage life that the initiated girls should be prepared to counter in life. In the narrative, the innocent woman who is not vindictive is rewarded handsomely when the humiliated husband begs for forgiveness from her in presence of the congregation of the church she attends and is transformed into a good husband. The moral teaching to the initiated girls who would one day have families is that, the marriage institution faces many challenges. However, one can overcome the challenges through perseverance and forgiveness.



Thus, ARP becomes the avenue and oral literature the medium of communication that ensures stability of marriages in the society just as Talcott (2005) posits that there is need to have latency in every society. This involves having control mechanisms that serve to manage tensions, motivate people, and resolve interpersonal conflicts within institutions. Therefore, through an oral narrative performed in ARP ceremonies, the initiates learn that for the marriage institution to be protected, the marriage partner who errors out of selfishness like the man in narrative no. 5 is punished accordingly and the faithful marriage partner is vindicated which eventually leads to reconciliation between the two. The importance of having well grounded families ultimately ensures the existence of a stable community and nation.

Proverb no. 6 (i), *Mutaane niuria, uri na into biawe* (The one who is circumcised, is one who has his own property) is used by Pastor Gitonga Kaithungu to impress upon the initiated boys to work hard in their studies. The initiates are encouraged to pursue their education to the highest level possible until they are able to get into careers that can sustain them financially. Their success in education would subsequently help them avoid getting involved in criminal offences such as thievery or engaging in drug trafficking since education is viewed as the main gateway to economic empowerment of the people in the region. The proverb also reaffirms to the initiates the patriarchal nature of the Igembe people where men are expected to own property as a sign of manliness.

Proverb no. 6 (ii), *Mutaane niuria uri na biake* (The circumcised man is one who has his own wealth) by Ms Eunice Kanini is used to warn the newly initiated boy against stealing his father's *mira*. He is advised to concentrate on his studies so that he can later get a job that can give him enough money to meet his own needs. In addition, she warns the initiate against being arrogant as circumcision is just a physical cut that cannot earn him respect in the society that only respects young men who have financially emancipated themselves from poverty through working hard in their studies. Thus, the proverb shares one of the principles that Talcott (2005) stipulates that for social order to exist, societies should put in place institutions that are committed to ensure that common values are adhered to. According to him, the most important shared values include: a belief in the work ethic and in meritocracy. When there is a common belief in the work ethic (people value working instead of being

idle) and in meritocracy (people believe that hardwork should be rewarded), the community prospers economically and has less people engaging in vices such as thievery condemned in ARP ceremonies.

Song no. 12, *Kiretherio* (That which is sung throughout the day) is performed by Pastor Jeremiah Gitonga and it encourages initiates to be prayerful, to go to church, and read the word of God. The cultural song is embellished and adapted to instill Christian virtues because majority of the Igembe people have embraced Christianity. The song advocates for inculcation of Christian religious doctrines and virtues among the initiates for they believe that by doing so, the initiates would become disciplined and morally upright members of the community:

**Soloist:** Timothy, my son, do not refuse to go to church,  
If you refuse God's prayers, you are ruining  
The honour of being a circumcised person.

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** He says that if we follow the footsteps of Jesus  
The son of God, my son you will get eternal life,

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If you become a Bible reader my son you will  
Move closer to God and you will get salvation.

Proverb no. 7, *Itigua ta ina, igua ta ithe* (If it does not resemble the father, it resembles the mother) that is performed by Mercy Nkatha, encourages the initiated boys to be hardworking. She advises the initiates to imitate the good character traits of their parents and other people in the community who are successful in their professions as a result of having worked hard in their academic studies. Song no. 15, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) by Kirema Masharufu that is sung during the graduation ceremony of initiated boys also advises the initiates to be hardworking and optimistic in life. If they work hard in school irrespective of their social background, they would win the sympathy of the members of the community. Therefore, they would get financial support from them to pursue their dreams in education even if their parents fail to do so due to abuse of alcohol:

**Soloist:** As long as you work hard in your studies,  
I truly tell you, even if your father drinks  
Local liquor until he falls on the trenches,  
You will be taken to school.

**Audience:** Yes

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that the oral literature of the Igembe people encompasses the values endeared in the community such as being: God fearing, industrious, prayerful, forgiving, obedient, empathetic, tolerant, tidy, determined, perceptive, prudent, hardworking, optimistic, humble, and wise among others. Such values are applauded to encourage people to embrace them. This happens because the community strives to ensure that their youth acquires certain admirable values and those deviating are encouraged to change for the better. All these values are encompassed in the orality performed in ARP ceremonies. Nwige (2016, pp. 1-10) also affirms that the rich oral tradition of a community is instrumental in shaping the personality of young people during their youthful stages of life. Therefore, the Igembe people believe that through counselling of initiates in ARP ceremonies through oral genres of literature, the initiates are socialized to know the ethical issues of the society that are encompassed in their rich oral literature so that they can embrace them.

#### **4.4 Castigation of Vices in Alternative Rites of Passage**

Any ills in any community can be a source of frustrations to its denizens. Thus, each and every member of a community must condemn any vices detected among its members. If this is not done at the earliest opportune time, the vice can become a pain in the neck and can cause untold pain and suffering to other inhabitants of the society. Therefore, efforts are made during initiation into adulthood for boys and girls among the Igembe people to ensure that the initiates are conversant with the expectations of the community. This is done to prepare them to be disciplined, responsible, and respectable members of their community. The correction of deviant behaviour is sometimes done through use of oral literature as a tool for communication in ARP ceremonies.

Proverb no. 8, *Nkima ya mutu yiina mwanki irijawa na rutere* (Hot ugali is eaten from the sides) is performed by Tarsius Mugambi during the graduation ceremony of an initiate. It is used to warn the initiated boy against irresponsibly immersing himself into the pleasures of drug taking and having sexual relationships with young girls now that he had become an adult after initiation. Instead, he is advised to take his time to learn the behaviour of people in his community before making any decisions that could expose him to sexually transmitted infections (STI's) and the devastating effects of drug abuse witnessed in the neighbourhood. He is further warned that if one

is intoxicated with drugs, his reasoning capacity would be highly impaired. Hence, one is vulnerable to making uninformed decisions which can lead to one's downfall.

Proverb no. 9, *Mwathoa kirira nuuri kiawe* (The one to be advised is one who has his own knowledge) by Margaret Kanampiu is used to advise the initiated boys during their graduation day ceremony. The proverb is used to caution the initiates against being naïve, gullible, and foolish when interacting with their colleagues in school lest they are misled by them. The advice is crucial to the initiates because peer pressure can destroy the future of even the most promising individuals in the society. According to the proverb, if you advise a fool, the fool may not take your piece of advice seriously and heed to it. Therefore, the initiates are advised to reason intelligently before making any choices in life lest they wallow in problems as a result of decisions made out of ignorance.

Narrative no. 6, *Mwari na mami wake* (A girl and her mother) by Dr. Mugambi is performed in an ARP session for girls while in seclusion. It is used to deride vices such as gullibility and naivety among young girls. In the narrative, there is a young girl who is instructed by the mother never to undress in presence of men instead of being told candidly that she should never have sex with men. Her boyfriend deceives her into having sex with her telling her that they could do it without undressing. The girl naively agrees. The girl not only becomes pregnant but also contracts a sexually transmitted infection. The moral lesson of the narrative is that, girls should be wary of their sexuality lest men deceive them into being intimate with them. In addition, the girls should be prudent with men otherwise any miscalculations can lead to disastrous consequences such as contracting STI's. The initiated girls are also being prepared for motherhood responsibilities when they get married and have children of their own. They are implicitly being advised to openly advise their children on matters of sexuality to protect them from being taken advantage of by men due to their ignorance.

Proverb no. 10, *Ukia kuona kinyuuru oo, uwezi oona moja* (If you see a mongoose, you do not see one) is used by Dr. Mugambi while advising girls in seclusion. He warns the girls against irresponsible sexual behaviour that could culminate into contracting STI's such as HIV/AIDS. He enumerates to the girls the multiple

symptoms which an HIV positive person exhibits such as coughing and diarrhoea among others. Therefore, deterring the initiates from immorality during initiation is necessary because there is a misconception among many of the initiates that once a girl or a boy is initiated into adulthood, he or she is mature and is at liberty to engage in sex anyhow.

The ARP organizers are particular about sex and sexuality issues especially after an alarming report (National AIDS Control Council, 2018, p. 12) about the high rate of AIDS prevalence among the youth in Kenya. It is estimated that by 2017, approximately 1.5 million people were infected. The children who were infected and are below 15 years were approximately 1388,200. This accounts for 7% of the population living with HIV out of the total population of HIV positive people in Kenya. Therefore, there is need for concerted effort to enlighten the initiates about the disease since most of them are young and naive. If this is not done, the disease can spread fast and threaten the social economic advancement of a community or a whole nation.

Narrative no. 7, *Mwekuru na twana twawe* (A woman and her children) is narrated by John Lika during a graduation ceremony of initiated girls. The narrative mocks naivety among girls. In the narrative, a certain girl is said to wonder why she could not pass urine like her brother. Whenever she would ask her mother the reasons as to why she was different, her mother would reassure her that, one day she would be given a sex organ like her brother's (by God); and would thereafter be able to urinate like her brother. When the girl shares the information with her boyfriend about her desires to have genitalia like the one her brother has, the boyfriend promises to "give" her the male sex organs she was longing for by having sexual intercourse with her. The boy consequently impregnates the girl in the process of "giving her, a male sex organ".

The moral lesson of narrative no.7 to the initiates is that, they should be wise and openly advise their children when they become mothers in future. This would ensure that their daughters are not sexually exploited by men like the girl in the narrative. Moreover, there is need to ensure that girls are given an opportunity to undergo ARP after the banning of FGM where sexual information and knowledge is shared openly.

It is necessary to do so because many of the parents are too shy to talk about sex and sexuality issues with their children due to societal taboos that prohibit such discussions.

The desire of the girl in narrative no. 7, to possess a male organ is explained by Freud (1923) who postulates that our actions are largely dictated by the mental processes of our mind. His concept of personality structure states that a person has three psychical apparatus categorized as the Id that operates on “The Pleasure Principle”. The Id follows its instinctive urges without any consciousness of rational or moral, or censorious awareness. The second apparatus is the Ego which operates on the Reality Principle and is influenced by the voice of reason and rationality. The third one is the Superego that operates on the Morality Principle and is largely unconscious and is driven by a strong moral conscience. The development of a strong superego is influenced by reinforcement by parental or societal punishment for what is regarded as bad or rewards for what is considered to be good. In narrative no. 7, the girl in the narrative indulges in sexual intercourse with her boyfriend out of her desire to have genitalia like the one her brother had without knowing that what she was doing was morally wrong. She also did not know that her intimate encounter with the boy would have dire consequences on her like getting pregnant or contracting STI’s. This could have been as a result of her mother having failed to teach her what is right or wrong; hence, her Superego and Ego were not yet well developed.

Freud further explains how the “oedipal complex” phenomenon affects the behaviour and actions of children undergoing the developmental stages especially when in the Phallic Stage. He states that children naturally fall in love with the parent of the opposite sex. The boy longs to possess the mother but his desires are suppressed for fear of castration by the father whom they share the object of admiration (mother). This suppression culminates into anxiety. On the other hand, the girlchild experiences phallic desires. She desires to have the penis that she does not have.

Thus, the girl in the narrative no. 7 is impregnated because of her desire to have a male organ (penis envy). The girl’s impatience and disobedience towards her mother’s advice in pursuit of her immediate desires lands her in trouble by being impregnated. The girl seeks help from the boyfriend perhaps because she felt that her

mother was not going to fulfil her needs of getting her object of obsession (penis) soon enough. The moral lesson to the initiates is that they should be obedient to their parents or teachers because any disobedience can have adverse consequences. Secondly, girls are encouraged to be cautious and not to trust strangers who can mislead them with the aim of taking advantage of their ignorance. Thirdly, they should patiently wait until they get properly married and thus “acquire phallic of their own”. In addition, the initiated girls learn that when they become parents later on in life, they should empower their daughters with knowledge on the consequences of premarital sex to protect them from being sexually exploited because of their naivety.

Narrative no. 8, *Mwekuru na kaana kawo* (A woman and her child) by John Lika prepares initiated girls for challenges that they are likely to encounter in their family life when they get married. In the narrative, a certain woman leaves her baby sleeping in the house while she goes to buy some household items from the shop. The house accidentally catches fire from a lantern she had lit and had placed next to her bed where her baby was sleeping. Her baby is badly burnt when the bedding catches fire. Her husband persuades his wife to let the badly burnt baby to die rather than risk to incur hospital expenses for the baby’s treatment. The mother refuses and instead takes the baby to hospital. The baby is rescued by some missionaries visiting the hospital where she is admitted. The baby and the mother are flown abroad so that the baby can get specialized treatment (plastic surgery). While abroad waiting for the baby to undergo treatment, the mother of the baby is given a scholarship to study. She eventually gets a job and becomes very wealthy. The moral lesson to the girls is that they should endeavour to be kind for there is always a reward for being virtuous. It also teaches them to be prudent when dealing with fire and while nurturing offsprings.

In addition, the initiated girls are also warned against being cruel to their physically challenged children like the father of the burnt child was by advising his wife to allow their badly burnt child to die. Instead, they should be kindhearted, strong-willed, and optimistic when they encounter serious challenges in the course of bringing up their children. The woman’s resolve to struggle with the baby facing the possibility of living with a disability is rewarded with good education and a job. She would not have received the scholarship if she had listened to her husband’s cruel decision to allow the baby to die in order to avoid unnecessary expenses. A narrative like this one

also sends a subtle message to the initiated girls that they should be prudent when dealing with fires since they can be disastrous.

Narrative no. 9, *Mwana na mami wake* (A child and his mother) performed by Lilian Njagi cautions the initiates against being gullible and naive. In the narrative, one of the characters, a small boy, is introduced to an unacceptable social group, the Alshababs. The boy and his mother had migrated from a rural set up to the city of Nairobi. As a result of peer influence and radicalization, the boy becomes very rude to the mother and later begins to fail to do his school assignments. This prompts his mother to report the boy to the teachers and later to the police officers. After investigations by the police, it is discovered that the boy had been radicalized by the miscreant gang he had joined. Through the intervention of the police, the boy's mother and his teacher are able to extract information from the boy on how he had been recruited into the gang by his schoolmates. His schoolmates had even trained him on how to use a gun by getting information from the internet. The moral lesson of the narrative is that the initiated girls should be wise and vigilant when choosing friends when they go to new institutions of learning and neighbourhoods. Such precautions would protect them from being introduced to pervasive activities by their friends. The initiates also learn that they should take time to learn people before they can trust them to avoid being misled by them.

Narrative no. 9 mirrors the problem of technology in the society today that is blamed for the rapid acculturation arising from globalization (UNODC, 2012) Globalization has been identified as one of the major factors responsible for the increase in social vices in modern societies which are attributed to abuse of Information Technology by the youth who are ill advised or lack guidance on its use. The misuse of internet and technology adversely affects the social norms and values of the people in the communities where internet services are easily accessible. This has resulted to the presence of miscreant gangs that terrorise the residents of areas where abuse of internet is prevalent. Through the narrative, the initiates are prepared for parenthood by being trained to be vigilant on their children's behaviour changes so that any bad influence can be dealt with in its early stages before the future of the affected child is destroyed.



Abuse of drugs is a rampant vice among many communities in the world including among the Igembe people. As a result, many of the community leaders have taken it upon themselves to condemn the vice whenever the opportunity presents itself. It is in this spirit that during the ARP initiation ceremonies that the initiates are advised to desist from smoking bang through the use of song no. 12, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) by Pastor Gitonga Jeremiah:

**Soloist:** If you become a smoker of *bang*, you are

Ruining the honour of being circumcised

**Audience:** Yes.

Similarly, song no. 15, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) is sung by Kirema Masharufu during the graduation ceremony of initiated boys. The song condemns alcoholism; because the vice can derail people from their responsibilities such as educating their children. The song also encourages the initiates to work hard in school for this would motivate the members of their community to support them to pursue their dreams in education, in the event that their parents are unable to because of alcohol abuse. By extension, the initiates also learn that alcoholism is an addictive vice that can cause embarrassment to those who abuse it. For instance, a person may fall on the roadside, the presence of many people notwithstanding, or a parent may abdicate his or her parental responsibilities.

The severity of drug abuse among the young people is affirmed by reports by UNODC (2018). The report reveals that youth are at a high risk of abusing drugs which would affect their health. Thus, ARP organizers are putting effort in empowering the initiates while in seclusion in an effort to safeguard them from drug abuse and its consequences which can ruin all the gains made in the health, socio-economic, and political sector:

**Soloist:** As long as you work hard in your studies,  
I truly tell you, even if your father drinks  
Local liquor until he falls on the trenches,  
You will be taken to school.

**Audience:** Yes.

Song no. 12, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) performed by Pastor Jeremiah Gitonga during the graduation of one of the initiates is used to condemn stealing of *Miraa*. Theft is a common social vice prevalent among all communities in the world. The Igembe people also abhor the vice so much that they deter it in ARP ceremonies. Stealing of *miraa* is a unique and rampant practice common mainly among the Igembe people from *Miraa* growing zones because selling of *miraa* is a lucrative business. The seriousness of the consequence of the offence of stealing *miraa* among the Igembe people is echoed in a newspaper report by Kimanthi and Mwiti (2016, February 8, p. 24). In the report, the alleged *miraa* thieves are ruthlessly tamed through mob justice. Some of the perpetrators of this vice end up losing their limbs or are even killed if caught red-handed. This form of “justice” is administered to tame the thieves. The initiates are thus cautioned against engaging in such a dishonourable vice that has horrendous consequences:

**Soloist:** If you become a thief of other people’s *miraa*,  
You are ruining the honour of being circumcised  
**Audience:** Yes.

The atrocious killing of innocent unborn babies by young girls through illegal abortions is castigated in an oral song no. 16, *Watoto ni Baraka* (Children are a blessing) performed by Ura MCK Sunday School. Through the song, the cruelty of girls, doctors, and mothers who abet such crimes is also rebuked. The rebuke of such evil acts against unborn babies is meant to discourage the initiates from participating in abortions:

*Salaala!* Why has your love dwindled?  
After one month, the child has no life  
Injections, different medicine is used  
With no doubt the toilet becomes my home  
My mother throws me there with no pity or love  
I am not faeces, but a child who is a blessing from God.

Narrative no. 10, *Mwari* (A lady) was narrated to the girls in seclusion by Lilian Njagi. It is used to condemn indecent dressing prevalent among the youth; a common problem not only among the Igembe people, but also among different communities in the world. In the narrative, a lady is almost stripped naked by touts when her tight pair of trousers gets torn as she alights from a vehicle. The narrative is used to warn the young girls against dressing inappropriately because if they do so, they are likely to face the wrath of the community such as being raped and assaulted by the mob. This

could result to unwanted pregnancies, trauma, contracting sexually transmitted diseases, and loss of dignity. Thus, the young girls are advised to prevent such a scenario from happening by dressing modestly; after all, prevention is better than cure.

The same problem of inappropriate dressing is rebuked in song no. 17, *Nthuki ikuiya* (An age group has come) that is sung by Masharufu Kirema during the graduation ceremony of initiated boys. The singer of the song warns the initiated boys against befriending indecently dressed girls who tempt them into indulging in premarital sex that can expose them to STDs. In the song, an indecently dressed girl sings the song when she meets an elder and is embarrassed by her short dress. She cunningly requests the elder to look towards Nyambene hills as she looks at his back. By telling the elder to face the other way, the girl avoids getting humiliated by coming face to face with the elder for this would be tantamount to exposing her nakedness to him. The performer of the song also uses the song to rebuke the girls of today who shamelessly dress scantily thus exposing some parts of their bodies considered private. According to the singer, the behaviour is offensive and disrespectful to other members of the community. Thus, the initiates should steer away from such unbecoming behaviour. The singer says:

You old man who deserves to be my father  
Will be sung for *aa*  
And an old man who deserves to be my father  
What will I sing for you with?  
And clothes we have cut them short and have  
Reached, and clothes we have cut them short *aa*  
They have been cut short above the knees *uu*  
They have been cut till they resemble bows  
You old man called Mutui look that way,  
And I will look at your back *oo*  
And you look at *ii* the hills of Nyambene.

The problem of indecent dressing in Kenya is also reflected in the social media reports where there is an outcry for freedom of dress code (Santos & Seol, March 16, 2015). They are appealing to everyone to be allowed to dress in any choice of clothes one deems is appropriate without one being questioned. The outcry is triggered by a series of attacks on women on the streets. Violence is mainly meted against women in Nairobi where the women adjudged to be indecently dressed are violently attacked and stripped naked in the public. The behaviour of indecent dressing depicts a generation

that has no morals, something the singer disparages in song no.17. While condemning the indecent dressing in the contemporary society, the speaker also uses the song to implicitly prepare the initiates to be ready to play a supervisory and advisory role to their daughters as far as modest dressing is concerned when they become fathers.

Narrative no. 11, *Mukuru na ngekuru ciawe* (A man and his wives) is narrated by Gladys Muthoni to girls in seclusion to prepare them for marriage life. In the narrative, the first wife is not able to make her bed neatly. The husband is so unhappy with her that he marries a second wife who used to wet their bed. Out of disappointment, he marries the third wife who turns out to be an alcoholic. He is also unhappy with her and decides to marry the fourth wife whom he discovers is a thief. The wife also disappoints him so much that he marries the fifth wife who is a witch. Later, the witch unknowingly kills her alcoholic co-wife whose body she carries home after she finds her drunk and sleeping in a tunnel on the roadside at night. After informing her husband what she has done, he advises her to dispose the body of the dead wife. The same body is later collected by the second wife and taken to their home. After informing her husband about what she had found on the roadside, the husband again escorts his wife to throw away the dismembered body of his wife. The fourth wife who is a thief follows them secretly to find out what her husband and co-wife wanted to discard. She decides to take the sack with the body back into her house so that she can find out what was inside. When she opens the sack the husband and the co-wife had thrown away, she finds out that it is the body of her co-wife. She goes and reports the matter to the police.

After police interrogations, all the women and their husband are convicted and jailed for being accomplices in the murder and secret disposal of the body of one of their own. The narrative is used to warn the girls against being untidy or negligence when they get married. They are also advised against witchcraft and alcoholism which can make their husbands repulsive towards them. According to the narrator, any unbecoming behaviours such as the ones depicted in the narrative no.11 contribute towards polygamous marriages. The initiates are also reminded to be contented in their marriage because if the man who had married five wives had been contented with the first wife, he would not have been jailed for being an accomplice to the crimes committed by his wives. In addition, the man would have been better off with

the first wife as the ones he marries later end up having worse flaws than the flimsy flaw of the first wife. The Igembe people also have a saying that, “*aka beli ni nyungu cia uroi*” (Two women are like two pots of black magic or witch craft). The proverb though not used in ARP ceremonies indicates that it is dangerous to keep more than one wife because they will cause more problems than one wife would, just as in the narrative no. 11. The narrative is a commentary of the many challenges facing polygamous marriages in our society today and a subtle warning to the girls undergoing ARP against getting entangled in such marriages that are prone to diverse challenges.

Proverb no. 6 (i), *Mutaane niuria uri na into biawe* (A circumcised man is one that has his own property) by Pastor Gitonga Kaithungu is used to warn initiated boys against being greedy for food. The saying is used in this context to admonish the circumcised men who scramble for food in social gatherings and functions. Traditionally, a circumcised man among the Igembe people is not allowed to enter into his mother’s kitchen to ask for food for this implies lack of manners. In addition, the initiate is not expected to be seen scrambling for food in public functions. Instead, an initiate is impressed upon to fend for himself at all times. The comment is made by the speaker who observes that an unbecoming habit of scrambling for food by young men had been witnessed during homecoming ceremonies for initiates in the neighbourhood.

Proverb no. 11, *Itindikawa iri mauru* (You can only push something or that which has its own legs or wheels) is performed by Tarsius Mugambi during a homecoming party to warn an initiated young man against ignorance and laziness. The speaker reminds the initiate to be wary of the evils in his village such as drug abuse, drug trafficking, and immorality. Such ills in the society can hinder one’s progress in life, if one does not take the initiative to safeguard oneself against the evils associated with lazy people. Instead of engaging in the unbecoming behaviour, the initiate is encouraged to work hard in school and behave well so that his community can be motivated to step in to support him to pursue his education in case of financial constraints.

From the foregoing discussion, proverbs, oral narratives, and songs are depicted as powerful tools for communication in fighting social ills among the Igembe people in

ARP ceremonies. ARP ceremonies for girls and boys are also viewed as crucial avenues that unite the youth being initiated into adulthood. They are also important in condemning vices that may hinder their amicable coexistence as members of the same community. The main vices and habits detested and castigated are immorality, naivety, laziness, alcoholism, drug abuse, laziness, indecent dressing, discontentment, greed, thievery, wickedness, among others.

Therefore, oral literature genres used in ARP ceremonies play a crucial role in shaping the initiates' behaviour just as Talcott (2005) posits that all parts of a society have a function and certain needs. He further adds that institutions in a society face certain challenges that have to be solved if the society is to exist and function properly. Therefore, if efforts are not made to ensure the initiates acquire the desirable virtues, the society risks wallowing in moral decadence. Thus, the seclusion period for the initiates symbolizes transition from childhood into adulthood and shedding off of any unacceptable immature behaviour and mannerisms.

#### **4:5 Perpetuation of Traditions and Practices of the Igembe People in Alternative Rites of Passage**

Different communities have varied traditions and practices that they treasure because of the significant role they play in positively influencing and controlling their lives. During the training of initiates in seclusion among the Igembe people, the knowledge about the traditions, religious beliefs and practices, philosophy, and the history of the community is ingrained in the initiates.

The general knowledge about worship and existence of a supreme God in any community and transmission of the knowledge to future generations is paramount. Igembe people just like many other communities in the world believe that, God is supreme and all powerful. They therefore, seek His guidance and protection in all spheres of their lives. This is depicted in song no.18, *Ancia Murungu* (Now God) performed by Kirema Masharufu to bless initiates on their graduation day. The song is traditionally performed by a traditional seer when Igembe people are carrying out cultural rituals that require the intervention of supernatural powers of God. In the song, the initiates are blessed through the song before they depart from the seclusion site to go to their homes. The congregation sings in unison and in agreement to what the soloist is saying as he blesses and prays for them. The soloist blesses the initiates

through what he metaphorically refers to as to “spit saliva”. He does this so that the initiates can prosper in all aspects of their lives such as in education, business, and unity as an age group:

**Soloist:** God our Father,  
We spit saliva for these children of ours ii  
**Audience:** God  
**Soloist:** We bless them  
**Audience:** God.  
...  
**Soloist:** You are our Creator.

Song no. 18 exposes the initiates to the Igembe religious way of worship. They are taught to venerate their God and realize that they cannot prosper without His blessings. The Igembe people believe that their prosperity depends on God’s blessings and unless this kind of blessing ritual is done before the initiates commence their journey into adulthood, the initiates are bound to get misfortunes in their lives. Through the song, initiates are also reminded the qualities of their God; that *Ngai* (God) is their creator, healer, and giver of good luck. Thus, the initiates should always consult Him, seek His guidance and protection at all times. The song is therefore used as an eye opener to the traditional religious beliefs and worship of God by the Igembe people:

**Soloist:** You heal them  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** You are our creator  
**Audience:** God ii.

The Igembe people also treasure unity amongst themselves as depicted in song no.18. They believe that unity is strength; and that where there is individualism, selfishness thrives to the detriment of the whole community. Thus, the song endears to the initiates to always endeavour to live in unity and harmony with each other:

**Soloist:** Let them come together  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With unity.

Moreover, Igembe people value maintenance of good extended family relationships that ultimately enhance cooperation in the community. Each child belongs not only to his biological parents, but to the extended family and the community. The success or failure of a child is also interpreted as the success or failure of the extended family and to a large extent, the community. The communal spirit is invoked and instilled in the initiates in song no. 15, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) by

Kirema Masharufu. The song is performed during the graduation day of the initiated boys. It encourages unity in the community as they support and uplift each other in different areas that need financial support such as education.

The message in song no.15 is a reflection of what Durkeim (1895) emphasizes; the need for members of a given society to have an identity and feel that they belong to a common society. Through the song, initiates are reassured that even if their parents fail to fund their education, other people would come together to do so such as the area MCA, MP, Bishops, teachers, “Sisters”, and other members of the community. The the initiates should consider suc people as their parents. This reassurance is important for it gives hope to the initiates and by extension all the young people present in the ceremony that they can both rely on their biological parents for support and the larger community. Consequently, the song fosters communal spirit among the initiates. The initiates implicitly learn that they are also expected to support needy children in the community just as they are also supported as suggested in song no.15:

**Soloist:** If you continue to work hard  
Even if your father drinks *kibondi*  
Till he lies on the road paths,  
Your education will be taken care of

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** This Safari (MCA of Kanuni ward) you  
Can see here has money for taking you to school,

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If we call the likes of Linturi {Meru County Senator}  
Who is there has money to take you to school,

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** This Bishop you see seated there  
Has money to educate you,

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Even the pastors you see seated there  
Have money to take you to school,

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And your parents who are there in the village  
Have money to take you to school,

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** The teacher who used to teach you will get  
Troubled and troubled until he loses sleep and he  
Will call the others so as to discuss how to help you

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** He will even call the school committee to support  
him in planning for your education.

The initiates are also informed about the existence of age groups and its genealogy among the Igembe people through song no. 19, *Ngai nguatia kutharima* (God help me



to bless) performed by Masharufu Kirema during the graduation ceremony of initiated boys. The soloist invokes the spirits of the different age groups to protect the initiates because Igembe people believe in the protection of the living by the spirit of their ancestors. The invocation is done as the soloist enumerates all the age groups commencing with the oldest to the latest to circumcise as per the current year. The ones enumerated are: *Kiriamunya*, *Ithalii*, *Michubu*, *Ratanya*, *Lubetaa*, *Miriti*, *Buantai*, and *Gichunge*. The knowledge gives identity to initiates who get to know the age group to identify with as far as being a member of the Igembe people is concerned. The singer of song no.19 sings:

**Soloist:** The God of *Kiriamunya*

**Audience:** *Iii* God help me you are the *Mugwe*

...

**Soloist:** The God of *Gichunge*

**Audience:** *Iii* God help me you are the *Mugwe*

Knowledge about age groups and brotherhood ties among boys initiated at the same time is also important to the initiates. Those initiated at the same time are expected to belong to the same age group. It is also hoped that they would have brotherly ties uniting them. This brotherhood is fundamental for it encourages unity of the initiates. According to Igembe traditions, a man from the Igembe people cannot have an intimate affair nor marry the daughter of a man that they share the same age group with because this is tantamount to marrying one's daughter. Such a relationship is frowned upon and one can be fined heavily by *Njuri Nceke*, if such a case is presented to them for determination.

Song no. 19, *Ngai nguatia kutharima* (God help me to bless) also affirms the belief by the Igembe people that their ancestors' spirits have influence on the lives of the present generation and the singer wants the initiates to acknowledge that too. This is done through the repeated reference to *Mugwe*. Marete, (2009, pp. 78-79) opines that *Mugwe* was a great warrior, seer, and a leader of the *Ameru* people who was believed to have great powers over the lives of the people. His help was always sought when offering prayers and sacrifices to God and when blessing the warriors before they went for any cattle raiding expedition. Through reference to *Mugwe* in song no.19 therefore, the initiates are able to know about history, legendary, and religious leaders of their community who played and still play crucial roles in the survival of their ancestors and the present generation respectively. The importance of this knowledge

to initiates in promoting identity is echoed by Talcott (2005) who stipulates that education unites individuals into the larger society by giving them a sense of belonging and identity through teaching them a shared history.

Song no. 20, *Kirarire* (That which is sung throughout the night) that is performed by Micubu Mushete during a graduation ceremony of an initiate perpetuates some traditional social gender roles and statuses treasured by Igembe people. The song enumerates the things that an initiated young man is supposed to do and the way he should expect the society to treat him. First, the initiate is reminded that an initiate is never greeted once but twice. This implies that once one is initiated, he acquires an elevated status that is senior to that of those uncircumcised:

**Soloist:** *Wuuu* my son called Thuraira  
I greet you and again  
I greet you again because an initiate  
Is never greeted once

**Audience:** Yes.

In addition, song no. 20 highlights what the community expects from the initiates as far as acquisition of wealth is concerned. An initiated boy is expected to acquire his own wealth. Consequently, one is encouraged to have a good education background that would guarantee him financial stability through formal employment because the community believes in education as a means of economic empowerment. The need to embrace the same values as a community is echoed by Talcott (2005) who argues that order is established in the community if all the individuals there are committed to the same values. Two of the most important shared values include a belief in the work ethic and a belief in meritocracy. When people value being hardworking, there would be few cases of idleness and the community would prosper economically. On the other hand when people value meritocracy, they believe that those who work hard get rewarded and those who do not work should be punished or ridiculed. This implies that the Igembe people want their future generation to believe in hardwork especially in education that opens opportunities for them to prosper and anybody behaving otherwise is treated as a social misfit:

**Soloist:** And again, I will tell you that an initiate  
Is one who has his own degree.

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And again, I will tell you that an initiate  
Is one who has his own property.

**Audience:** Yes.

The superior position and role of men among the Igembe people is also perpetuated through proverb no. 12, *Nkingo itikilaa mutwe* (The neck can never overrule the head). Ms Nkatha Kamui uses it while advising initiated boys on their graduation day to work hard in their studies so that their roles as heads of the family are not usurped by their wives in future. It is emphasized that their superior position can only be guaranteed if the initiates work hard in their education and in life. This would ensure that they are more financially empowered than their spouses are and are therefore respected in the family and community. The fact that an initiate should never exhibit emotional weaknesses such as crying in public is suggested in narrative no. 5, *Mwekuru na mukuru wawe* (A woman and her husband) that is performed by Gladys Muthoni to initiated girls. In the narrative, a man marries a woman older than him and later gets married to a younger woman. When he takes the younger wife to his home with an intention of humiliating the first wife, the first wife treats them so well that his second wife is so embarrassed that she abandons the man. When the man realizes that the first wife had treated him well despite his evil intentions, he goes to beg for her forgiveness in the presence of the congregation in the church where the wife fellowships. As he begs for her forgiveness, the man sheds tears of pain and regret.

The narrator says:

The husband was crying. Do you know it is bad  
for a man to cry? Men do not cry anyhow my friend.  
Is that not so?

**Audience:** Yes.

I personally do not understand why it is hard for them  
to cry. I do not know whether they were told that when  
they get circumcised they should never cry even if they  
experience anything difficult. I am always surprised by the  
fact that they never cry just like that.

The narrator in narrative no.5 implies that crying in public especially by an initiated man is condemned and considered unmanly. It is generally believed by the Igembe people that a man should never exhibit cowardice by crying despite the hardships he may experience because crying is treated as a sign of weakness. The implication is that it is okay for a woman to cry because she is a weakling. However, the same is unacceptable for a man. This demonstrates the elevated position of men among the Igembe people as compared to that of women.

Narrative no.5 also depicts the expectations of the Igembe people as far as shedding of tears in public is concerned; that it is a demeaning act that an initiated man must never exhibit even when at his lowest ebb. The crying of the man could also be interpreted as a challenge and upset to the patriarchal order among the Igembe people where the females get a voice to challenge men's superiority and their control of women. In narrative no.5, it is the woman who rejects the man for the sake of the happiness of another woman that makes the husband shed tears. Since the narrative is told to girls in seclusion, the moral lesson to them is that they should stand together in support of each other so as to stop men from oppressing and exploiting them. Similarly, song no. 21, *Judasi ti umwe* (Judas is not one), that is performed by URA MCK choir also depicts the subversion of patriarchy where male dominance in the family set up is challenged by the female figure who questions her husband's irresponsible behaviour of coming home late. The implied message to the girls is that the traditional superior status of the men is changing and women have a voice to question their husbands' unbecoming behaviour. The singers sing:

When the husband comes back home at night,  
 his wife will ask him, "Why have you come late?"  
 When he asks for food, the wife replies,  
 "Go back to your prostitute, do not disturb me, go away from me."

Lastly, the social expectation and role of women as homemakers in the family set up among the Igembe people is communicated to the initiated girls in song no. 21, *Judasi ti umwe* (Judas is not one). Alcoholism is deterred among women for it is viewed as a recipe for a broken marriage because an alcoholic woman cannot nurture the children as expected. The message is implicitly passed on to the initiates with the hope that they would avoid the vice that can be a threat to the stability of their families later in life when they are married. The message is communicated in song no. 21:

A good woman takes care of the home,  
 Guiding the children peacefully,  
 When told to drink one (beer) to get rid  
 Of thoughts, then that is the end of you.

In summary, the foregoing discussion depicts the social roles and statuses of men and women as defined by the Igembe community; and the subversion of those traditional roles and statuses due to the dynamics taking place in the society that are challenging patriarchy. Finally, the importance of age groups, brotherly ties, traditional religious worship, beliefs and practices is brought to the fore. The spirit of unity and hardwork is also highlighted.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

The analysis in chapter four ascertains that oral narratives, proverbs, and songs discussed are used in the literate society to pass educative messages to initiates. The genres are utilized to prepare and equip the initiates with life skills and knowledge that would help them navigate their lives in their families and society as responsible citizens.

The chapter reaffirms that oral genres discussed address core challenges facing initiates. Through the genres, the initiates are objectively advised to steer away from traditional initiation and instead embrace ARP. In addition, the chapter ascertains that oral literature genres used in ARP ceremonies play a proactive role in shaping the character of the initiates by castigating the vices loathed and praising the virtues treasured. The mentors charged with the responsibility of guiding and training the initiates in ARP ceremonies endeavour to introject among the initiates the acceptable virtues that would endear them to the community. The initiates are also prepared for responsible parenthood and family life where they are implicitly equipped to be ready to face and wisely tackle challenges that face the marriage institution. The role of males as providers and females as homemakers in the family set up is also explained to the initiates.

Finally, it is observed that oral literature genres play a crucial role in ensuring that initiates are smoothly integrated into cultural practices of the Igembe people in the contemporary set up. The integration is done to ensure that the initiates understand their position and expectations of the society as far as the social and gender roles, statuses, traditions, practices, philosophy, and beliefs of the Igembe people are concerned. The woman is also empowered to work hand in hand with her husband and to be wary of the traditional gender inequalities in order to create a fruitful life for the two. The empowerment of women is like a subversion of the patriarchal order which mirrors transformations in the contemporary societies and the need for the initiates to face such realities. These realities include: the intricacies of polygamy and the role of the woman in rejecting or upholding it.

The next chapter discusses the functions of styles used in oral songs, proverbs, and narratives performed in ARP ceremonies.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### STYLES IN ORAL SONGS, PROVERBS, AND NARRATIVES PERFORMED IN ALTERNATIVE RITES OF PASSAGE AMONG THE IGEMBE PEOPLE

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the significance of linguistic and performance styles used in the three genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people. A close scrutiny of styles in songs, narratives, and proverbs used in ARP is significant because styles help to reiterate themes, clarify issues, and reinforce the messages communicated. The main linguistic and performance styles that feature in the three genres of oral literature that are discussed include: use of imagery, rhetorical questions, mnemonics, repetition, euphemism, satire, interludes, local idioms, dialogue, code-switching, question and answer technique, direct address, ellipsis, intertextuality, symbolism, and parallelism among others.

#### 5.2 Styles Used in Proverbs Performed in Alternative Rites Passage Ceremonies

Proverbs used in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people are incorporated in songs and oral narratives while others are used independently. The main styles identified in the proverbs discussed include: mnemonics, code-switching, imagery, parallelism, ellipses and abbreviations.

There is use of ellipsis in proverb no. 9, *Mwathoa kirira, nuuri kiawe* (The one to be advised is one, who has his own wisdom) that is used by Margaret Kanampiu to advise initiated boys during their graduation ceremony. The use of ellipses or abbreviations occurs when the interlocutor states the proverb halfway and allows the audience to complete the remaining part of the proverb loudly. The proverb is relevantly used in this context because as a newly initiated adult, one is bound to receive varied pieces of advice from different people. It is thus the prerogative of the initiate to filter the different pieces of advice given to him and only follow the ones that are beneficial to him. The Igembe people believe that once one is initiated into adulthood, one receives instructions from one's mentors in seclusion, "his daytime father" and his peers in the society. The instructions given empower the initiates with the rich knowledge that enable them to make wise decisions on issues affecting their lives in different stages of their development from teenage years when they are getting initiated into adulthood till their old age. These issues include but not limited

to education, marriage life, relationships with opposite sex and peers, respect for others, and acquisition of property.

In this particular context, the speaker tells the initiates that there is need to steer away from people who can mislead them into drugs and immorality. The speaker uses the proverb to remind initiates to always recall and use the knowledge they have acquired whenever confronted with a challenging situation. Accordingly, knowledge is considered important since a decision made out of ignorance can lead to disastrous consequences such as plunging into costly and cataclysmic situations such as drug addiction and contraction of HIV/AIDS. The speaker utters the proverb halfway and the initiates complete it:

**Speaker:** The one to be advised is one who has what...?

**Audience:** Who has his own wisdom.

There is also use of ellipsis in proverb no. 6 (i), *Mutaane nuria urina, into biawe* (The one who is circumcised, is the one who has his own property) by Pastor Gitonga Kaithungu that is performed during graduation ceremony of initiated boys. The proverb is used to impress upon the initiates to work hard as they pursue their studies so that they can get rewarding jobs and therefore improve their chances of being financially independent in future. The proverb also reflects the gender based expectations of a male child in the community. Among the Igembe people, men are expected to be financially empowered, if they are to earn any respect from other members of the community. The proverb also instills a culture of hardwork just as Talcott (2005) stipulates that a society should promote and be committed to common values. One of the most important shared values includes a belief in the work ethic. The speaker intones:

**Speaker:** A circumcised person is the one who has what...?

**Audience:** The one who has his own property.

Through use of ellipses in the proverbs no. 9 and 6 (i) discussed above, the initiates and the audience are able to actively participate in the performance of the proverbs as they fill the missing part of the wise saying. Use of ellipsis also enhance the initiates' ability to recall the message communicated to them even in future since they internalize the message embodied in the proverb when they participate in completing it. The involvement of the audience and the initiates in performance of the proverb

also helps to put emphasize on the message passed to the initiates better than if a speaker performed it alone. In addition, the speakers in these contexts allow not only the initiates, but also the audience (during graduation ceremonies) to complete the proverbs that are well known to them so that the audience can also actively participate in advising the initiates since they also share the same philosophy being communicated. The participation of the audience also kills the monotony of having just one speaker addressing the initiates. The first part of the proverb uttered by the speaker is said with a rising intonation to act as a cue to the audience to participate by providing the omitted part of the proverb. There is also use of an interrogative intonation in the first part of the proverbs which is meant to send a signal to the audience to chip in the conversation and be part of the performance. This makes the rendition of proverbs highly conversational.

Proverb no.13, *Icau ria muti yungii, litilumataa muti yungi* (The bark of another tree, cannot stick on another tree) by Gladys Muthoni uses parallelism. The two parts of the proverb separated by a comma are such that they are balanced and of equal strength. The above proverb is used to caution young girls in seclusion against abandoning their humble families by seeking shelter in their friends' homes which are more financially endowed than theirs. They should instead be reminded that it is only in their parents' homes where they can get true love and support at all times. The girls are therefore encouraged to appreciate the economic status of their families and be satisfied with what their parents are able to provide them with.

In addition, the initiates are enlightened on the fact that it is only their parents who are always ready to take care of them faithfully. The proverb no.13 also uses a metaphor. A bark of a tree is compared to the girls and a tree to their family background. The figure of speech is aptly used to remind the girls that their families and homes are the only place they can be truly appreciated. Thus, they should not expect to be fully accepted by their parents' friends nor be fully welcomed in those homes just as it is difficult and unrealistic to permanently stick the bark of a different tree on another tree. The proverb acts as a commentary on some of the bad habits prevalent in the area where the initiated girls come from. The comparison of sticking the bark of one tree to another tree is something that each of the girls has never seen happening and thus they know it is unrealistic and impossible for them to be equally accepted in



other people's homes. Thus, the initiates are made to understand that it is only their parents who can always be there for them irrespective of the circumstances that they are in using the familiar metaphors of a bark of a tree and a tree.

Proverb no. 14, *Mbonia uria ugwitania nawe, nani nkwire uria ukari* (Show me your companion, I shall tell you what your character is) by Margaret Kanampiu also makes use of parallelism. The proverb is used to warn the initiated boys against befriending people with perverted character because with time the wicked friends would influence their character negatively. Instead, the initiates are advised to seek the company of people with unquestionable moral values because these are the people who are likely to influence them positively. After one undergoes initiation into adulthood through ARP, one is expected to acquire the right morals and as such seek the company of other initiates who are equally disciplined. The two equal parts of the proverb are separated from each other using a comma and each of them has more or less the same length and strength as the other.

The use of parallelism makes the proverbs no.13 and no.14 sound poetic and rhythmical because the two parts are divided into equal parts. The first part of such a proverb is usually uttered with a rising intonation. On the other hand, the second part with a falling intonation to mark the end of the proverb. Consequently, the proverbs sound interesting and captivating to listen to. Parallelism enhances the memorability of the message communicated as it helps the initiates to internalize the message communicated to them in the two parts; the first part which is in form of a proposition and the second part which completes the proverb. While the first part of the proverb states a given scenario, the second part gives the consequence. This way, the initiate perceives the cautionary message in two unforgettable parts that complement each other. Thus, the message is taken in with the seriousness it deserves.

There is use of assonance in proverb no. 7, *Itigua ta ina igua ta ithe* (If one does not resemble the mother, one resembles the father) uttered by Mercy Nkatha. The proverb is used to advise initiated boys on their graduation day. There is production of a vowel sound during the pronunciation of the vowel letters "i" as illustrated by the underlined letter. The proverb is used to remind the initiates the need to follow in the footsteps of their mentors who have excelled in life because of their hardwork, determination, and

by being focused in life. The mentors include the parents of the particular initiates being addressed and the other people in the society who are doing well financially and in their professions because of their high level of education.

Similarly, proverb no. 4, *Uti mbiti iti munyanya wayo* (There is no hyena that does not have a friend of its own) by Pastor Julius Kaunyangi makes use of assonance as illustrated in the underlined vowel letters that produce the vowel sounds “i” and “a”. This proverb is used to impress upon the initiated boys to be prudent when choosing friends lest they befriend people with dubious character that could negatively influence them when they join secondary school.

There is also assonance in proverb no.15, *Uuithoe aria uwikinyila* (You will scratch yourself the farthest you can reach yourself) by Gladys Muthoni. Assonance is illustrated in the repetition of the underlined letters that produce vowel sounds /u/ and /i/. The proverb is used to advise girls in seclusion to be satisfied with the financial support their parents give them even though it is not much rather than to get engaged in irresponsible relationships with men for financial gains. This is because at the end of the day, the men would demand for sex from them that would endanger their lives. The use of assonance in proverbs no. 15, 4, and 7 makes the proverbs sound musical and appealing to the ears of the audience during their rendition especially when performed in their original language. As a result, the message encompassed becomes memorable to initiates as it sounds interesting to listen to the proverbs due to the musicality of the same sounds being repeatedly produced.

There is use of a metaphor in proverb no. 4, *Uti mbiti iti mu nyanya wayo* (There is no hyena that does not have its own friend) that is performed by Pastor Kaunyangi. The proverb uses a metaphor of a hyena to represent an evil person. A hyena in narratives among the Igembe people is used to symbolize wicked, mean, and cunning people who are almost always scheming on how to take advantage of other people’s naivety. In this case, the initiates are conversant with what the hyena represents. Thus, the cautionary message being passed to them that they should be wary of people in the community who can take advantage of them while pretending to be their friends is taken with the seriousness it deserves.

Alliteration and consonance as styles are used in the proverb no. 17, *Uria kanyua kaugaa nibuo gukaraga* (What one utters with one's mouth is what comes to pass) that is performed by Mrs Margaret Kanampiu. There is repetition of sounds /k/ (alliteration) and /g/ (consonance) in the proverb as demonstrated by the underlined letters "k" and "g" respectively. The alliteration of /k/ and use of consonance /g/ sounds in the underlined letters in the the proverb make it sound musical and interesting to the ear and thus the message communicated becomes memorable to the initiates. The proverb is used to warn the parents against confessing negative things about their children for this makes the children hopeless and lose self esteem. There is also a common belief among the Igembe people that the spoken word can either build or destroy one's destiny.

Proverb no.16, *Bukeeja kwaa Dicii* (Do not be a District Commissioner {DC}) by Mukiri Gituma uses a metaphor of the DC. The proverb is used to warn the initiates against being arrogant and indisciplined just because they are initiated into adulthood. The initiates are advised against imagining that they are as important as a DC. A District Commissioner (DC) in the government administrative structure of Kenya was the only government administrative officer (before Devolution of the Government of Kenya) who was known to command power and earn respect from citizens because of the authority he or she wielded in his or her area of jurisdiction. Similarly, a circumcised man among the Igembe people is highly regarded by people. However, the initiates are warned that initiation into adulthood in itself does not make the initiates as important as a DC. Hence, the initiates are reminded that as long as they are dependant on their parents, they should always be obedient and subservient to them even though they are initiated. The use of the image of a DC is easily understood by initiates and initiates can identify with it because a DC in the community in a rural set up was highly revered.

Proverb no. 10, *Ukia kuona kinyuruu, huwezi ona moja* (If you see a mongoose, you will not see just one) by Dr. Mugambi uses a metaphor and code-switching. "To see a mongoose" is compared to facing numerous problems in life. The proverb is used to shed light on the symptoms of HIV/AIDS and other infections that one gets after contracting the disease. The speaker cautions the girls in seclusion against immorality because if one gets infected with HIV/AIDS; there are many other opportunistic

infections that afflict the victim. The comparison of HIV/AIDS symptoms to seeing a mongoose in one's vicinity is an apt imagery that the initiates can identify with. A mongoose is a common predator in the environment of the initiates that is known for preying on people's poultry. The mongoose keeps on coming for more and more of its preys until they are depleted. Similarly, when one contracts HIV/AIDS, one becomes prone to various infections that afflict the victim one after another till the victim is deprived of his or her good health and eventually dies. The proverb is used to deter the girls from having irresponsible sex that can expose them to contracting HIV/AIDS since sexual immorality is one of the vices that ravages the youth among the Igembe people.

Code-switching is used in proverb no. 10 where the first part of the proverb which is the proposition uses *Kimeru* words (*Ukia kuona kinyuruoo...* {If you see a mongoose...}). The second part of the proverb which is the completion of the proverb is in *Kiswahili* language (...*huwezi oona moja* {you will not see one}). Code-switching is used by the speaker because he knows his audience is literate just as he is and the initiates understand him irrespective of the languages used. Code-switching also makes the proverb sound absurd, interesting, and more humorous than if it were uttered in its original *Kimeru* language only. In addition, code-switching allows the performer who is a doctor by profession to sound less formal and identify more with the initiates he is mentoring because code-switching is a common phenomenon among the youth. In the process, he is able to creatively incorporate humour and this makes the proverb memorable to the young girls. Thus, the creativity in the saying enables the speaker to skillfully pass a serious message on HIV/AIDS to the initiates who are vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections by using a simplified and humorous language and imagery that is familiar to them.

Proverb no. 8, *nkima ya mutu yiina mwanki, irijawa na rutere* (hot *ugali*, is eaten from the sides) is uttered by Tarsius Mugambi while counselling an initiated boy. The proverb uses a metaphor of eating hot *ugali* to compare it to indulging in immorality and drug abuse that can burn or destroy one's life. The imagery of the hot *ugali* is aptly used as the initiate can identify with eating hot *ugali* and how it can scald one's hands and mouth if one puts a hot morsel in one's mouth. Similarly, any initiate who decides to indulge in drugs and immorality is reminded that the venture can have

painful and irreversible consequences. Thus, the initiate should be cautious so as to safeguard his health which is his wealth.

Proverb no. 11, *itindikagwa iri mauru yayo* (You can only push something that has its own wheels or legs) is used by Silas Murithi to advise initiated boys. The proverb uses the metaphor of legs or wheels to remind the initiates that they should always have innate zeal to excel in life and in their academics and should be disciplined if they want anybody to help finance their education. In addition, they should endeavour to acquire wisdom that would empower them with knowledge to help them make wise decisions when confronted with challenges in life. This wisdom and zeal to excel in life is metaphorically compared to having one's legs or wheels and the advice and financial support is compared to being pushed. The metaphor of being pushed is something the initiates can identify and relate with having grown seeing wheelbarrows being pushed during construction of buildings. The moral lesson to the initiates is that for one to be supported by anybody, one should always be in a position to use wisdom to make the right decisions in life as per the guidance one is given by one's mentors. In addition, the initiates should always have innate drive to excel in life so that other people are motivated to help them.

Proverb no. 5, *Ukiinjira baangi mariinya, iinja ya manene na ya manini, niuntu noo uwe kuu* (As you dig trenches or holes for others, dig deep ones and shallow ones for you may end up falling in one of them) is performed by Gladys Muthoni and is used to advise girls in seclusion. The girls are cautioned against plotting evil things against other women for they could be victims of their own evil schemes that are metaphorically being compared to trenches or holes. Through the proverb, the young girls are warned against breaking the families of other women because of their own selfish interests by having extra-marital affairs with married men. They are reminded that, the same could happen to them once they get married. The metaphor about trenches is suitable because the initiates are able to figure out in their minds how difficult it can be to get out of a deep hole or trench in comparison to a shallow one in case one falls in any of the deep ones. Therefore, the proverb emphasizes the need to be humane and empathetic to the plight of other women. In addition, it discourages selfishness. All this is geared towards motivating people to embrace altruism as a social foundation that can hold the society together through having stable families.

Durkheim (1895) suggests that members of community are naturally selfish and should be restrained so as to maintain social order and have amicable coexistence among them. He insinuates that this can only be achieved if individual's selfish desires are controlled by instilling common social norms and values that members can ascribe to. Thus, the selfish man is punished by being deserted by the second wife, while the first wife is rewarded when the husband begs her for reconciliation after having been humiliated by the second wife.

Proverb no. 1, *Ugeeta arusine utitii* (Do not attend wedding ceremonies where you are not invited) that is performed by Ms Karambu Mururu uses a metaphor of a wedding. It is used to warn girls in seclusion against attending traditional circumcision ceremonies in the community lest they get molested for intruding on the cultural activities that they are not yet initiated into. According to Igembe cultural practice, an uncircumcised girl is not allowed to participate in rituals performed for boys and girls who are traditionally circumcised. Breaking this tradition is tantamount to transgressing against the culture which attracts a severe punishment or fine from the age group that is getting circumcised that season. It is common for the Igembe people to attend wedding ceremonies in the community whether invited or not. There is also indiscriminate dining and wining for everybody present as the community celebrates the joyous occasion. As a matter of fact, wedding ceremonies are viewed as communal activities where people are free to meet and celebrate together. Thus, the metaphor is used to caution the girls against treating initiation ceremonies like wedding ceremonies where they can attend freely without any restrictions. Instead, they should treat initiation ceremonies as serious cultural practices that have taboos and restrictions that must be adhered to by everybody. Since, the imagery of a wedding is familiar to the initiates; the message passed to them is better comprehended than if plain language is used.

In summary it is evident that styles in proverbs are significantly used during ARP ceremonies to help different speakers to focus on the messages they want to communicate in a better way. The significance of styles in oral genres are echoed by Kuper A. and Kuper J. (1985, pp. 322-324) who stipulates that every particular feature that exists in a system has a function ascribed to that practice. Therefore, each of the styles used play a role in enhancing communication of messages in the proverbs

where they are used. Consequently, the messages encompassed in the proverbs become imprinted in the minds of the initiates and this increases chances of the pieces of advice being beneficial to the initiates for a longer period of time.

### **5:3 Styles Used in Oral Narratives Performed in Alternative Rites of Passage Ceremonies**

Several features of style are used during performance of oral narratives to achieve varied desired effects in ARP ceremonies. They include: onomatopoeia, satire, euphemism, local dialect, dialogue, ellipsis, opening and closing formulae, allusion, personification, repetition, ideophones, personification, rhetorical questions, symbolism, imagery, and intertextuality between genres among others. Each of the styles is used intentionally or unconsciously by different mentors and counsellors guiding the initiates to serve certain purposes. Their functions include: to break the monotony of narration, help in characterization, and create mental images of what is being communicated, provoke the initiates to ponder over a given issue, create humour, emphasize, and summarize messages being communicated to initiates.

An opening formula is used in oral narrative no. 1, *Kamwali na atanong'ina* (A girl and her brothers) that is narrated by Gladys Muthoni to the initiated girls. The moral lesson of the narrative to the girls is that for them to succeed in fighting FGM, they should be keen to follow instructions given to them by their mentors and also embrace self-discipline. The opening formula prepares the audience to listen to the adventure and fantasy to be experienced in the narrative. The use of an introductory remark by the narrator, "I want to give you a story" is also significantly used in the narrative by the narrator to seek permission from the audience before she tells them a narrative so that it does not seem like the narrator wants to impose the narrative upon them. The consent of the audience is echoed by the remark "*Ehee*" (Yes) which acts as cue to the narrator to commence the storytelling session. The response also reassures the narrator that they are attentive from the beginning of the narration so that they can get the message communicated to them. This is how narrative no. 1, begins:

**Narrator:** I want to give you a short story.

**Audience:** *Ehee!* (Yes)

**Narrator:** There was once a woman and her three children...

An opening formula is also used in narrative no. 5, *Mwekuru na mukuru wawe* (A woman and her husband) that is narrated by Gladys Muthoni during counselling of the girls in seclusion. The introductory formula, “Allow me to tell you a story. This is a true story” that is used to cue to the audience that the narrator is about to start telling a narrative so that the audience can prepare and listen to her. If this is not done, then the narrator may not be able to capture the attention of all the initiates from the beginning of the narrative until the end. When the audience responds in the affirmative, “*Ehee*”, the narrator gets the message that her audience is ready to listen to her. The fact that the narrator clarifies from the beginning that she was going to give a true or factual narrative and not a folktale prepared the audience to expect to hear experiences from the narrative that they could identify and relate with in their environment. As the narrative unfolds, the audience is able to listen to a narrative about the marriage of a woman to a man younger than her; a familiar scenario in Kenya. The narrator also uses jargon in the introductory formula that suits the younger generation as a way of identifying with them. The use of slang words like “*kastory, Kalife story and mathee*” is meant to entice the initiates to listen to the narrator. Consequently, the message communicated becomes more memorable to the initiates than if the narrative lacked the styles:

**Narrator:** *Wacha nimuambie kastory. Kalife story.*

**Audience:** *Ehee!*

**Narrator:** *Kulikuwa na mama mwingine na huyu mathee  
Aliolewa na houseboy wacucu wangu...*

**Translation**

**Narrator:** Allow me to tell you a story. It is a true story.

**Audience:** Yes!

**Narrator:** There was a woman who got married to my  
granny’s houseboy...

Similarly, narrative no. 2, *Kamwari na aari baria bataani* (A small girl and the circumcised girls) narrated by Dr Kinanu Ntalala uses an opening formula to signal to the audience the start of the storytelling session. The introductory remark “*take a story*” is very crucial as it alerts the audience that the speaker is digressing from counselling the girls into a narrative telling session and it also captures their attention so that they can listen to the narrative. Their consent, “we take it” signals to the narrator that she could start narrating the narrative as the audience is ready to listen and learn the moral lesson (s) being communicated. The narrative encourages the girls



to be brave and resist circumcision of girls. The opening formula also assures the narrator that her narration would not be in vain since the audience is attentive as the story unfolds:

**Narrator:** Take a story.

**Audience:** We take it.

**Narrator:** When I was growing up, circumcision  
used to take place in my place...

Intertextuality of genres of oral literature is illustrated in narrative no. 5, *Mwekuru na mukuru wawe* (A woman and her husband) that is narrated by Gladys Muthoni. This is a modern narrative coined to address a contemporary issue prevalent in most polygamous marriages in modern society. The proverb, “All that goes round comes around” has been used to reinforce the message that, the evil things you do to others would eventually be done to you. The proverb is used in reference to the man in the narrative who abandons his first legal wife and cohabits with a younger woman because his first wife is ostensibly looking old and therefore not good enough for him. The mistress later on also abandons the husband when she realizes that her co-wife is a virtuous woman who does not deserve to be mistreated by the husband. The proverb “*Mchimba kisima huingia yeye mwenyewe*” (The one, who digs a well, falls into it himself or herself) is also incorporated in the narrative. The proverb also reinforces the same message that warns initiated girls against betraying their spouses in marriage because the same could be done to them. The message is illustrated by the man in the narrative who plots on how to humiliate his first wife only for him to be humiliated by his second wife who deserts him. Though the origin of the above two proverbs in narrative no. 5 is not from the Igembe people, the proverbs are used aptly to summarize and reinforce the messages incorporated in the narrative that warns initiates against being unfaithful to their partners when they get married in future

In the same narrative no. 5, the proverb, “*Tenda wema nenda zako*” (Do well to others without expecting any payment) is used to reiterate the need to be kind to others without expecting any form of reward from them. The proverb is used in reference to the woman being mistreated by the husband. Instead of reciprocating, she chooses to treat the husband and his second wife in a humane way. Later, the second wife abandons the husband when she realizes that her husband’s first wife is too beneficent to be hurt by anybody. The proverb “If all wishes were horses, even beggars would

ride” is also incorporated in the same narrative no.5 to emphasize the fact that people will always regret mistakes that they make. However, they would not be in a position to reverse their consequences. Thus, it is always important to be prudent when making decisions to avoid regrets. The two proverbs are also used to summarize and emphasize the message in narrative no. 5 that, one should be ready to face the consequences of one’s own actions. In the narrative, the man who had deserted his first wife because he claimed that she is aged is deserted by the second wife. The two proverbs have also been borrowed from other communities but have been aptly used to sum up the moral lesson being communicated.

A man in narrative no. 5 is punished by the second wife who deserts him. The moral lesson to the girls is that they should be faithful to their spouses when they get married. Similarly, it enlightens men to never betray their first wives while in pursuit of second wives whose loyalty and love may be questionable as exemplified by the second wife of the man in the narrative. In addition, initiates learn that forgiveness and loyalty in marriages is a recipe for stable families. The moral lesson is achieved by use of the oral narrative that incorporates proverbs to reinforce the message communicated that introjects the right morals in the initiates. This is done by having those who deviate from the norm being punished and those who persevere in marriage rewarded like the first woman of the maleficent man in narrative no. 5. The man is deserted and consequently humiliated by his second wife who realizes that the first wife was too altruistic to be hurt by anybody.

There is also incorporation of the proverb “*Usipoziba ufa, utajenga ukuta*” (If you do not repair a crack {on your wall}, you will build a wall) in narrative no. 12, *Mukuru na mwekuru wawe* (A man and his wife) that is narrated by John Mungathia. The proverb is used to sum up the moral lesson of the narrative that one should denounce any inappropriate behaviour one observes in one’s children or wife immediately lest the problem gets out of hand. This is in reference to a woman in the narrative no.12 who allows her children to mess their compound by defecating anyhow. The husband pleads with his wife to discipline the children so that they can stop the bad habit in vain. The husband gets so angry that he asks his friends to defecate heaps of faeces in the compound at night. The wife is forced to spend a lot of time the following day clearing the mess.

The proverb reinforces the need for parents to correct their children's unacceptable behaviour as soon as it is noted; otherwise, by doing so later would be costly. In addition, the initiates are being prepared for parenthood responsibilities of training their children to do the right thing later on in life. The metaphor of "to repair a crack" is used to mean to solve a small problem while "building a wall" is compared to solving a problem that has escalated from bad to worse. The figure of speech aptly brings out the mental picture of what is described and thus it emphasizes the message of not letting things get out of control by not solving a small problem as soon as it is identified.

It is therefore evident from narrative no.2 and no.5 that both proverbs and narratives have a symbiotic relationship with each other where proverbs are used to emphasize and summarize the message being conveyed by narratives just as Miruka (1994, pp. 177-178) points out; that, there is a lively connection between proverbs and folktales in which both genres are interwoven and each complements and enhances the quality of the other to achieve desired effects. In addition, the use of proverbs from other origins other than from the Igembe community demonstrates the external influence of the speakers either by Western education or their interactions with people from other communities. The use of proverbs in Kiswahili and English to reflect the experiences of the Igembe people is also a pointer to literacy levels of counsellors engaged in ARP ceremonies and adaptability of the proverbs and narratives to reflect the reality in the contemporary society.

A song is also incorporated in narrative no. 11, *Mukuru na ngekuru ciawe* (A man and his wives) that is narrated to initiated girls in seclusion by Gladys Muthoni. The song is used to satirise the vice of gossiping among women and to warn the initiates against it. In addition, the song acts as a mirror to the dynamism among the Igembe people where there is devil worship that is associated with *Illuminat*. The use of the song makes the message of refraining from being a slanderer more memorable to the girls who even participate in the singing of the song that is well known to them. This reaffirms Miruka's assertions (1994, p. 125) that songs in narratives help to "reinforce themes, create suspense, enhance plot development, and divide episodes."

The song also breaks the monotony of narration and gives the initiates an opportunity to relax as they participate in the singing:

Listen to the words of the *Kachina* village (village gossip)  
Her main preoccupation, her mouth is ever talking *cucucucu!*  
When I am in trouble, she is talking and talking *cucucucu!*  
Even when I am blessed you do not stop talking  
You are always saying I am an *Illuminat* worshipper  
Where is your goodness, you who is said to be my friend?

The intertextuality among oral narratives, songs, and proverbs as depicted in the narratives no. 12, 5, and 11 affirms that the different genres of oral literature are interdependent on each other. Therefore, each of the genre's effectiveness in communicating any message incorporated in it is enhanced and reinforced by another genre.

There are several ideophones used in narrative no. 11 to make the storytelling sessions dramatic and captivating to the initiates. The ideophone, "*cucucucu!*" in the song incorporated in narrative no.11 is used to describe how carelessly and endlessly the village gossip is always talking about others. The ideophone makes the song comical hence sustaining the attention of the initiates from the beginning until the end of the narrative. Consequently, the narrator is able to play the role of a teacher as well as an entertainer during this period which makes her message memorable to the initiates. The use of a rhetorical question, in the song in narrative no. 11, "Where is your goodness, you who is said to be my friend?" provokes the initiated girls into thinking seriously about the devastating effects of betraying one's friends through gossiping. Thus, the initiates are reminded to refrain from such unbecoming behaviour that can devastate one's friend.

The use of an ideophone "*Kuu!*" in narrative no. 13, *Aaki* (Builders) by Gerald Mungathia describes the sound produced by the stone and money in form of notes that is thrown by the mason who is trying to get the attention of the other mason working on the ground. The mason who is up in the building throws some notes of money to the person on the ground. Unfortunately, the mason working on the ground just takes the money and puts it into his pocket without bothering to find out the source of the money. This happens several times. The mason working in the building up is so angry that he takes a stone and hits the one on the ground "*kuu*". This time the mason looks

up and demands to know why his friend had hit him with a stone. The narrative cautions the initiated boys against failing to support their parents, the work of God, or God's servants who support them. If the initiates fail to support them, this can attract the wrath of God just as the mason up the building hits and inflicts pain on the mason who is on the ground with a stone for failing to respond to his call for attention. The hitting of the mason working on the ground with notes of money symbolizes blessings while hitting him with a stone signifies calamities that cause pain and suffering.

The ideophone *kuu!* makes the message more memorable for it creates a mental image of pain being inflicted on somebody after being hit forcefully. The mild hitting of the builder on the ground with money in form of a note for the first time symbolically represents blessings that one gets from God, parents, and servants of God. On the other hand, the hitting of his head with a stone that inflicts pain signifies calamities that people suffer that make them remember to look upon God or other people for help. The mason working on the ground does not look up when hit with notes of money because he never feels any pain. However, he looks up the building when hit with a stone to find out the person who had inflicted pain on him. The moral lesson of the narrative to the initiates is that they should not forget God or people who have always supported them in their lives when the going is good and only remember them when in problems.

Narrative no. 1, *Kamwari na atanong'ina* (A girl and her brothers) narrated by Gladys Muthoni uses several ideophones to create mental images of how the girl who climbs the mountain trudges majestically; "So the girl climbed the mountain *kocho! Kocho! Kocho!* She trudged on". The ideophones create an impression of struggle as the girl undertakes the laborious journey to ascend the mountain. The narrator also uses an ideophone "*Mssss!*" to express the narrator's disappointment with the failure of one of the brothers to follow instructions. "What! He looked behind. *Mssss!* He turned into a stone!" The seer had instructed the brother not to look behind as he climbs the mountain. However, he does not listen and thus ends up turning into a stone. There is also use of an ideophone *ka! ka! ka!* to create mental images of the threatening sound produced when stones are thrown towards the girl while she trudges up the mountain, "The stones were being thrown *ka!ka!ka!* But none of these stones were hitting her". The messages being communicated to the initiates through these ideophones

emphasize how destructive the distracters are to anybody striving to climb the mountain to get the golden things that were up in the mountain.

The girl in the narrative no. 1 does not look behind despite the noise being made by stones hurled at her. This shows the girl's courage and focus. The fact that the stones thrown targeting the girl do not actually hit her implies to the girls that if they ignore the people who attempt to divert them away from achieving their dreams, they would succeed in fighting FGM and in pursuing education symbolized by getting of the golden water. The hurling of stones towards the characters trying to ascend the mountain symbolizes the harassment that those who do not undergo FGM face in their day to day life. The stones hurled at the climbers symbolically represent the traditional forces hindering the fight against FGM. The moral lesson of the narrative to the initiates is that the fight against FGM is not for the fainthearted because opposition is real. Therefore, the initiates must remain brave, focused, and determined in order to triumph.

The symbol of a journey in narrative no. 1 reminds the initiated girls that the war against FGM among Igembe people is progressive and challenging and would take a lot of time and effort before positive results are achieved. The girl who follows instructions issued to her is able to reach at the mountain top and get the golden water, a basket, and a tree to signify to the initiates that their success in life and fight against FGM would be determined by their ability to follow instructions given to them by their mentors. The golden water is used symbolically to represent education and the effect of the knowledge acquired on other people. Therefore, the girls who undergo ARP are to enlighten other girls about the devastating effects of FGM. Once the initiates get this understanding, they would be able to fight FGM and the community would prosper as symbolized by the resurrection of all those who had died. The resurrection of the dead people gives hope to the initiates that if they consistently fight FGM their success would be insurmountable and would give life to the community. Gold is an expensive and valuable metal. Thus, the golden water, tree, and basket symbolize something precious; something that imparts positively on the lives of the people. Gold is also used to represent the education that the girls receive, which empowers them to resist FGM. Therefore, pursuant of formal education would eventually lead to success and fame in their lives.

The girl's brothers' failure to reach at the mountain top in narrative no. 1 is attributed to their failure to heed to the instructions given to them by the seer at the bottom of the mountain. The girl succeeds because she pays attention to the advice. The seer symbolically represents the teachers, mentors, and parents who guide the youth on the right path to follow in life. It therefore implies that if one heeds to their advice, one is bound to succeed in life. However, if one does not, then they are bound to fail in life just like the brothers of the girl fail to reach at the mountain top.

Personification is evident in narrative no.1. In the narrative, the girl who reaches at the top of the mountain is able to have a conversation with the golden basket that instructs her on what to do. Personification in the narrative is inevitable because it helps to resolve the predicament of the dead people that had transformed into grass and stones. The golden basket talks to the girl instructing her on how to help reinvigorate the people who had earlier on transformed into grass and stones. Personification is necessary because without the instructions, the young girl would have been helpless and would not have become famous. On the other hand, the dialogue where the golden basket talks, breaks the monotony of narration and thus makes the narration lively:

When she reached at the mountain top,  
she met a golden basket that told her,  
“Listen, I tell you. All the grass you can see,  
are people who got ruined.  
I want you to sprinkle this  
golden water on the grass...”

The fingerlings that are rescued and returned into the river are used to symbolize the girls who undergo ARP in the oral narrative no. 14, *Tusamaki na kaiji* (The fingerlings and a small boy). The narrative is performed by John Mungathia to girls in seclusion on their graduation day to illustrate that, the fight against FGM using ARP programs has not always received support from all parts of Igembe. Thus, the poor attendance of such a program witnessed in one of the ARP centres, necessitates the narration. In the narrative, a boy who finds many fingerlings that had been swept to the bank of a river by torrential floods tries to rescue those he could by throwing them back into the river. A man comes by and asks him why he is wasting his time trying to return some of the fingerlings into the river yet they are too many for him to rescue. The boy rescuing the fingerlings tells the man that he has hope that those fingerlings

he had put back into the river would one day reproduce and the future generations of the fish would be guaranteed.

The few girls who undergo ARP in narrative no.4 symbolize the fingerlings that are rescued and thrown back into the river. They are the girls spared from FGM and are the ones who would ensure there is a generation of uncircumcised girls that survives and is sustained in the community. The man who rescues the fingerlings symbolizes the church and the organizers of the ARP programs that fight FGM in Igembe region. The passers-by who ask the boy rescuing the fingerlings why he is wasting his time throwing back into the river some of the fingerlings when there are so many that are on the river bank that he could not possibly rescue alone, represents the cynical people in the society that are not fighting FGM in the area because they think it is futile to do so. The torrential water that carries the fingerlings out of the main river to the river bank symbolizes the strong forces in the community that are fighting and threatening the survival of the girls who are not circumcised by coercing them to get circumcised so that they can be socially acceptable in the society.

The use of such symbols when communicating to girls from an area with rivers and fish aptly communicates to the initiates for they can identify with the familiar symbols. The survival and prosperity of the girls requires a favourable environment just as the survival of fingerlings require water or the river to stay alive. This is a wake up call to leaders in the region to protect the girls from FGM that opens doors for their early marriages hindering them from progressing on with their education.

A dialogue is used in narrative no. 7, *Mwekuru na twana twawe* (A woman and her children) that is narrated to initiated girls on their graduation day by John Lika. In the narrative, the girl repeatedly questions her mother why her sex organs are different from her brother's, "Mother, why wasn't I given like that of Boy?" The words spoken by the girl indicates her curiosity commonly found in young children who want to discover the world around them. In addition, the girl's exact words also indicate that she has not been adequately socialized to realize that when she grows up and gets married, she can "acquire her own male sexual organs." The mother's response, "Do not worry. One day, you will be given" underscores the failure of many parents in educating and equipping their children with life skills and knowledge about sex and



sexuality as they mature. The dialogue also breaks monotony of narration which makes the initiates' interest to be sustained throughout the narration. The narrative warns initiates against being gullible and naïve as the girl in the narrative is sexually exploited by her boyfriend due to her ignorance. It also teaches the initiates the importance of not shying away from teaching their daughters how to handle sexual matters by being open to their children when they become parents in future.

Euphemism and ellipsis are used in narrative no. 7. The girl asks the mother, “Mother, why was I not given like that of Boy?” The ordinary question should have been, “Mother, why was I not given a sex organ like the one Boy has?” The direct use of language would have been disrespectful because sex organs in most African communities are not mentioned openly to avoid being perceived to be obscene. Thus, use of euphemism and ellipsis allows the girl to deftly seek answers in a sensitive subject without being noncivill to her mother.

However, it is important that euphemistic language is used cautiously lest one misunderstands the coded language and ends up in trouble like the girl in narrative no. 6, *Mwari na mami wake* (A girl and her mother) performed by Dr Mugambi. In the narrative, the mother tells her maturing girl never to take off her clothes for men instead of telling her openly and directly that she should never have sex with men. Since the girl had misunderstood the advice, the girl is duped by the boyfriend into having sex with her. As a result, she contracts an STD and becomes expectant. The use of euphemism in narratives no. 6 and 7 also allows the narrators who are males to freely discuss the issue of sex and sexuality with the teenage girls without feeling embarrassed. Traditionally, sex and sexuality issues for girls among the Igembe people were ideally meant to be handled by females such as the girls' aunts and grandmothers.

Narrative no. 6 also uses euphemism to highlight the dire consequences of irresponsible sexual behaviour among the youth. The girl in the narrative fails to mention exactly what she had done with her boyfriend that led her to getting expectant. The girl describes having sex by saying, “we did this thing while standing up” while pregnancy is called “a ball”. Euphemism in this context helps the speaker to talk about sexual matters without the speaker getting embarrassed since he is a man

and there is huge age gap between him and the girls he is addressing through the narrative. The inherent humour created with pregnancy being metaphorically compared to “a ball” and having sex as “doing this thing” makes the unfortunate incident in the narrative laughable and memorable to the initiates.

The problem of using coded or euphemistic language that is ambiguous leaves the young girls confused and at the mercy of their peers who may also have been misguided by their parents. Consequently, it exposes the girls to STIs, unwanted pregnancies, and an increased rate of girls dropping out of school. It is for this reason that in ARP rituals for girls that the thorny issue of sexuality is tackled in a bid to enlighten the girls who may have been misinformed about their sexuality by their parents who are prohibited by taboos from sharing such important matters with their daughters.

The mother asked her,  
“Didn’t I tell you not to remove clothes for men?”  
Mary replied. “We did this thing while standing up!  
{Implying being intimate with a male while still dressed up}  
Now, Mary was in trouble. She had gonorrhoea and  
*a ball*

Code-switching is used in narrative no. 5, *Mwekuru na mukuru wawe* (A woman and her husband) that is narrated by Gladys Muthoni initiated girls. The narrator uses a combination of *Kimeru*, slang, *Kiswahili* and English words in her narrative. The narrative underscores the need for the initiated girls to be virtuous. It also teaches them that the choices one makes in life have consequences. In the narrative, an elderly woman gets married to a younger man. After acquiring a lot of wealth, the man starts an affair with a young woman who later deserts him after discovering that his first wife was a kindhearted woman who did not deserve to be ill-treated by her husband. The language used in narrative no. 5 is quite informal. The speaker who is a teacher by profession could have used any one of the three languages comfortably. However, he chooses to use a combination of languages in order to communicate to everybody effectively as the linguistic competency of the audience is not the same due to varying educational levels.

Code-switching also enables the narrator to satirise the absurd relationship because the term “mathee” refers to a very elderly woman. The word “houseboy” is demeaning and satirises the extreme mismatch in age in the relationship between a very young man and a very old woman. The contrast in age prepares the minds of the initiates for the inevitable disaster of the family conflicts that ensues due to age disparity of the involved couple. The moral lesson to the initiates is that they should not get married to men younger than them for it can easily trigger conflicts in the family.

Code-switching used in narrative no. 5 also enables the speaker to quote common English philosophical sayings that could not have been directly translated into any other language with the same effect like “looking sexy, dressed to kill”. The unusual use of language satirises the indecent dressing of the man’s second wife. The initiates are indirectly warned against such mode of dressing. Thus, code-switching makes the moral lessons captivating and memorable to the initiates since the narrator uses a language that the initiates can identify with so as to make her message more accessible to them.

*Wacha nimuambie kastory. Kalife story.*

**Audience:** Ehe!

*Kulikuwa na mama mwingine na huyu mathee  
Aliolewa na houseboy wa cucu wangu.  
Mwanamke huyu alikuwa na miaka mingi kuliko  
Ya bwanake. Is it possible kuolewa na mtu  
Mkubwa kukuliko?*

**Audience:** Ehe!

*It is possible. Si ndio? Nendi mukuruu uu ari akuoya  
Mwekuru uyuu, beeta bauria into bauria...Sasa wacha  
Niendelea na stori yangu. Wamekuja na bwana. Huyu  
bwana amebeba vitu za mwanamke. Nendi ndathuanacia  
keejite kamejidecorate na kamedress venye watu*

*wanasemanga*

*“I was dressed to kill.” Umesikia watu wakisema hivyo?  
Ati you look sexy. Ati mpaka kwa church!  
Kwani ulikuwa umekuja kufanya sex kwa church?  
Unapaswa kukaa sexy kwa bedroom si kwa church  
au kwa njia! Si ndio? Hio statement I hate it.*

**Translation**

Allow me to tell you a story. It is a true story.

**Audience:** Ehe!

There lived an elderly woman who got married to my grandmother’s houseboy. This woman was older than the man who married her. Is it possible

for one to be married to somebody who is older than you?

**Audience:** Ehe!

It is possible. Now, after this man married this woman, they went and worked hard and worked hard to amass wealth...So let me continue with my story.They came with the husband. This husband had carried his wife's things. I think she had come having decorated herself and having dressed the way people dress when they say, "I was dressed to kill." Have you ever heard people say so?

**Audience:** Ehe!

You just look Sexy even in the church! Now, had you come to have sex in the church? You are only supposed to be sexy in your bedroom, not in the church or in public! Isn't that so? I hate this kind of statement.

Question and answer technique is a feature of style that allows the audience to participate in a storytelling session. It is used in narrative no.12, *Mukuru na mwekuru wawe* (A man and his wife) narrated to initiated boys on their graduation day by John Mungathia. The style allows the narrator to use interrogative words or utterances or questions that require the initiates to respond. Thus, the message communicated becomes interesting and memorable since the initiates participate in the conversation:

**Narrator:** There was a wife and her husband.  
Are you listening to this story?  
There was a man and who else...?

**Audience:** And his wife.

...

**Narrator:** And they loved each other.  
They were blessed with two children.  
Praise God?

**Audience:** Amen

**Narrator:** How many children were they blessed with?

**Audience:** Two.

Audience participation in narratives is also achieved through ellipsis where a speaker uses an interrogative intonation that signals the initiates to audibly fill gaps created by the narrator. This is depicted in the narrative no.1, *Kamwali na atanongina* (A girl and her brothers) by Gladys Muthoni where the narrator says:

**Narrator:** The girl was left alone...?

**Initiates:** Was left alone.

**Narrator:** She climbed and reached at the  
peak of the mountain as a winner.  
As a...?

**Initiates:** Winner.

Through the above utterances in narrative no. 1, the narrator engages and sustains the attention of initiates by using questions and ellipsis. As a result, it ensures that both the storyteller and the audience participate in the narration which makes the session interesting, fulfilling and memorable. Consequently, the message about the girl who remained focused and obeyed instructions given to her is communicated to the initiates in an unforgettable manner.

Narrative no. 15, *Ukuu na mtego* (A ground squirrel and the snare) by Caston Lubetaa uses symbols of a ground squirrel, a trap, and eating maize to warn an initiated boy against sexual immorality lest he contracts AIDS. In the narrative, an animal called a ground squirrel that steals and eats the farmers' maize is trapped by a farmer using a snare. Once trapped, it starts to console itself that it is not the only one trapped for all the other ground squirrels had also been trapped just like it had. The ground squirrel that is trapped is used to represent a person who has contracted AIDS who may want to console himself that he is not alone in the predicament. On the other hand, stealing maize is compared to having irresponsible premarital sexual acts. The symbols used in the narrative help the narrator to aptly warn the initiated boy against immorality in a subtle way and while doing so avoid the embarrassment associated with talking openly about sexual immorality in an audience of mixed gender and age.

In summary, this section reaffirms that different styles are used in oral narratives performed in ARP ceremonies. The main messages communicated to initiates through the stylistic devices discussed include: how to counter negative effects of peer pressure and drug abuse, fight against FGM, repercussions of sexual immorality, warning against naivety and gullibility among girls, being determined and focused, warning against indecent dressing and unfaithfulness in marriage. In addition, they are used to perpetuate gender roles and statuses as well as the philosophy of the Igembe people. Thus, different styles used in narratives play a crucial role in enhancing communication of didactic messages to initiates which reaffirms the assertion of Kuper A. and Kuper J. (1985, pp. 322-324), that anything practised in a society has functions or roles that helps to ensure the survival of the society.

#### 5.4 Styles Used in Oral songs Sung in Alternative Rites of Passage Ceremonies

Most of the songs performed in ARP ceremonies are rendered for entertainment and for passing on educative messages to initiates. Each of the performers of a song is at liberty to sing a song using styles that one deems necessary to enhance effective delivery of one's message to the audience. The main features of style used in songs collected for this study include: Biblical allusion, repetition, metaphors, slang, symbolism, similes, euphemism, ideophones, code-switching, refrain, antiphony, direct address, rhetorical questions, interludes, and satire among others.

There is extensive use of repetition as a style in cultural songs named *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) and *Kirarire* (That which is sung throughout the night) no.12, 14, 15 and 20. Repetition is evident where the lead soloist is given the freedom to manipulate the wording of the song. This helps the soloist to address diverse issues while the audience's response is just "aa" (yes) or the audience just repeats a few lines after the soloist. Repetition is used because the soloist of the traditional *Kirarire* song from which *Kiretheretie* song is adapted from is traditionally meant to be a seasoned oral artist who is wise enough to delve into diverse societal issues that need to be addressed in the society.

The troublesome vices in the society that initiates are warned against include: thievery, abuse of drugs, refusal to go to church, and disobeying parents (song no. 12). Other messages communicated include: Warning initiates against irresponsible sexual behaviour and its consequences; the need for parents to educate their children, reviving the *harambee* spirit among the Igembe people so that they can unite and educate children from needy families as well as giving advice to parents on the money generating projects that parents from humble backgrounds can embark on (song no. 15). Song no. 19 also advocates for education as the key to success. Gender roles and statuses from the viewpoint of people from Igembe is also highlighted.

Repetition of "aa" (yes) by the audience in the cultural songs no. 12, 14, 15, and 20 is also inevitable since these songs are usually very long and the audience may not be in a position to know the whole song. The soloist is given the power to guide the audience while addressing issues that are pertinent to the initiates as dictated by the context. The style also helps the soloist to play the role of a teacher and a

commentator. Thus, the soloist responds to the needs of the community accordingly by highlighting issues that need to be resolved by members of the community who are present for they affect the lives of the initiates.

In song no. 15, the soloist points out to the audience that among the initiated boys, there are initiates that would not go to high school because of financial constraints. He directly challenges the political leaders present like the area MCA (Mr Safari), the *Father* in charge of the Catholic Church, the *sisters* present, and the teachers to take the responsibility of ensuring that none of the initiates discontinues his education as a result of lack of finances. The messages communicated to parents give hope to initiates from humble backgrounds to work hard in school because they are assured of support from different members of the community.

Repetition is also evident in the traditional religious song no. 18, *Ancia Murungu* (Now God) by Kirema Masharufu where the soloist enumerates different blessings that he wants to befall the initiates such as prosperity in education, health, and in the professional world while the singers' only response is *Ngai* (God). Song no. 18 is traditionally meant to be performed by a traditional seer mainly during offering of sacrifices or when conducting rituals or ceremonies to bless people. The person who plays the role of a soloist chants the prayer items while expecting the audience to respond "God" in agreement as a way of rubber stamping what the soloist has prayed for. The overt repetition of the same parts of the song makes it easy for everybody to learn the song on the spot. Repetition also makes it rhythmical and interesting. The message encompassed in the words repeated is also emphasized and thus becomes memorable to the initiates. The fact that the audience only responds "God" also makes the initiates recognize how important it is to worship and revere God who controls all the blessings among the Igembe people. In addition, repetition also demonstrates that the audience or initiates are in agreement with what the soloist says and this emphasizes the message being communicated.

There is direct address to the personalities present in ARP ceremonies in song no. 15, *Kirethretie*, (That which is sung throughout the day). The style makes those addressed to own the responsibilities bestowed upon them by the community through the singer. Thus, the song implicitly plays an active role in mobilizing people to

support communal education of bright children that are from humble backgrounds in the community. The message also motivates the initiates to know that their education is guaranteed because the society is ready to come together for their sake. This ultimately inspires and instills communal spirit among the initiates to be united and to take care of each others later on in life. The song therefore, acts as a social commentary to what is currently going on in the community where needy and bright students are educated through harambees organized by the community. In this context, the problem of having bright children discontinuing with their education due to lack of financial support is solved through implicit mobilization of the community members to support needy cases through the songs performed in ARP ceremonies. The direct address of personalities present in song helps to bring out immediacy and intimacy between the initiates and the singer:

**Soloist:** The likes of Safari (area MCA) seated there  
They will be called to plan for you.

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** There is a congregation of *Fathers* that  
Can pay for your education

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And even a congregation of *sisters*  
Who can educate you!

Direct address is also used in song no. 15, through use of “you”. The song is also used to give hope to the initiates from poor backgrounds by advising their parents and other people present in the ceremony ways of generating income so as to raise school fees for their children’s education. The parents who do not have money are encouraged to sell firewood and ripe bananas so as to raise money for secondary school fees for their sons. The initiates also get to understand that many of their parents toil and moil so as to fund their education. Consequently, they are motivated to work hard so that they can excel in education once they go to school:

**Soloist:** If you work hard and sell your firewood  
Or ripe bananas truly you will get money  
For taking your son to secondary school,

The singer of song no. 12, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) directly addresses one of the initiated boys by his name, “Momati”, “Timothy” and “my son” to warn him against immorality, drug abuse, and thievery. This creates



intimacy between the singer and the initiate thus making the initiate to own the message(s) directed to him to resist the mentioned vices:

**Soloist:** Please allow me to sing my *kiretherio* so that  
I will charge you after you have listened to it

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Oh! Please Momati, my son, if you become a thief  
Of other people's things you are ruining the honour  
Of being circumcised

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If you ever smoke *bang* Timothy,  
I tell you my son, I beseech you,  
You are ruining the honour of being circumcised

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If Timothy you get killed by AIDS you are  
Ruining the honour of being circumcised.

Through song no. 20, *Kirarire* (That which is sung throughout the night) performed by Mr Micubu, the initiated boy is directly addressed by the singer mentioning his name "Thuranira". This is supposed to emphasize to him that the message about his ennobled superior status as an initiated male in the society is meant for him only and he should therefore safeguard and honour it. In addition, the direct address to the parents of the initiates (Lucy and Mithika) to request them euphemistically to reward the singer by paying him for advising their son (stretch your hands to me) depicts the role of singers or oral artists in the society as not only entertainers but also as teachers who can earn their livelihood through their performances. The implicit message to the initiates is that singing is a career that one can exploit to earn one's living:

**Soloist:** *Wuui* please my son called Thuranira receive  
Greetings and again receive greetings, an initiate  
is never greeted once.

**Audience:** Yes ...

**Soloist:** *Wuui* the people called Lucy and Mithika stretch  
Your hands to me, I advise your initiated son for you

The cultural songs no. 12, 15, and 20 discussed above are spontaneous and elastic which make it possible for them to address diverse and thorny issues among the Igembe people. The elasticity of the songs also makes it possible for them to be performed for a long time while addressing different issues depending on the circumstances surrounding any particular performance such as the need to incorporate different educative messages.

There is use of interlude as a style of performance for some of the songs that are long. The style allows the singer or soloist who doubles as an entertainer and a teacher to pause and explain to the audience the main issues he or she desires the audience to take seriously. A good example is in song no. 15, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) and song no. 17, *Nthuuki ikuiya* (An age group has come) that are sung by Kirema Masharufu. The lead soloist pauses so as to explain to the initiates the messages encompassed in the part of the song about to be sung or the one that had already been sung. This ensures that the initiates do not forget that the speakers or singers are not just singing the song for entertainment but the song is meant to be educative. Song no. 17 addresses the issue of indecent dressing by girls in the community that can tempt the initiated boys to indulge in indecent sexual acts whose results can be HIV/AIDS transmission. On the other hand, song no. 15 warns the initiates against immorality that can lead to STIs that can result to poor sexual performance of initiates when they get married. Through the song, the initiates are also encouraged to work hard in school so that they can have a bright future.

Song no. 7, *Ntaano cia Nkenye* (Circumcision of girls) that is performed by Ura MCK women group makes use of antiphony as a feature of style. Use of antiphony is depicted where there are two opposing performers. One side supports circumcision of girls by highlighting its advantages while the other one opposes it while depicting its disadvantages. The song makes use of antiphony style as a way of depicting the dissenting voices in the community on whether to support or not to support FGM. The style also allows the initiates to follow the divergent arguments prompted by each side so that they can make an informed decision on whether to embrace FGM or ARP depending on the convincing views aired in the song. The side supporting FGM indicates that those circumcised are not ridiculed and one gets someone to marry them unlike those uncircumcised. On the other hand, those who embrace ARP argue that the girls who undergo FGM can contract infections such as tetanus and hepatitis from the circumcisers during the operation and are also susceptible to problems such as haemorrhage during childbirth.

Thus, use of antiphony is significant as it sharply contrasts the glaring negative consequences of FGM and thus deters the uncircumcised girls from embracing circumcision as compared to the unsound reasons given in support of undergoing

FGM. This sharp contrast also encourages the girls initiated through ARP to realize that their decision of rejecting FGM is a wise one because the demerits of embracing FGM overpower those given by those who support ARP. In the last stanza, the two opposing performers sing the last stanza together to symbolically communicate to the initiates that the choice to either embrace or reject FGM is theirs and would be guided by the sound facts highlighted earlier in the song.

The ululations, cheering, clapping of hands, and screaming by the audience make the performance of the song no. 15, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) performed by Masharufu Kirema and song no. 20, *Kirarire* (That which is sung throughout the night) by Michubu Mushete dramatic and interesting; and the didactic messages about gender roles, value of education, and working hard in one's studies in order to acquire one's wealth that are communicated in the songs to be memorable. The four ululations in the song no. 19, *Ngai nguatia kutharima* (God help me to bless) and song no. 20 emphasize the superiority of the boychild as they are symbolically a re-enactment of the ululations given to a boychild at birth. This is unlike the girlchild who receives three ululations among the Igembe people. Through the ululations, male dominance or superiority of the male initiates and the subordinate position of the women among the Igembe people is rubberstamped.

Facial expressions of despair and a satirical tone are used to emphasize the need to zealously fight FGM practice that reduces women's libido and hampers their sexual performance in song no. 22, *Arailiba na Iruu* (She is meditating on her knees) that is performed by initiated girls. The sad facial expression on the faces of the initiates as they sing about the unfortunate predicament that a circumcised girl finds herself in is meant to deter other girls from undergoing FGM.

Humour is infused in song no. 20, *Kirarire* (That which is sung throughout the night) performed by Micubu Mushete where the soloist introduces a dialogue and code-switches from *Kimeru* dialect to English and *Kiswahili* languages in a cultural song usually sung in *Kimeru* language. The singer claims that he had met a European who greeted him and he had responded in the affirmative. This kind of act causes laughter among the audience who find it hard to conceive such an unusual incidence taking place bearing in mind that this is a cultural song performed during traditional

circumcision rituals. The laughter that ensues as a result of the humour makes the initiate to be more alert on the other messages in the song about gender roles and value of education to initiates being communicated to him. The humour is also enhanced by use of a foreign accent as the singer mimics the accent of a European when singing the parts performed in English language. The code-switching is also necessary in order to create rhythm:

**Soloist:** Wuui ni mutaano okwa ncoke nkwire  
Ndakulukite muthungu arungama ambiira  
“How are you” *nikamwambia* “I am fine”

**Audience:** *Aaa*

**Translation**

**Soloist:** *Wuui* my son and again I want to tell you  
I was passing by when a Whiteman  
stopped and greeted me, “How are you?”  
and I told him, “I am fine.”

**Audience:** Yes.

There is use of rhetorical questions and personification in oral poem no. 16, *Watoto ni Baraka* (Children are a blessing) performed by Ura MCK Women Group during an ARP ceremony for girls. The song is used to condemn procurement of abortions by young girls when the aborted foetus is given a voice to speak for itself as it condemns those who perpetuate the vice. The rhetorical questions are used to appeal to the emotions of the initiated girls to be empathetic to the helpless unborn babies and spare their lives. The initiates are also advised against aping the evil act that is being perpetuated against the unborn babies by people who procure abortions out of their own selfish desires. The individual selfishness of people that make them procure abortions is echoed by Durkheim (1895) who proposes that selfishness in societies should be constrained by ensuring that there is social order and social structures to tame those who act selfishly. Thus, ARP seclusion centres provide the avenues where such a message can be conveyed to the initiates through oral genres of literature:

Why this mother? Why meditate upon my death?

...

Why the shame? To give birth to me, in mercy and love?

...

The Bible says you should not kill, why are you killing?

Several rhetorical questions are also presented in form of a dialogue in song no.7, *Ntaano cia nkenye* (circumcision of girls) and are geared towards encouraging the

girls to get circumcised. The rhetorical questions also satirise and reveal to the initiated girls the unsound propaganda that is used to coerce naïve girls to accept to undergo FGM:

**Response:** You daughter of mine,  
All your age mates are circumcised,  
When you meet with them, they will sneer at you  
They will ask you this, “what don’t your parents  
have?”  
“What do they lack? A girl of high grade,  
Did you fear to be circumcised?”

A simile in song no. 23, *Laitha ii kithomo* (Focus on education) performed by Nkiro Dancers is used to describe the deterioration of the health of a person suffering from HIV/AIDS. The sick person is compared to old clothes getting tattered; “...Once it gets somebody he or she starts to wear out like (old) clothes”. This description depicts how an AIDS victim has a weak immune system that makes him or her vulnerable to infections just like an old piece of cloth that is easily torn. The comparison is meant to paint a gory image of how pathetic a person suffering from AIDS looks like. This ultimately discourages the initiates from engaging in immorality when they imagine themselves looking like tattered clothes because of a disease that they can avoid getting by being morally responsible:

**Soloist:** There is a disease that has come

...

**Soloist:** It is called AIDS

...

**Soloist:** It is contracted by people

...

**Soloist:** Once it gets somebody he or she starts  
To wear out like (old) clothes

There is use of a simile, “so that people can conspicuously see them like Mount Kenya” in song no. 18, *Ancia Murungu* (Now God). The simile emphasizes the fame the initiates would get if they remain united and work hard in school. The initiates are reminded that education would open opportunities for them to travel by air and water as they traverse beyond the boundaries of Kenya. The prayer reflects the good things in life that Igembe people treasure and their desire for their children to get the same. The prayer inspires the initiates to have dreams of acquiring the same good things their community desires them to have so as to fulfil the vision of their community in their lives. It is also significant to know that Igembe people believe that their

*Murungu* (God) lives in holy places like *Kirimara* (Mt Kenya) among other sacred places. Hence, the prayer is made while alluding to that sacred place with hope that their prayers would be answered by their God who dwells in the mountain. Thus, initiates are implicitly being advised to be prayerful:

**Soloist:** May they all be blessed

**Audience:** God ii

...

**Soloist:** So that they grow like

**Audience:** God ii

**Soloist:** The *Mugumo* tree

**Audience:** God ii

**Soloist:** So that people can conspicuously  
See them

**Audience:** God ii

**Soloist:** Like Mt Kenya

**Audience:** God ii

There is also a simile, “So that they grow like a *mugumo* tree” in song no. 18, *Ancia Murungu* (Now God) where the initiates’ prosperity is compared to the sprouting and growth of a *Mugumo* tree. A *Mugumo* tree among the Igembe community is a sacred tree and many cultural sacrifices are offered under it. The tree is never cut anyhow. If it is accidentally uprooted by natural forces like strong winds or rains, sacrifices and prayers are made to appease the Spirits and God before it can be cut as firewood or timber. So, the imagery underscores the great importance attached to the initiates who are compared to a *Mugumo* tree that is equally valued and protected by the community. Similarly, the initiates should be treated with utmost care and reverence by everybody just like a *Mugumo* tree is because they are very important as they form part of the future of the Igembe people. Consequently, the song impresses upon the initiates to be disciplined and behave like honourable members of the community since they are highly valued by not only their parents but also by the larger community.

Song no. 17, *Nthuuki ikuiya* (An age group has come) by Kirema Masharufu aptly uses a simile to remind the initiated boys to be wary of immoral girls who dress indecently with a motive of seducing and luring them into intimate sexual activities. Their clothes are described as being “cut short like bows”. The girls’ dressing is said to entice the initiates so that they can have amorous affairs with them with an objective of infecting them with STIs and other infections. A bow is a weapon that

has a crooked shape and is used for hunting. Thus, when the young girls dress in those short dresses, their crooked intention is to symbolically hunt or lure the initiated boys into sexual relationships which can be deadly just like any weapon is if used inappropriately:

And clothes we have cut them short *aa*  
They have been cut short above the knees *uu*  
They have been cut short like bows.

A simile is used in song no. 7, *Ntaano cia nkenye* (Circumcision of girls) that is performed by MCK Women Group where the initiated girls are encouraged to have faith in God so that they would triumph against FGM and thrive “like a tree planted in a well ventilated and fertile soil” even amidst the threat of FGM. Their strong faith should be as strong as that of Biblical characters alluded to such as Meshack, Shadrack, and Abednego who stood firmly to defend their faith by rejecting the worship of idols. The trio instead chose to worship the God of Israel during their time. The allusion to the Biblical characters and their stand is meant to motivate the girls to always stand their ground against FGM even when there is pressure to do otherwise. They are assured in the song that they would have a resounding victory just like the characters in the Bible had when they defended what they believed in. The allusion also strengthens the initiates’ faith in God and their spirituality:

**Call:** You daughter of mine, listen,  
Your faith should be like a tree planted  
in a well ventilated and fertile soil,  
Meshack, Shadrack, and Abednego, were  
burnt with fire, it did not consume them,  
their faith helped them; the things of this  
world cannot help you. You trust in God,  
Our Father and you will be a victor in this  
world. My daughter, abandon circumcision.

A metaphor is used in song no. 24, *Aliyoyapanga Muumba* (What the Creator has planned) where the benefits of education are metaphorically compared to “fruits” and benefits of education are said to be sweeter than the “sweetness of honey”. The comparison is meant to motivate the initiated boys to work hard in education because of its desirable benefits. Honey is a highly valued commodity among the Igembe people and is part of the things paid by a bridegroom to the parents of the bride. The familiar metaphor is thus aptly used so that the initiates can associate the sweetness of

many familiar fruits that are sweet to the benefits of education that are said to be sweeter than even honey that is highly valued among the Igembe people:

The fruits of education are sweeter than honey,  
Parents, if you are happy ululate.

In an attempt to discourage FGM among the Igembe people, metaphors are used in song no. 4, *Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya* (Today's Kenya is a new Kenya) that is performed by initiated girls during their graduation into adulthood ceremony. The circumcised girls in the community are metaphorically called disparaging names such as witches, dirty, distorted, and fools as a way of deterring the uncircumcised girls from embracing FGM. A witch in any community is associated with wickedness which in turn makes one detestable by everybody. A fool on the other hand is equally hated and treated as a useless person in the community.

The contempt that the Igembe people have for fools is reaffirmed by the proverb that is commonly used among Igembe people that says, "It is better to give birth to a thief than to a fool". Although the proverb has not been used in ARP ceremonies, it buttresses the message being passed across to initiates that only fools allow themselves to undergo FGM. The girls who are not circumcised are said to be educated and are metaphorically referred to as doctors and teachers. The unfavourable reference of circumcised girls and the admirable reference to uncircumcised girls as professionals at the national level (Kenya) are geared towards helping the girls to see the glaring differences in terms of the destiny of the two categories of girls. The main goal is to motivate the uncircumcised girls to resist being circumcised and embrace ARP because it gives them prospects of transiting into adulthood honourably and prospering in admirable careers. This is unlike the ones who embrace FGM that are likely to be doomed and condemned by their society:

**Soloist:** Those who have been circumcised are fools

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those circumcised are witches

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

...

**Soloist:** Those circumcised are not clean

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

...



**Soloist:** Those not circumcised are educated  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

...

**Soloist:** Those not circumcised are doctors  
**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

...

**Soloist:** Those not circumcised are teachers.

A metaphor is used in song no. 22, *Arailiba na iruu* (She is meditating on her knees) that is performed by initiated girls. In the song, circumcised girls are left in a deplorable state being compared to a tree stump, "now I was left a stump" and the circumcised girls regret being left in that ugly state. The word "stump" refers to the part of a tree that remains after a tree is cut down for firewood or timber. Stumps are commonly found in the rural set up where there is cutting down of trees since firewood is used as a source of firewood. The stump is usually considered as an obstacle to people who walk on the path where a stump has been left after the important part of the tree is cut and taken away. The metaphorical reference to the girl's genitalia that is left after FGM "as a stump" implies that the best and the most useful part of the girl's body is destroyed by being cut off during FGM. Therefore, what is left is a hindrance to the girls' sexual pleasure. The use of an imagery of a stump that the initiates are familiar to in reference to the girl's genitalia is absurd and humorous. The ugly condition of the circumcised genitalia is exaggerated with a motive of instilling fear to those not circumcised so that they can shun away from FGM that mutilates the girls' genitalia:

**Soloist:** She is meditating on her knees,  
The circumcised girl,  
**Response:** She is meditating on her knees asking,  
Asking, woe! Unto me, I got circumcised  
And was left a stump.

...

**Response:** She is meditating asking, asking woe  
Unto me I got circumcised and now  
I am not sexually appealing.

The girls who are circumcised but are not educated are said to be living in "darkness" in song no. 25, *Aciari thomethieni aana benu* (Parents educate your children) that is performed by Ms Makena. The metaphor of darkness is used to demean FGM since darkness is associated with evilness and backwardness. The song is used to persuade

girls to embrace education instead of FGM because it is only through education that the uncircumcised girls can be set free from the jaws of naivety and primitivity:

If you are not educated you are in darkness,  
Circumcision is not the light to darkness.  
Even those who are circumcised are in darkness.

Song no. 15, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) that is performed by Mr Kirema Masharufu uses euphemism. The singer sings, “Now we are annoyed and we have annoyed our women because of diseases that have no cure” to warn the initiates against immorality lest they get incurable STIs that can ruin the initiates’ sexual performance with their spouses when married. The singer warns that STIs can result to disintegration of families as a result of one’s wife being discontented by one’s husband if he is unable to give his wife, her conjugal rights. The euphemistic language allows the singer to educate the initiates about effects of STIs on one’s sexuality and at the same time avoid embarrassment emanating from the use of plain language since the song is sung in presence of a mixed audience in terms of age groups and gender:

**Soloist:** It is you God I am asking, if you  
will close your ears and refuse to listen  
to us and the disease fails to get a cure,  
who will listen to us?

**Audience:** Yes

...

**Soloist:** Now we are annoyed and we have  
annoyed our women because of  
diseases that have no cure.

Similarly, song no. 20, *Kirarire* (That which is sung throughout the night) performed by Micubu Mushete uses euphemism where the singer subtly asks for payment for performing the song by telling the parents of the initiated boy, “stretch your hands to me, I advise your initiated son for you” instead of plainly telling the parents to pay him for the services he had offered of advising the son through the song he had sung. The singer also complains indirectly that he is never invited to perform in any functions although he is an oral artist just because he is not yet famous. He does this by singing, “and again I want to tell you that I am called Micubu, but nobody comes for me because I am not yet famous (as a musician)”. The singer’s cry though

understated, is a wakeup call to people in the society to recognize the role of upcoming local artists in cultural ceremonies by paying them as a way of supporting them. The plea by the singer mirrors what happens in the society where rich people only invite and pay well known artists from other towns to perform in their ceremonies. However, people are less enthusiastic to do the same for the budding musicians from their own villages like Micubu, who accepts to sing the *Kirarire* song after he is informally requested to perform it by the audience that knew about his singing prowess. If he had directly complained about lack of recognition and payment, people may have judged him as being materialistic. Thus, euphemism helps him to candidly request for some token of payment and recognition. In the process, the initiates also learn that one can benefit from one's talent like singing if one nurtures it even though at the beginning, the talent is not lucrative:

**Soloist:** And again, I want to tell you that I am called  
Micubu but nobody comes to me because  
I have not yet become famous

**Audience:** Yes

...

**Soloist:** *Wuui* the people called Lucy and Mithika stretch  
Your hands to me, I advise your son for you

**Audience:** Yes

Code-switching is used in song no. 15, *Kiretheretie* (That which is sung throughout the day) that is performed by Kirema Masharufu where corrupted English words are used due to lack of *Kimeru* words that can aptly communicate the same message. The words used are *malawyers* (lawyers), *maprofessor* (professors) and *mamillionaire* (millionaires). Such use of language enables the singer to highlight the professions that the parents of the initiates value and wish that their children would pursue. This message also inspires the initiates to work hard in school so that they can pursue the same professions.

Code-switching is also used in song no. 7, *Ntaano cia nkenye* (Circumcision of girls) performed by MCK women group. The song is sung using different languages: *Kiswahili*, English and *Kimeru*. The English words used include: tetanus, T-shirt written newly circumcised, university, while the *Kiswahili* words include: *rudi kwa Malaya yako* (go back to your prostitute) and *mama pole sana* (sorry mother). The words are used mainly due to lack of words which can adequately communicate the

same meanings in *Kimeru* language that the song is sung in. In addition, if the performers of the songs use the *Kimeru* words or phrases that have explains the meanings communicated instead of mixing the English or Kiswahili words, the rhythm of the song would get interfered with. Consequently, the performance of the songs would be impossible since the English words would require longer or shorter phrases to explain what they mean. The code-switching also makes the song humorous and interesting because of the accent used while uttering a combination of several languages in the same breath. Consequently, the inherent humour in the combination of words from different languages makes the performance interesting to the initiates and the messages they communicate memorable.

There is intertextuality between songs and proverbs as depicted through integration of a *Kiswahili* proverb, “*pipli isiokuwa kwa mdomo wako yakuashia nini?*” (How does pepper that is not in your mouth irritate you?). In song no. 7, *Ntaano cia nkenye* (Circumcision of girls) that is sung by Ura MCK Women Group. Though the proverb does not originate from the Igembe people, it aptly summarizes the moral lesson of the song to the girls that FGM can cause complications to mothers when giving birth. Thus, if girls are advised against FGM but they insist on undergoing the rite of passage, then they should be ready to face the dire consequences of undergoing it. They should also not expect anybody to sympathize with their predicament when giving birth:

**Response:** You girl, when things go haywire when  
You reach maternity, delivering, the pain is  
unbearable, you chose this yourself, to be  
circumcised, now face the consequences,  
after all, the pepper that is not in your mouth,  
why would it cause pain to you? I am not  
involved in this, you became stubborn,  
let us respect each other, our daughter  
abandon circumcision. “I am sorry mother.”

In summary, songs performed in ARP among the Igembe people use varied features of styles such as code-switching, interludes, direct address, rhetorical questions, similes, metaphors, euphemism, Biblical allusion, repetition, antiphony, and humour among others. The stylistic devices reiterate issues highlighted through them; and make the message passed to the initiates more interesting and memorable than if plain language is used. The main messages passed include fight against FGM, promotion of

virtues, castigation of vices, promotion of the cultural practices of the Igembe, and philosophy of the Igembe people.

### **5:5 Conclusion**

The focus of chapter five is to establish the significance of the different styles used in oral songs, proverbs, and narratives performed in ARP rituals. An analysis of data collected reveals that styles are used innovatively and artistically to play a crucial role in enhancing communication of life changing messages that instill knowledge and life skills to the initiates. The linguistic styles and performance techniques used achieve different objectives as summarized below.

Firstly, some styles such as question and answer technique, repetition, ellipsis, and abbreviations allow participation of the initiates which consequently enhances memorability of messages passed on through them.

Secondly, styles such as humour and dialogue make the performance of different genres interesting which ultimately sustains the attention of the initiates. The use of mnemonics creates rhythm and musicality that makes the messages passed to initiates interesting and unforgettable. This ensures that the long sessions of teaching are interesting in order to sustain the attention of the initiates so that initiates can benefit from the educative messages communicated to them.

Thirdly, styles such as interludes, intertextuality, and repetition are used to reiterate the themes discussed, enhance the memorability and comprehension of the varied messages passed on to initiates during the long sessions of counselling.

Fourthly, use of euphemism, symbolism, and satire allow the initiates' counsellors to delve into issues of sexuality that the speakers may not have been comfortable to discuss openly due to gender and age differences without the speakers sounding vulgar. Thus, the style allows the counsellors to freely air their views without any inhibitions to the benefit of the initiates.

In addition, elasticity, vibrancy, and spontaneity of songs and the ability of narratives to be embroidered and embellished make it possible for different teachers training the

initiates to freely manipulate and adapt the genres so as to address divergent contemporary issues that were not prevalent in the olden days.

Finally, code-switching as a style is used to break language barrier between the speaker and the initiates since the initiates have varied linguistic competences. Code-switching also allows the speakers to use new technological and technical terms that convey specialized meanings that cannot be communicated in any other language. It also creates rhythm and humour which in turn makes the performance of the different genres interesting.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6:1 Introduction**

Chapter six summarizes the discussions in the first three chapters of the thesis as well as the research findings and conclusions drawn from the analysis done in chapter four and five. It also makes recommendations for further studies.

#### **6:2 Summary of Findings**

The main purpose for this study is to analyse the didactic messages passed to initiates through oral genres and stylistic devices used in oral narratives, songs, and proverbs that are performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe People. The study is guided by two objectives. These are: to analyse the didactic messages communicated to initiates through oral narratives, proverbs, and songs; and to investigate the significance of styles used in oral narratives, proverbs, and songs performed in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people.

Many communities in the world practice circumcision for both girls and boys as a rite of passage into adulthood. However, the traditional circumcision is facing resistance in the contemporary society. As a result, there are campaigns against traditional circumcision in many parts of Africa in a bid to replace it with Alternative Rites of Passage rituals. The campaigns are spearheaded by human rights activists, educationists, political, and religious leaders. The campaigns are mainly done because the traditional rituals expose initiated girls to several health hazards such as loss of libido, haemorrhage and complications during childbirth. The initiates also get infections and diseases and sometimes their sexual organs are injured during circumcision. In addition, the girls become potential candidates for early marriages. In an attempt to offer a remedy to the predicament, ARP is encouraged as an alternative way of initiating the young boys and girls into adulthood with few hazardous effects.

The literature review done reveals that oral literature genres are used to pass educative messages to people because of their unique attributes. Proverbs are used for they communicate more profoundly than ordinary language would. In addition, they are brief, memorable, and can summarize a given message in an emphatic way. Proverbs are also flexible and can therefore be manipulated in different ways and are used in

different contexts. The proverbs are also dynamic and flexible. Hence, they are used to address different contemporary issues as need arises. Oral narratives on the other hand are significantly used because they are easily embroidered and embellished to address diverse issues.

This study is significant for there is no adequate study that has been done on how literature genres and their styles are used as a tool for communication in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people. The Igembe people and other communities in the world are adopting ARP as the main mode of initiating their young girls and boys into adulthood and oral literature genres prominently feature in those ceremonies.

Functionalist theory is used to aid the analysis of the study. The theory proposes that each cultural activity and social relations in a society such as ARP ceremonies and genres of oral literature play a role in passing messages that help in solving problems and satisfying needs of a given community. Each society is dogged with problems such as vices among the youth that need to be eliminated if members of the society are to progress in all facets of their lives. Using the functionalist theory, the study highlights how ARP is adapted to serve as a contemporary cultural rite of passage into adulthood unlike the harmful traditional rituals. The theory is also used to illuminate how different genres of oral literature are used innovatively and creatively to propagate values that are treasured and castigate vices that are detested by the Igembe people. In addition, the theory points out that social solidarity and collective conscience is necessary for a cohesive society. The cohesiveness is achieved through having shared values, history, practices, beliefs, and relations. Consequently, common socialization of initiates such as undergoing the same training in ARP rituals gives an initiate an identity that enhances unity and survival of the society.

The study affirms that oral literature genres are used to address matters of profound human existence such as their social, economic, cultural, religious, and human relationships. Through the oral literature genres performed in ARP ceremonies, girls are deterred from embracing FGM because the rite of passage is viewed as a backward and an obsolete practice that exposes the girls to health hazards and early marriage. The traditional circumcision of boys is degraded and deterred because it is characterised with indecent dressing, exposure of initiates to health hazards, and



hardships. The ARP for both boys and girls is also commended for it provides Christian spiritual nourishment and guidance that is based on the word of God (the Bible) to the initiates. The vile treatment of traditional initiation into adulthood of boys and girls is meant to encourage the initiates to embrace and support ARP and reduce the number of those who embrace traditional circumcision. This is because the Igembe people believe that if majority or all the youth from the community embrace the same ARP rituals, there would be less interpersonal disharmony in the community.

Secondly, the genres of literature performed in ARP ceremonies are used to inculcate virtues among the initiates by complimenting positive virtues and castigating vices. The main desirable virtues inculcated include being: empathetic, kind-hearted, focused, determined, prudent, wise, hardworking, prayerful, obedient, humble, contented, faithful, forgiving, and morally upright. On the other hand, the main vices condemned include: thievery, gullibility, naivety, pride, immorality, alcoholism, laziness, disobedient, unfaithfulness and discontentment in marriage among others. Moreover, peer pressure as a challenge affecting young boys and girls in the contemporary society is addressed. The initiates are also empowered with knowledge on the dangers of giving in to drug abuse, indecent dressing, watching pornography, radicalization through misuse and abuse of technology and information. Since the vices are frowned upon, the initiates are prepared through the ARP training to be virtuous, responsible, dependable and upright individuals who have a common communal sense of direction.

Thirdly, the social gender roles and statuses, traditional beliefs, practices, age groups, and brotherly ties of the Igembe people are perpetuated. The initiated boys are encouraged to embrace the spirit of hardwork in education in order to empower themselves financially since respect and prestige in the society is associated with how much wealth one has. The cultural expectation of men to exhibit bravery even amidst adversity is instilled. The four ululations accorded to an initiated boy implicitly teach them that they are more valued than girls even in the contemporary society. The girls are taught how to be homemakers and wives.

Fourthly, the analysis of oral literature genres performed in ARP ceremonies demonstrates that orality plays a crucial role in ensuring that the initiates receive spiritual nourishment and knowledge on the religious aspects of the Igembe people and Christianity. Through songs performed, the worship, reverence and dependency upon God for success is brought out. There is also recognition and appreciation of God's power and His influence in one's life and prosperity. In addition, the history of the Igembe people is spelt out through the mention of traditional worship and religious traditional leaders such as Mugwe. The initiates are also impressed upon to adopt Christian doctrines such as: to have faith in God, to be prayerful, read the Bible and follow its teachings. The teachings ensure that the initiates are guided on the direction to take to ensure that there is no void in their lives as far as their spiritual nourishment is concerned. Since ARP rituals mimic the traditional rituals in many ways, those who undergo ARP are socialised into the traditions of the Igembe community in almost the same way. The minimized disparities between those who undergo ARP and those who are traditionally initiated into adulthood enhance harmony in the community.

Finally, the stylistic devices used and their effectiveness in passing the intended messages to initiates are discussed. The analysis of data indicates that features of styles are used innovatively and creatively by different performers depending on their oratory expertise and contextual needs at the time of performance. The main styles significantly used in the three genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies to enhance communication include: repetition, ellipsis, question and answer technique, repetition, satire, imagery, euphemism, symbolism, juxtaposition, parallelism, dialogue, intertextuality, interludes, mnemonics, personification, antiphony, direct address and code-switching among others. Most of the styles are used purposefully and consciously by the performers in order to achieve certain linguistic purposes. Whether all the styles are used independently or together, consciously or unconsciously by different oral performers, they complement each other in communication of varied messages to initiates. It is also affirmed the styles are creatively and artistically used by the different performers in all the three genres of literature. In addition, the genres and their styles are adapted to suit and respond to contemporary issues.

### **6.3 Conclusions**

This analysis affirms that oral literature genres and their styles are intrinsic and fluid in ARP ceremonies among the Igembe people and they play an indispensable role in communicating pedagogical messages to initiates.

Firstly, the use of artistically and innovatively composed oral literature genres in ARP rituals ensure that the achievement of the Kenya Vision 2030, (Republic of Kenya, 2007, p. vii) that is anchored on the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2000, p. 67) is enhanced. Kenya Vision 2030 is based on three pillars: Economic, Social and Political.

The Economic Pillar is only achieved if there is eradication of poverty and hunger as well as mainstreaming of gender inequality. By encouraging hardwork among initiates and castigating vices such as alcoholism, drug abuse, sexual immorality through oral genres, the initiates improve chances of developing economically because of being healthy and in a peaceful environment. With few vices, a just and cohesive society where economic activities thrive for the betterment of everybody is attained. Through genres of oral literature performed, gender equity, and empowerment is achieved where girls are given an opportunity to go to school and to subvert patriarchy and determine their destiny without oppressing each other.

The Social Pillar also thrives where there are reduced maternal deaths. This is achieved through having few girls undergoing FGM that exposes young mothers to maternal complications such as haemorrhage that can result to death. Girls also get better chances to pursue their education rather than get married at an early age after undergoing FGM.

The Political Pillar is enhanced as it strengthens the rule of law and respect for internationally recognized human rights such as the right to protect children from harmful cultural practices such as harmful traditional circumcision operations that are done by personnel with no medical qualifications. In addition, by advocating for humane treatment of children with disabilities, oral literature promotes justice for all children irrespective of the state of their physical body. Consequently, oral literature plays a key role in upholding the rule of law by ensuring that the even the

constitution of Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2010) that guarantees every citizen, the right to be protected is adhered to. Oral literature is therefore seen in this study as a key to enhancing peace, gender, and economic empowerment with the central site being the Alternative Rites of Passage ceremonies.

Secondly, the messages passed to initiates through genres of literature performed in ARP ceremonies promote peace and tranquillity in the community by castigating vices such as thievery, indecent dressing, drug abuse, alcoholism, watching of pornography, and misuse and abuse of information and technology which sometimes lead to radicalization, violence, and conflicts.

Thirdly, messages that combat abuse of drugs such as khat, alcohol, and bang complement the work done by NACADA in fighting drug abuse among the youth. This is important to initiates because drug abuse can ruin their lives and interfere with their education. By instilling good moral values among the initiates, they learn to steer away from irresponsible sexual behaviour and drug abuse that can expose them to diseases that are expensive for the government to treat and manage. Thus, utilization of oral literature genres in ARP ceremonies is crucial in fighting vices which culminate to a healthy community. Consequently, the chances of a community prospering economically are escalated.

Fourthly, through messages communicated to initiates through genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies, initiates are taught values that are essential in holding families together. They are empowered with knowledge on how to relate with each other in a family set up, how to bring up children responsibly, and consequently avoid family disintegration. The key pillars to family stability that are inculcated to the initiates are: forgiveness, loyalty, faithfulness, and contentment. On the other hand, the vices that lead to disintegration of families that are deterred are: immorality, unfaithfulness, disloyalty, discontentment, betrayal, and jealousy. Therefore, genres of oral literature play a pivotal role in ensuring stability of families founded on strong virtues. By advocating for patriarchal subversion through genres performed in ARP for girls, the initiated girls learn to have a voice and an opportunity to negotiate for their space in the contemporary society where women and men are

getting liberated from the traditional roles that are discriminative. All these ultimately contribute towards having a united and cohesive community.

Fifthly, oral literature genres performed in ARP ceremonies are artistically and creatively composed to incorporate messages that encourage the initiates to embrace formal education. This increases the chances of the youth having a brighter future with attainment of higher levels of education. This has a spiral effect on the nation as the same initiates are able to take up different professions. Thus, the notion that education is the key to success and development in any community is reaffirmed.

Sixthly, oral genres performed in ARP rituals promote unity and communal spirit where members of the community support each other in times of need especially on matters pertaining to education of less privileged initiates. The initiates also learn about their age groups and its importance for their identity and association. The ARP ceremonies also promote unity and solidarity as members of different families come together to feast as they celebrate the initiates in the community who have been initiated into adulthood.

In addition, the creativity and artistic prowess of mentors involved in ARP ceremonies are improved as they learn to adapt the oral genres to suit their needs while guiding initiates. The dynamism of genres of orality is demonstrated where genres of literature are creatively coined in order to address the desired educative messages while at the same time, entertain the audience. The older songs and narratives are embellished in order to respond to emerging issues which are relevant to the initiates. Some of the songs sang in ARP ceremonies deftly use tunes and rhythms borrowed from Christian religious songs to pass cultural messages. In other instances, the tunes and rhythms borrowed from cultural songs are used to pass religious messages to the initiates. Some proverbs from other communities are also integrated in the songs and narratives performed. This reflects the interfluent nature of ARP ceremonies where Western formal education and practices, Christianity, and cultural aspects intermingle with each other freely.

Finally, use of mentors from varied age, gender, and educational backgrounds improves the chances of the initiates benefitting from their vast knowledge and skills.

The religious leaders offer spiritual nourishment to initiates by inculcating Godly values and virtues from the Biblical point of view even though ARP rituals are cultural practices. The medical personnels used guide the initiates on issues pertaining to their health while the teachers tackle issues that affect the education of the initiates. The elders and community leaders mainly inculcate cultural values, beliefs, and philosophies that influence the initiates to embrace the societal norms. Most of the narrators of the narratives are young people and they respond to contemporary issues in their environment and address them in their mentorship programs of initiates in ARP ceremonies from their own point of view. The interaction of oral genres, traditional practices, modern beliefs, western education and Christianity, and modern contexts ensures that the Igembe people's expectations of behaviour change in accordance with the traditions of the community is achieved while at the same time adapting to the changing times.

#### **6:4 Recommendations**

From this study, it is ascertained that ARP ceremonies and rituals are fertile grounds for performance of oral literature genres that are used to pass varied educative messages to initiates. The features of style in genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies are also significantly used by different counsellors to enhance delivery of messages to the initiates. As a result, the following recommendations are made:

- (i) The different speakers invited to mentor the initiates should be encouraged by those in charge of ARP centres to use oral literature genres in their speeches because they aid in delivery of the educative messages passed to the initiates. The use of tunes and rhythms of already known cultural songs enables the initiates to learn the songs on the spot because of the familiar tunes. This also helps the initiates not to forget their cultural roots. The use of tunes and rhythms borrowed from known Christian religious songs to coin new songs also makes it easy for the initiates to learn the songs on the spot which enhances the memorability of messages encompassed in them.
- (ii) The government, religious institutions, educationists, politicians, and human rights activists should be encouraged to support ARP ceremonies

because ARP rituals provide avenues for the youth to further their agenda of: combating vices and maintaining law and order, promoting good health, morality and spiritual growth, education, and protecting their rights. The ARP rituals also provide a healthy and safe haven for initiating the youth into adulthood.

- (iii) ARP ceremonies should be made mandatory and be fully funded by the government of Kenya just as it finances Free Education for all its school going children since the knowledge imparted to the initiates shapes their character and ultimately, their destiny. Through the unwritten curriculum followed in ARP ceremonies, the Kenya Vision 2030 and MDGs pursued by the Government of Kenya are implicitly campaigned for and rubber stamped.
  
- (iv) The ministry of social and culture in different Counties should prepare a suitable common curriculum and syllabus to be followed in ARP ceremonies that accommodates integration of oral genres of literature as a tool for communication. The curriculum and syllabus should cover topics that cut across all aspects of human beings. It should include: exploitation of talents and entrepreneurship, economics, drug abuse, health, family life, spiritual growth, relationships, peer pressure, drug abuse, sex and sexuality, consequences of misuse and abuse of information and technology, and pornography. The knowledge on how to combat emerging diseases and infections and challenges of parenthood and family life should also be accommodated in the syllabus. The syllabus should be tailored to the needs of each community to ensure that initiates are well grounded on the healthy and beneficial traditions and cultural practices of their community so that they do not forget their ancestral cultural roots. Knowledge on the spiritual aspects and religious practices of given communities should also be accommodated in the syllabus to ensure the initiates have aspects of Godliness being imparted in them. This would ultimately promote cohesiveness and unity in the community.

- (v) The counsellors who teach the initiates should also undergo training and in-service on how to creatively use oral genres as a tool for communication so as to ensure that they are updated on issues affecting the initiates that should be tackled through the oral genres. The training can be sponsored by different government ministries such as the ministry of health, social and culture, and education. The church should also collaborate with the concerned ministries to ensure that the spiritual knowledge imparted to the initiates is standardized.
  
- (vi) Alternative Rites of Passage rituals should be supported by community members, religious leaders, and government institutions since they play a crucial role in bonding and promoting communal spirit among the initiates and the members of the community since all community members converge to celebrate the homecoming ARP graduation ceremonies in the same place.

### **6.5 Suggestions for Further Study**

From the discussion of this study, it is noted that there is need for further study on the rich oral genres of oral literature performed in ARP. The significance of use of other genres of oral literature performed in ARP ceremonies such as drama should also be investigated. In addition, more research on the importance of messages communicated to the audience who attend ARP ceremonies that are communicated through oral songs, narratives, and proverbs should be interrogated.



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## APPENDIX I

### SONGS TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

**1. Song: Be praised**

**Performer: Initiated Girls**

**Age: Varied**

**Audience: Parents and guests**

**Place: Kiegoi Methodist Church**

**Soloist:** Be praised } x2

**Response:** Be praised I will go to church and have my daughter  
Circumcised there, the Bible will be read to her, my daughter  
Belongs to Jesus ii she does not step on the soil

**Soloist:** I tell you } x2

**Response:** I would not want my daughter to be mutilated } x2

**2. Song: They are telling me to get circumcised**

**Performer: Initiated Girls**

**Age: Varied (12-16 years)**

**Audience: Initiates' parents and guests**

**Place: Kangeta girls**

**Soloist:** They are telling me to get circumcised and and I am not used to it,  
And I cannot get circumcised because of you

**Response:** They are telling me to get circumcised and I am not used to it,  
And I cannot get circumcised because of you } x2

**Soloist:** Circumcision was done in the olden days, but today it is useless  
I cannot get circumcised because of you

**Response:** Circumcision was done in the olden days, but today it is useless  
I cannot get circumcised because of you } x2

**Soloist:** There are those who got circumcised and today are not  
Sexually appealing, I cannot get circumcised because of you

**Response:** There are those who got circumcised and today are not  
Sexually appealing, I cannot get circumcised because of you. } x2

**3. Song: It is a fight against circumcision of girls**

**Performer: Initiated girls**

**Age: Varied**

**Audience: Initiates, their parents, and guests**

**Place: Kiegoi Methodist Church**

**Soloist:** It is a fight against circumcision of girls uu

**Response:** It is a fight } x2

**Soloist:** All of us have come together so that we can fight it aa

**Response:** It is a fight uu } x2

**Soloist:** All of us have come to fight it

**Response:** And we will triumph } x2

**4. Song: Today's Kenya is a new Kenya**

**Performers: Initiated girls**

**Age:** Varied (12-16) years  
**Audience:** Initiates' parents and guests  
**Place:** Kiegoi Methodist Church

**Chorus: Soloist:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those who have been circumcised are fools

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those who have been circumcised are witches

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those circumcised are crooked

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those who are circumcised are not clean

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those circumcised are not educated

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those circumcised are not educated

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those not circumcised are doctors

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**Soloist:** Those not circumcised are teachers

**Response:** Today's Kenya is a new Kenya,  
It does not want circumcised girls

**5. Song:** Let's all migrate  
**Performer:** Kirema Masharufu  
**Age:** 61 years  
**Profession:** Village Elder

**Audience: Initiated girls, their parents, and guests**

**Place: Athi Methodist Church of Kenya**

**Soloist:** Let us all migrate ii  
**Audience:** From being analogue oo  
**Soloist:** To being digital ii  
**Audience:** From being analogue oo  
**Soloist:** Even our leaders' ii  
**Audience:** Let us all migrate oo  
**Soloist:** From being analogue ii  
**Audience:** To being digital oo  
**Soloist:** Even our President ii  
**Audience:** Let us all migrate oo  
**Soloist:** From being analogue ii  
**Audience:** To being digital oo  
**Soloist:** Even our grandchildren ii  
**Audience:** Let us all migrate oo  
**Soloist:** From being analogue ii  
**Audience:** To being digital oo  
**Soloist:** Even our Reverend ii  
**Audience:** Let us all migrate oo  
**Soloist:** From being analogue ii  
**Audience:** To being digital oo  
**Soloist:** Even the women ii  
**Audience:** Let us all migrate oo  
**Soloist:** From being analogue ii  
**Audience:** To being digital oo

**6. Song: Light Came**

**Performer: Thirindi Mitine**

**Age: 67 years**

**Profesion: Retired primary school teacher**

**Audience: Initiates, their parents, and guests**

**Place: Mr Kaberia's home, Amwamba village**

**Soloist:** Light came to our village and it shone and it told women  
That circumcison of girls has been banned.  
**Audience:** Light came to our village and it shone and it told women  
That circumcison of girls has been banned  
**Soloist:** Let them (FGM) be banned using seminars and  
Women will make steps forward  
**Audience:** Light came to our village and it shone and it told  
Women that circumcison of girls has been banned  
**Soloist:** Let it be (FGM) banned with prayers ii  
**Audience:** Light came to our village and it shone and it told women  
That circumcison of girls has been banned.  
**Soloist:** Let it be (FGM) banned with education ii  
**Audience:** Light came to our village and it shone and it told women  
That circumcison of girls has been banned.

**7. Song: Circumcision of girls**

**Performers: URA Methodist Church Women Group**

**Age: Varied (30 – 50 years)**

**Profession: Varied**

**Audience: Guests, initiated girls and their parents**

**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

- Call:** You daughter of mine, I tell you that circumcision of girls  
You do not get involved in it, instead, concentrate on education  
You study well, till in the university and you will get a job  
And you will be called the rich one, everything you will get,  
Will help you and you will be able to support somebody else  
And our country Kenya, will advance, education is free,  
There is free education in our country Kenya  
Our daughter, abandon (the idea of) circumcision.
- Response:** You daughter of mine, listen to me, if you refuse to get circumcised  
You will not get anybody to marry you, whenever a man comes by,  
He would ask if the daughter of so and so is circumcised.  
“That one was afraid and she ran away and left the circumciser,  
In the field with his razor blades,”  
You will be called the one who feared to be shaved {circumcised}.  
My daughter be courageous and get circumcised.
- Call:** You daughter of mine listen,  
Your faith should be like a tree planted in a well ventilated and  
Fertile soil, Misheck, Shadrack, and Abdenego, were burnt with fire  
But the fire did not consume them.  
Their faith helped them; the things of this world cannot help you.  
You trust in God, our father and you will be a victor in this world.  
My daughter, abandon (the idea of) circumcision.
- Response:** You daughter of mine, all your age-mates are circumcised,  
When you will meet with them, they will sneer at you  
They will ask you this, “what don’t your parents have?”  
“What do they lack? A girl of high grade,  
Did you fear to be circumcised?  
They have cows, millet, and maize full in the granary  
You agree and get circumcised,  
You will enter into the house {seclusion}, you will drink gruel,  
My daughter be courageous and get circumcised.
- Call:** You daughter of mine, listen, leave circumcision alone,  
Being touched by old and shrivelled women,  
With long dirty nails, rusted razor blades,  
Diseases are there called AIDS and tetanus, hephatitis is a viral  
Infection and are also killer diseases,  
I would be annoyed if you got  
AIDS, after enthusiastically having gone  
to be circumcised, in the church  
is where your foundation is  
You will wear a T. Shirt written in front  
“No Circumcision, Jesus is the answer”  
My daughter, keep off circumcision.
- Response:** You daughter of mine, listen  
When you will get circumcised you will wear a T.shirt written

Infront “A smart circumcised girl” and behind written “newly circumcised” all will know you have been circumcised, that circumcision of yours, that is of great honour, you will apply Babyjelly and powder, Then you will smile as men pursue you.

**Response:** You girl, when things go haywire when you reach maternity, Delivering, the pain is unbearable, you chose this yourself, To be circumcised, now face the consequences, after all The pepper that is not in your mouth, why would it cause pain to you? I am not involved in this, you became stubborn, let us respect each other, our daughter leave circumcision. School girl, if told to get circumcised, tell her “Mother I’m very sorry,” God, I pray that you help Mother to know the dangers of circumcision of girls, when you get Circumcised, you will get tetanus; bleed all the blood you have. You are at a risk of severe infection and haemorrhage.

**8. Song:       The circumciser, who will tell you?**

**Performer: Initiated girls**

**Age:           Varied (12-16) Years**

**Audience: Initiates’ parents and guests**

**Place:         Kangeta Girls Secondary School**

**Soloist:**    The circumciser, who will tell you,  
                  The cursed one, who will tell you?

**Response:** The circumciser, who will tell you,  
                  The cursed one, who will tell you?

**Soloist:**    Christianity...

**Response:** Has benefits

**Soloist:**    You the cursed one

**Response:** Who will tell you?

**Soloist:**    Teaching...

**Response:** Has benefits

**Soloist:**    You the cursed one

**Response:** Who will tell you?

**Soloist:**    Kaberia...

**Response:** Has benefits

**Soloist:**    You the cursed one

**Response:** Who will tell you?

**Soloist:**    And children...

**Response:** Have benefits

**Soloist:**    You the cursed one

**Response:** Who will tell you?

**Soloist:**    And old men...

**Response:** Have benefits

**Soloist:**    Who will tell you?

**Response:** You the cursed one

**Soloist:**    The circumciser, who will tell you,  
                  You, the cursed one, who will tell you?

**Response:** The circumciser, who will tell you,  
                  You, the cursed one, who will tell you?

**Soloist:**    The church...

**Response:** Has benefits  
**Soloist:** The cursed one  
**Response:** Who will tell you?  
**Soloist:** The cursed one, who will tell you,  
The cursed one, who will tell you?  
**Response:** The cursed one, who will tell you,  
You the cursed one, who will tell you?  
**Soloist:** The District Commissioner...  
**Response:** Has benefits  
**Response:** You the cursed one  
**Response:** Who will tell you?  
**Soloist:** Grace...  
**Response:** Has benefits  
**Soloist:** You the cursed one  
**Response:** Who will tell you?  
**Soloist:** The circumciser, who will tell you,  
You, the cursed one, who will tell you?  
**Response:** The circumciser, who will tell you,  
You, the cursed one, who will tell you?

**9. Song: Go and tell the circumciser to hide her *kiruunya***  
**Performers: Initiated girls**  
**Age: Varied (12-16) years**  
**Audience: initiates' Parents and guests**  
**Place: Kiegoi Methodist Church**

**Soloist:** Tell the circumciser for me to pack her *kiruunya*  
Because we have abandoned the circumcision of girls } x2

**Response:** Tell the circumciser for me to pack her *kiruunya*  
Because we have abandoned the circumcision of girls } x2

**Soloist:** Yi rii rii we have rejected it in our place  
**Response:** Yi rii rii we have rejected it in our place } x2

**Soloist:** Tell the circumciser for me to cut short her nails,  
The circumcision of girls has been rejected in our place } x2

**Soloist:** Yi rii rii we have rejected it in our place  
**Response:** Yi rii rii we have rejected it in our place } x2

**Soloist:** Tell the circumciser for me to pack her *kiruunya*  
Because we have abandoned the circumcision of girls } x2

**Response:** Tell the circumciser for me to pack her *kiruunya*  
Because we have abandoned the circumcision of girls } x2

**10. Song: There are two paths**  
**Performer: Mzalendo Mithika**  
**Age: 45 years**  
**Profession: Works with NGOs**  
**Audience: Initiated girls**  
**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

**Soloist:** There are two roads my friend  
**Audience:** You choose which one you want to follow  
The roads are two my friend,  
**Soloist:** Choose the one you want to follow } x2

**11. Song:** **It is the uncircumcised girls who are shining**  
**Performer:** **Initiated girls**  
**Age:** **Varied (12-16)**  
**Audience:** **Initiates' parents and guests**  
**Place:** **Kangeta Girls Secondary School**

**Soloist:** It is the uncircumcised girls who are shining  
**Response:** It is the uncircumcised girls who are shining  
**Soloist:** It is not the circumcised girls  
**Response:** It is the uncircumcised girls who are shining  
**Soloist:** Looking healthy  
**Response:** It is the uncircumcised girls who are shining  
**Soloist:** Beautiful ones  
**Response:** It is the uncircumcised girls who are shining

**12. Song:** **That which is sung throughout the day**  
**Performer:** **Pastor Gitonga Jeremiah**  
**Age:** **46 years**  
**Profession:** **Pastor of EAPC Churches of Kenya (Thunguma)**  
**Audience:** **An initiate, his parents, and guests**  
**Place:** **Mr Kailiba's home, Red Canteen village**

**Soloist:** Wuui Please my *Kiretherio* is never ruined by laughter  
But the problem is to make noise } x2  
**Audience:** Yes } x2  
**Soloist:** Wuui my *kiretherio* is never ruined by laughter  
But the problem would be to make noise  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Please allow me to sing my *kiretherio* so that I will  
Charge you after you have listened to it  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** I want to labour for my goat that is worth of a moran  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Iii Jesus was born in Nazareth  
So that all of us can get eternal life } x2  
**Audience:** Jesus was born in Nazareth  
So that all of us can get eternal life } x2

**Soloist:** Oh! Please Momati my son  
If you become a thief of other people's things  
You are ruining the honour of being circumcised  
**Audience:** Yes



**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** If you ever smoke bang Timothy, I tell you my son  
I beseech you; you are ruining the honour of being circumcised  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I fail to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Timothy my son, if you refuse to go to church,  
You refuse prayers of God  
You are ruining the honour of being circumcised.  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I fail to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If the devil comes our way where God is,  
We will hit it until it sees trouble } x2  
**Audience:** If the devil comes our way  
We will hit it until it sees trouble } x2  
**Soloist:** If Timothy you get killed by AIDS you are ruining  
The honour of being circumcised  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** I tell you even if I wanted to try and help you  
I would not get into debts because of you  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Now, I have advised you accordingly my son, if you become a  
An indisciplined person, what kind of a person shall you be?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** *Alleluya* Jesus was born in Nazareth so that we may get salvation } x2  
**Audience:** Jesus was born in Nazareth so that we may get salvation } x2

**Soloist:** Please, there is a woman that I honour,  
Mary who gave birth to the Saviour (Jesus)  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** He was crucified on the cross so that we may get eternal life  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** He was beaten, a crown of thorns put on his head  
So that we can get salvation  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** He says that if we follow the footsteps of Jesus the son of God,  
My son you will get eternal life,  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** If you become a Bible reader my son you will  
Move closer to God and you will get salvation  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?

**Audience:** Yes

**Audience:** If you walk with those people going about while naked  
You are ruining the honour of being circumcised

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If you become a smoker of *bang*  
You are ruining the honour of being circumcised

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If you become a thief of other people's *miraa*  
You are ruining the honour of being circumcised

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If I fail to advise you correctly what kind of a person  
Will you end up being?

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Iii Jesus was born in Nazareth so that we may get salvation

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Jesus was born in Nazareth so that we may get salvation

**Audience:** Jesus was born in Nazareth so that we may get salvation } x2

**Soloist:** If the devil comes our way we shall hit him  
Till he sees trouble where God is

**Audience:** If the devil comes our way we shall hit him  
Till he sees trouble where God is

### **13. Song: Lord be praised**

**Performers:** Ms Karambu and Ms Kathao

**Age:** Varied

**Profession:** Students

**Audience:** Initiates' parents, and guests

**Place:** Kiegoi Methodist Church

**Chorus:** Praise the Lord I will go to hospital and be circumcised well  
The newly circumcised boys of Jesus will come by a vehicle *alleluya*  
Praise be to the Lord,  
I would not want my child harassed running about } x2

**Soloist:** Being forced to run up and down I tell you ee  
We will sit down nicely and our hands will be washed  
And we will eat with spoons I tell you.

**Soloist:** We migrated from there ii we migrated from there ii  
We migrated from there, a long time ago } x2

**Response:** We migrated from there ii we migrated from there ii  
We migrated from there, a long time ago } x2

**Soloist:** We migrated from the traditions of Meru  
**Response:** We migrated a long time ago  
**Soloist:** We migrated from those types of circumcision  
**Response:** We migrated a long time ago  
**Soloist:** We are now digital.  
**Response:** We migrated from there a long time ago

**Soloist:** We migrated from there ii we migrated from there ii  
 We migrated from there, a long time ago } x2

**Response:** We migrated from there ii we migrated from there ii  
 We migrated from there, a long time ago } x2

**Soloist:** We came to the church  
**Response:** We migrated from there a long time ago  
**Soloist:** Under the guidance of the Bible  
**Response:** We migrated from there a long long time ago  
**Soloist:** We migrated from the traditions of Meru  
**Response:** We migrated from there a long time ago  
**Soloist:** We migrated to modernism  
**Response:** We migrated from there a long time ago  
**Soloist:** We migrated to the church  
**Response:** We migrated from there a long time ago.

**14. Song: That which is sung throughout the night**

**Performer:** Ms Thirindi Mitiine  
**Age:** 67 years  
**Profession:** Retired Primary school teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated girls  
**Place:** Amwamba Girls' high school

**Soloist:** Uu ii! Long ago God used to talk to people  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Even today, God talks to people  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Come all of you for a seminar (ARP)  
**Audience:** Come all of you for the seminar  
**Soloist:** Uu ii! Please do not fail to listen to what I am saying my children  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Do not be associated with anything that has to do with circumcision  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Circumcisions for girls is forbidden  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Uui come all of you for the seminar  
**Audience:** Come all of you for the seminar  
**Soloist:** You should not get involved in anything that has to do with circumcision.  
**Audience:** Yes.  
**Soloist:** Wu ii! My *mother* let me tell you what I want to tell you  
 I attended the circumcision for girls (ARP for girls)  
 I was told circumcision of girls is useless  
**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And what I want my child is for you to be educated

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And even today I want to tell you that  
the circumcision of girls is useless

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Yie! Come all of you and hear

**Audience:** Yie! Come all of you and hear

**Soloist:** What I want to tell you my child is that  
You should go to pursue your education

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Yie! Let us all come and listen to this

**Audience:** Yie! Let us all Come and listen to this

**15. Song: That which is sung throughout the day**

**Performer: Kirema Masharufu**

**Age: 61 years**

**Profession: Village elder**

**Audience: Initiated boys, initiates' parents, and other guests**

**Place: Amungenti Catholic Church**

**Soloist:** Uuu God uuu Father iii

**Audience:** Uuu God uuu Father iii } x2

**Soloist:** Please God my Father I beseech you  
Open your eyes and listen to our weeping

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** We have sorrow because we have diseases that have come

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And they have no cure all over the world  
Even if we go anywhere even in heaven

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** We are worried because we have a disease that is afflicting all people

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Uuu we are worried because of having a disease that has  
Defeated Doctors, Lawyers, and Professors

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** iii Open your ears I ask you another question

**Audience:** Open your ears I ask you another question } x2

**Soloist:** Uuu God our Father iii

**Audience:** Uuu God our Father iii } x2

**Soloist:** Now, God our Father if you close your ears and refuse  
to listen to our cries, who will listen to us?

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** It is you God I am asking, if you will close your ears and refuse to  
Listen to us and the disease fails to get a cure, who will listen to us?

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** You brought us to this world so that we can praise you and obey you

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** We came to this world so that we can live in obedience to your word  
May your name be praised very much.

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Uuu God uuu father iii

**Audience:** Uuu God uuu father iii } x2

**Soloist:** Please God our father hear our prayer and send us Jesus  
Who will come to save us?

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Everything that we will desire we will ask through  
Jesus and he will give us

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** When we ask for anything we want, he will give us  
Because our Father is rich

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Because there is nothing that he lacks from above  
And coming to this earth

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If we fail to ask we will be tempted by Satan

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Now we are annoyed and we have annoyed our women  
Because of diseases that have no cure

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Our children, do not be abandoned by your parents,  
Please return to your parents

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And you children, do not be abandoned by your parents,  
Go back to their chest

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Iii please open your ears and listen to another prayer iii

**Audience:** Iii please open your ears and listen to another prayer iii } x2

**Soloist:** Things that concern God, I tell you God gave us His ten  
Commandments and the most rewarding one that can make  
Your days added is the one about obeying your parents

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And you (parents) do not curse your child or hate him  
As this will push him away to the bush

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Iii please bring them back to your chest

**Audience:** Bring them back to your chest } x2

### Interlude

**Soloist:** Iii swallow that I tell you something else

**Audience:** Iii swallow that I tell you something else } x2

**Soloist:** Now my parents, since the time that I have been talking to you,  
Is there anybody who has understood anything?

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If you have understood, take care of these sons of mine,  
Till they reach home well

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** After they reach home well, educate them well

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Even if you are poor, do not fail to advise them that education

Is important irrespective of the way you view yourself

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If you put effort and sell firewood and some ripe bananas,  
You will get money, for taking your child to school,  
Allow the child to pursue his education

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Just work hard in your education iii

**Audience:** Just work hard in your education } x2

**Soloist:** Just work hard in your education iii

**Audience:** Just work in your education } x2

**Soloist:** My son work hard in your education iii

**Audience:** Just work hard in your education } x2

**Soloist:** If you continue to work hard even if your father drinks *kibondi*  
Till he lies on the road paths your education will be taken care of

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** This Safari (Kanuni ward MCA) you can see here has money  
For taking you to school

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If we call the likes of Linturi (Meru County Senator) who is there  
Has money to take you to school

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** This Bishop you can see seated there has money to educate you

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** Even these pastors you can see seated there have money  
to take you to school

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And your parents there in the villages have money to take you to school

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** You just work hard in education

**Audience:** You just work hard in education } x2

**Soloist:** My son work hard in education

**Audience:** My son work hard in education } x2

**Soloist:** And now my child, I have told you  
If you ever get an 'A', or 'B' or 'C' following each other,  
*Father* your education will be paid for

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** The teacher who used to teach you will get troubled and  
Troubled until he loses sleep (because of your education) and  
He will call the others to assist you

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** He will even call the school committee to support him  
In planning for your education

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** The likes of Safari (Kanuni Ward MCA) seated there  
Will be called on your behalf to plan for you

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** If only you work hard in your studies ii

**Audience:** If only you work hard in your studies } x2

**Soloist:** Oh my son work hard in your studies ii  
**Audience:** If only you work hard in your studies. } x2

**Soloist:** And we also have people here who are millionaires  
And are kindhearted and can educate you

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And this Bishop you see here seated  
At the altar of God is your second parent

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** They even have a group of other Bishops  
Who can even educate you.

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** And we even have a congregation of *sisters*  
Who can educate you.

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** You dedicate yourself to your studies ii

**Audience:** You dedicate yourself to your studies } x2

**16. Song: Children are a blessing**  
**Performer: URA MCK Senior Sunday school**  
**Age: Varied**  
**Profession: Students**  
**Audience: Initiates, initiates' parents, and guests**  
**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

Greetings audience!

I am a child, who is a human being,  
Despite that, I am not valued at all,  
Why am I being oppressed? My rights as a child-oo  
Remember I am a gift from the Creator  
Thank you because of your love, two people of God,  
Came together with enthusiasm and joy,  
Together you were blessed, mother became expectant,  
*Salaala!* Why has your love dwindled?  
Why this mother? Why meditate my death?

It is not because of my love, but the love between you?  
After a month, the baby has no life,  
Injections, different medications are being used,  
With no doubt, the toilet became my home,  
Mother has thrown me there, with no mercy or love,  
I am not faeces mother; I am a blessing from God.

Why the shame? To give birth to me in mercy and love?  
Bring me up with love; breastfeed me with love'  
Please mother, I beseech you do not throw me away  
I am your child, a blessing from God.

Parents, I am asking, why are you paying money for  
Your daughters to do abortions,  
So that they continue with education?

Between a child and education, which is more important?  
Did you pay money for them to get those children?  
Pray to God to forgive you, for killing your blessings.  
Children are a blessing from God.

Doctors, I beseech you, bad habits you should desist from,  
To assist girls to abort, I beseech you to stop,  
The Bible says we should not kill; why are you killing?  
We pray you should stop killing blessings from God.  
If you do not stop, condemnation awaits you.

**17. Song: An age group has come**  
**Performer: Kirema Masharufu**  
**Age: 61 years**  
**Profession: Village elder**  
**Audience: Initiated boys, their parents, and guests**  
**Place: Amungenti Catholic Church**

My warriors, an age-group has come with many things  
Aa my warriors, an age group has come aa  
Where will a person sing while singing for a lover?  
Uuuu! I am singing for my lover ii so he can call for me aa  
My fathers, I sing for my lover so that he can call for me the old men.

#### **Interlude**

And an old man who deserves to be my father will be sung for aa  
And an old man who deserves to be my father, what will I sing for you with?  
And clothes we have cut aa them short and have reached  
And clothes we have cut them short aa  
They have been cut short above the knees uu  
They have been cut short like bows  
The old man called Mutui, look this way and I will look at your back oo  
And you look aa at the hills of Nyambene  
And you look at ii the hills of Nyambene.

**18. Song: Now God**  
**Performer: Kirema Masharufu**  
**Age: 61 years**  
**Profession: Village Elder**  
**Audience: Initiates, initiates' parents, and guests**  
**Place: Amungenti Catholic Church**

**Soloist:** God our father we spit saliva, for these children of ours ii

**Audience:** God ii

**Soloist** Let it all be well with them ii

**Audience:** God ii

**Soloist:** Let it all be well with them ii

**Audience:** God ii

} x2

**Soloist:** We have blessed them

**Audience:** God ii



**Soloist:** Let them live ii  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Very well  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With no obstacles  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** On the road ii  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** The ones they will use when going home  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May they reach  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** While in good health  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With blessings  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** That comes from you  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May they live calling upon you  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** And you answer them  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** You heal them  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With your love ii  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** You are our Creator  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** There is no other like you  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** That we have  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** You alone  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Our security  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Our hope  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Our health  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Our feeding  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** And even what we drink  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** And education ii  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** The good health  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Of our bodies  
**Soloist:** This age group  
**Audience:** God ii

**Soloist:** That has made us all  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** To be here  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** All of us  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With parents  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Female parents  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Male parents  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** And people  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Of all age-groups  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Women  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** And girls  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** And children  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** And great grandchildren  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** They are all here because of this age-group  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May they all be blessed  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** In a good way  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** So that they grow like  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** The *Mugumo* tree  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** So that people can conspicuously see them  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Like Mt Kenya  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Let them come together  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With unity  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With togetherness  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Like the forest  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Of Nyambene  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With unity  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** That will attract a lot of rains

**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** That will make our water sources flourish  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** That will make there be  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Springs of water  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** This age-group

**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May it produce  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Good things  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Like wealth  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Education  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** A lot of money  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Degrees  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Diplomas  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Masters  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Phd  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Doctor  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May they come to them  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** All of them  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** You are all blessed  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** And you parents  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** You give them  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Everything  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With a good heart  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Incase you are unable  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Call for help  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** God is there  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** We will respond to your call for help

**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** We will help you  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** This child to acquire education  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** He will prosper  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** This is what we are investing in  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** These times  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** That is what we want  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** That is what we want  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Our business  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** We prosper and are recognized  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** Like Mt Kenya  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** They will be visited by people of all races/tribes  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May they be famous  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** In Kenya and other countries  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May they be used as an example  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May they drive vehicles  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May they be carried by aeroplanes  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** In the sky  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** And by ships  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** May they cross oceans  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With no obstacles  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** With no ill luck  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** When they come back  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** They will bring us good things  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** We will eat  
**Audience:** God ii  
**Soloist:** We will laugh  
**Audience:** God ii

**Soloist:** We will bless them

**Audience:** God ii

**Soloist:** Alii...

**Audience:** Alilililiii (Ululations) } x4

**19. Song: God help me to bless**

**Performer: Kirema Masharufu**

**Age: 61 years**

**Profession: Village Elder**

**Audience: Initiates and their parents,**

**Place: Amungenti Catholic Church**

Soloist: God help me to bless, God help me, you are the Mugwe

Audience: God help me to bless, God help me, you are the Mugwe } x2

Soloist: Our God uu

Audience: Iii God help me, you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The oldest God

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God who was and is today

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God who shall be there

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: In our lives

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: God help me to bless, God help me you are the Mugwe

Audience: God help me to bless ,God help me you are the Almighty Mugwe } x2

Soloist: Our God

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God of our parents

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: God of all the age groups

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God of Kiramunya

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God of Ithalii

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God of Micubu

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God of Ratanya

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God of Lubetaa

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God of Miriti

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God of Buntai

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe

Soloist: The God of Gichunge

Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe  
 Soloist: Yes the one who is alive  
 Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe  
 Soloist: You who is the *Kiini kiru*  
 Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe  
 Soloist: You who is *Kiundu Kaimba*  
 Audience: Iii God help me you are the Mugwe  
 Soloist: God help me to bless, God help me you are the Almighty Mugwe  
 Audience: God help me to bless, God help me you are the Almighty Mugwe } x2  
 Soloist: Arii...  
 Audience: Aririririri (Ululations) } x4

**20. Song: That which is sung throughout the night**

**Performer: Mushete Michubu**

**Age: 38 years**

**Profession: A renowned village singer**

**Audience: An initiate, initiate's parents and guests**

**Place: Mr Mithika's home, Antubochiu village**

**Soloist:** Wuui please my son called Thurania receive greetings  
 And again receive greetings; an initiate is never greeted once  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better  
**Audience:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better } x2  
**Soloist:** Wuui my son called Thurania receive greetings  
 And again receive greetings an initiate is never greeted once  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Wuui the people called Lucy and Mithika stretch your hands to me,  
 I advise your initiated son for you  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** I will tell you again a circumcised man is one who has his own degree  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness your becoming better  
**Audience:** It is good I came to witness your becoming better }  
 x2  
**Soloist:** Wuui my son from long time ago  
 God has always been beseeching man  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** And even today, He is always beseeching man  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better  
**Audience:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better  
**Soloist:** And again I tell you that the one that is initiated  
 Is the one who has his own degree.  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better

**Audience:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better } x2  
**Soloist:** Wuui my son from the beginning God has always been  
Beseeching man and even today, He is still beseeching man  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** And even today, He continues to beseech man  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better  
**Audience:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better } x2

**Soloist:** Wuui my son and again I want to tell you that I was  
Passing by when a Whiteman stopped and greeted me,  
“How are you” and I told him, “I am fine.”  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better  
**Audience:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better } x2

**Soloist:** Wuui I want to tell you again that my *kirarire*  
is never ruined by laughter but by noise  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** And again I want to tell you that, I am called Michubu but  
Nobody comes for me because I am not yet famous (as a musician)  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness your becoming better  
**Audience:** It is good I came to witness your becoming better } x2

**Soloist:** Wuui my son called Thuraira receive greetings and again  
Receive my greetings; an initiated person is never greeted once  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness your becoming better  
**Audience:** It is good I came to witness your becoming better } x2  
**Soloist:** Wuui the people called Lucy and Mithika stretch  
Your hands to me I advise your initiated son for you  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Wuui my son an initiate is one who is educated  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** And again I tell you an initiate is one who has his own property  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** And again I tell you an initiate is one who has his own degree  
**Audience:** Yes  
**Soloist:** Why would I be unable to talk?

**Audience:** Yes

**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better

**Audience:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better } x2

**Soloist:** Wuui my son let all the women utter the ululations  
Worth of a newly initiated boy

**Audience:** Ali alililii!

**Soloist:** Wuui women present, utter ululations to welcome back  
The newly initiated boy

**Audience:** Ali alililii! } x 4

**Soloist:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better

**Audience:** It is good I came to witness you becoming better } x 2

**21. Song: Judas is not one**

**Performer:** URA MCK Women Group Choir

**Age:** Varied

**Profession:** Varied

**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests

**Place:** Athi Methodist Church

The shilling in the world has ruined everything,  
All people have become selfish,  
They have denied God a tenth of their income,  
Yet He is the One who has created everything.

**Chorus:** Jesus resurrected Lazarus from Bethany,  
And they dined together on the same table  
Please help us so that we will not be misled  
By the Judas of this world, forgive us our sins  
So that we will dine with them

Sincerely, if you want to be employed you cannot get a job,  
Unless you give something little if not you are told to get out of the office  
Your boss tells you, you must give ten thousand shillings.

When you go to church, you are told to give twenty shillings and above,  
And then you should write your name (on the envelope),  
So that God may know how much you have given,  
You must give an offering of not less than twenty shillings.

A good woman takes care of the home, guiding the children peacefully,  
When she is told to drink (one bottle of beer) to get rid of thoughts,  
Then that is the end of you, one for the road is not dangerous.

When the husband comes back home at night, the wife will ask him,  
“Why have you come late?” When he asks for food, the wife replies,  
“Go back to your prostitute, do not disturb me, and go away from me.”

**22. Song: She is meditating on her knees**

**Performers:** Initiated girls



**Age:** Varied  
**Audience:** Initiates' parents and guests  
**Place:** Kangeta Girls Secondary School

**Soloist:** She is meditating on her knees , the circumcised girl  
**Response:** She is meditating on her knees asking, asking  
Woe! Unto to me, I got circumcised and was left a stump } x3

**Soloist:** She is meditating on her knees, the circumcised girl  
**Response:** She is meditating asking, woe unto me I got  
Circumcised and now, I am not sexually appealing. } x2

**23. Song:** Focus on education  
**Performers:** Nkiro group  
**Age:** Varied  
**Audience:** Initiate, initiate's parents and guests  
**Place:** Mr Kaberia's home

**Soloist:** Please look at Muriithi ii  
**Response:** Mbeeria  
**Soloist:** Iuu iii  
**Response:** Pay attention to education } x2  
**Soloist:** Degree in education ii  
**Response:** Mbeeria iuu ii  
**Soloist:** Pay attention to education  
**Response:** This is our child ii  
**Soloist:** Mbeeria iuu ii  
**Response:** Let us glorify God  
**Soloist:** Mbeeria iuu ii  
**Response:** Pay attention to education  
**Soloist:** Mbeeria iuu ii  
**Response:** Value education ii  
**Soloist:** There is a disease that has come  
**Response:** Mbeeria iuu ii  
**Soloist:** Uu ii  
**Response:** Value education  
**Soloist:** It is called AIDS  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii  
**Soloist:** Uu ii  
**Response:** Value education  
**Soloist:** Once it gets somebody s/he starts to wear out like (old) clothes  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii  
**Soloist:** Uu ii  
**Response:** Value education  
**Soloist:** This is a great day  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii uu ii  
**Soloist:** Value education  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii uuu ii  
**Soloist:** We will be crowned with a degree  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii  
**Soloist:** A degree of education

**Response:** Mbeeria ii  
**Soloist:** Ii uu ii  
**Response:** Value education  
**Soloist:** Let us praise God  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii  
**Soloist:** Uuu ii  
**Response:** Value education  
**Soloist:** The child is ours  
**Response:** Mbeeria  
**Soloist:** Iuu ii  
**Response:** Value education.

**Soloist:** Uuu ii  
**Response:** Value education } x2

**24. A Poem: What the Creator has planned**  
**Performer: Anonymous**  
**Profession: Unknown**  
**Audience: Initiates, their parents and guests**  
**Place: Wesley Boarding school, Nturuba.**

What the Creator had planned, today has been fulfilled,  
What had been planned by the Creator, has been fulfilled today,  
Parents if you are happy, ululate.

Ululations, we thank the Creator,  
Let us give him all the honour and appreciation,  
Let there be peace among us, love and tolerance,  
Parents if you are happy, ululate.

We sincerely hoped that a day like today would come,  
Because of God's love, we initiated boys,  
We have initiated the boys; there they are our honourables,  
You can see them they are shining truly, truly,  
Sincerely, they have been initiated.  
Parents if you are happy, ululate.

The fruits of education are sweeter than honey,  
You work hard in your studies with joy  
Work hard in your studies knowing that patience pays  
Parents if you are happy, ululate.

What the creator had planned, today has been fulfilled,  
Parents if you are happy, ululate,  
Let us give ululations, let us thank the Creator,  
Therefore, let us all give Him honour.

The elders of Nyambene had a vision,  
They took a step and came together.  
They held each others hands and initiated the boys,  
There is nobody who can challenge them, they have been educated well

All the principles of adult men have been inculcated in them.  
Parents if you are happy, ululate.

Bishop, pastors, and the church elders,  
Congratulations because of your leadership that has united us,  
Your ways and faith give encouragements,  
Parents if you are happy, ululate.  
I have communicated the message, we have initiated boys,  
With God's love, we will see each other again,  
The fruits of education are sweeter than honey,  
Parents if you are happy ululate...

**25. Song: Parents, educate your children**

**Performer: Ms Makena**

**Age: 23 years**

**Profession: Student (Masinde Muliro University, science and Technology)**

**Audience: Initiated girls, their parents and guests**

**Place: Kangeta Girls Secondary School**

Parents educate your children,  
So that your children will be enlightened,  
So that they can cope with these times,  
Anybody not educated is in darkness.

**Chorus:** Education is the light to darkness,  
Whoever is not educated is in darkness.  
All the offices are for the educated.

If you are not educated you are in darkness,  
Circumcision is not the light to darkness.  
Even those who are circumcised are in darkness.  
Parents educate your children,  
So that they can have knowledge,  
That is consistent with these times.  
Whoever is not educated is in darkness.

## APPENDIX II

### PROVERBS TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

- 1. Proverb:** Do not attend wedding ceremonies where you have not been invited  
**Performer:** Mrs Karambu Mururu  
**Age:** 30 years  
**Profession:** Evangelist, URA Methodist church  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** Athi Methodist church
- 2. Proverb:** If you befriend a person with crooked ways, you will also be crooked.  
**Performer:** Ms Karambu Mururu  
**Age:** 30 years  
**Profession:** Evangelist, URA Methodist church  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** Athi Methodist church
- 3. Proverb:** There is no difference between a thief and his/her accomplice.  
**Performer:** Robert Mwirirgi  
**Age:** 28 years  
**Profession:** Tailor, Kijiji market  
**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests  
**Place:** Kijiji Seventh day church grounds
- 4. Proverb:** There is no hyena that does not have a friend of its own.  
**Performer:** Pastor Kaunyangi  
**Age:** 46 Years  
**Profession:** Pastor, Athi Live Gospel Church  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** Mr Mitiine's home in Amwamba village
- 5. Proverb:** As you dig trenches or holes for others, dig deep ones and shallow ones, for you may end up falling into one of them.  
**Performer:** Ms Gladys Muthoni  
**Age:** 27 years  
**Profession:** Tiira Day Secondary school teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** Athi Methodist church
- 6. (i) Proverb:** The one who is initiated is the one who has his own property.  
**Performer:** Pastor Gitonga Kaithungu  
**Age:** 49 years  
**Profession:** Pastor, Kijiji Live Gospel Church  
**Audience:** Initiated boys  
**Place:** Kijiji Live Gospel Church
- 6. (ii) Proverb:** The one who is initiated is the one who has his own property.  
**Performer:** Mrs Eunice Kanini  
**Age:** 32 years  
**Profession:** Teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boy, his parents, relatives and guests.

- 7. Proverb:** If one does not resemble the father; one resembles the mother.  
**Performer:** Mercy Nkatha  
**Age:** 41 years  
**Profession:** Ryenya primary School teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** Mr Kithinji's home, Antubochiu village
- 8. Proverb:** Hot *ugali* is eaten from the sides  
**Performer:** Mr Tarsius Mugambi  
**Age:** 26 years  
**Profession:** Political Science Graduate from Moi University  
**Audience:** Initiated boy, parents, relatives and neighbours
- 9. Proverb:** The one to be advised, is one who has his own wisdom  
**Performer:** Mrs Margaret Kanampiu.  
**Age:** 61 Years  
**Profession:** Retired teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** URA Methodist church
- 10. Proverb:** If you see a mongoose, you do not see one.  
**Performer:** Dr. Joseph Mugambi  
**Age:** 35 years  
**Profession:** Doctor  
**Audience:** Initiated girls  
**Place:** Amwamba Girls Secondary school
- 11. Proverb:** You can only push something that has its own wheels/legs.  
**Performer:** Mr Silas Muriithi  
**Age:** 28 years  
**Profession:** Teacher of Kirindini Day Secondary schools  
**Audience:** Initiated boy, parents, and guests
- 12. Proverb:** The neck cannot overrule the head  
**Performer:** Mrs Nkatha Kamui  
**Age:** 37 years  
**Profession:** Accounts clerk  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents, and guests  
**Place:** Mr Kithinji's home, Antubochiu village
- 13. Proverb:** The bark of another tree cannot stick on another tree.  
**Performer:** Ms Gladys Muthoni  
**Age:** 27 years  
**Profession:** Tiira Day secondary school  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** Athi Methodist church
- 14. Proverb:** Show me your companion and I shall tell you what your character is.  
**Performer:** Mrs Margaret Kanampiu  
**Age:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Profession:** Retired primary school teacher

- Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** URA Methodist church grounds
- 15. Proverb:** You will scratch yourself the farthest you can reach yourself.  
**Performer:** Ms Gladys Muthoni  
**Age:** 27 years  
**Profession:** Tiira Day Secondary school teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** Athi Methodist Church
- 16. Proverb:** Do not be a DC. (District Commissioner)  
**Performer:** Mrs Mukiri Gituma  
**Age:** 32 years  
**Profession:** Accountant, Maua Methodist Hospital  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** URA Methodist Church grounds
- 17. Proverb:** What one utters with one's mouth is what comes to pass.  
**Performer:** Mrs Margaret Kanampiu  
**Age:** 61 years  
**Profession:** Retired teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** URA Methodist church grounds

**APPENDIX III**  
**ORAL NARRATIVES: TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH**

**1. Narrative: A girl and her brothers**

**Narrator:** Ms Gladys Muthoni

**Age:** 27 years

**Profession:** Secondary school teacher

**Audience:** Initiated girls

**Place:** St. Rita's Amwamba Girls Secondary School.

**Narrator:** I want to tell you a short story.

**Audience:** Ehee!

There was once a woman who had three sons and one daughter. The last born was a girl. Then, there was a very big mountain. At the top of the mountain was a golden basket, a golden tree, and golden water. It was said that whoever was going to ever climb that mountain and be able to fetch the three things: golden water, tree or basket and bring them down the mountain was going to be very famous. At the bottom of this mountain was a seer or a prophet who was to instruct people on how to climb the mountain.

As usual, you know a girl who is born alone among boys is always very spoilt and likes to be pampered. Doesn't she usually get spoilt especially if she is the only girl and the others are boys?

**Audience:** Eehee!

If you are the only dame you pretend you cannot do anything so that others (boys) can do it for you. So this is what happened. This girl went and told the brothers, "I want to become a very famous lady. So I want you to go up the mountain and get for me the golden basket, golden tree, and golden water."

Since the brothers loved their sister, what were they to do for her? They agreed. One of them was to go to the mountain to get those things for her. The eldest brother volunteered to climb the mountain. He went and at the foot of the mountain, met a prophet/seer. He told the prophet that he wanted to climb the mountain so that he could bring the golden basket, golden water, and a golden tree for her sister so that she could become famous. The prophet told the man, "As you go up there, I want you to know that many people have turned into grass, stones, and many other things as they attempt to go up. As you go up, the instruction is one, do not look behind you."

**Narrator:** Do not do what?

**Audience:** Do not look behind you.

Whatever you hear, do not look behind you. This is very simple. The young man began the journey. After taking three steps, he heard some voices, "Look at him! Very arrogant! We have seen many proud people like you! Hit him!" The young man looked behind him and turned into grass!

The other siblings waited for him but he never returned. The sister insisted that the brothers had to get those golden things for her. Because they loved their sister very much, they did not have a choice but to get the things she wanted for her. The other brother also went and met the prophet. This prophet told him, "As you go up the mountain, do not look behind you." The young man started the journey. Then he heard sounds, "very arrogant person. Take a stone and hit him. You pretender. We have seen many like you." This man also looked behind. What! He turned into a stone!

The sister told the remaining brother that she must become famous. Thus, he must go for the golden things for her from up the mountain. Because this brother loved the sister very much, what was he to do? He had to get the golden things for her. This brother went and met this prophet who instructed him at the bottom of the mountain, "As you go up the mountain, do not look behind you." The young man started the journey. As he was walking uphill after taking two steps, he heard voices talking to him, "Leave him alone, very arrogant. Take a stone and hit him. You are pretending. We have seen many like you. We have seen many like you. Hit him and he will not defend himself" What! He looked behind. Mssss! He turned into a stone!

The girl was left alone..?  
**Audience:** Was left alone.

This girl was very sorrowful (for losing her brothers). She said that she had to go to the mountain so as she could go to stay with her brothers. The girl went and was told by the prophet,

"As you ascend the mountain, remember all your brothers went up the mountain, died and left your parents mourning."  
The girl said, "I must go up the mountain."

So the girl climbed the mountain *kocho! Kocho! Kocho!* She walked on. Then she heard some strange voices, "who is this going up? Is it a woman of substance? The strong One...? Very arrogant person...? We have seen many." As she walked on the voices became louder and louder. The stones were being thrown at her *ka! Ka! Ka!* But none of those stones were hitting her. "Hit her now. You have missed her. This one will not be able to do anything. Let the devil be defeated. I do not know what is happening!"

The girl climbed on. Then she realized that she was going to be tempted to look behind. She therefore put her hands into her pockets and removed some cotton wool that she had put on her both ears. She then continued with her journey. Of course, she was not hearing what was being said to her. She went and reached the peak of the mountain as a winner. As a...?  
**Audience:** Winner.

When she reached at the mountain top, she met a golden basket that told her, "Listen, I tell you. All the grass you can see here represents all the people who had gotten killed. I want you to pour, sorry, I want you to sprinkle this golden water on the grass and stones and your people will sprout from them and from the stones. Then cut this golden tree and any woman you give part of this golden tree will become a very



famous person in the whole nation. And above all, take a leaf from the tree and touch any sick person with it, and even if the person is blind, he will regain his sight.”

The girl took the golden basket and sprinkled the water on the grass and stones and they turned into people! At the end of the day, this woman is the strength of a woman. At the end of the day, she became the winner and helped everybody else. She became the saviour of the families over the generations and the saviour of the whole nation.

## **2. Narrative: A small girl and the circumcised girls**

**Narrator:** Dr. Kinanu Ntalala

**Age:** 41 years

**Profession:** Dr Nyambene District Hospital

**Audience:** Initiated girls

**Place:** Amwamba Girls Secondary School

**Narrator:** Take a story?

**Audience:** We take it.

When I was growing up, circumcision of girls used to take place in my place. One day when I was very young, I met a big girl as I was coming from the church. This big girl saw a team of girls who had been circumcised walking while in a single file. They had bowed their heads and were walking in a single file just like newly circumcised boys do. Those who were escorting them were also in a single file and were also circumcised. They were walking down the road going to the home of one of them who had been circumcised. They had lined up on the road and traditionally; whenever one would see such a group of circumcised girls, the rule was that one was supposed to run away (to pave way for the circumcised girls).

On this particular day, this small girl told us, “Come and let us also make our own single file”

We lined up. We had seen them coming from a distance. We made a single file on our side. We made our line and started walking towards the circumcised girls’ single file. They were coming towards us and we were walking towards them. And the rule was that: if you were not circumcised; you were to run away from the circumcised ones when you saw them. This is because if you met face to face with the circumcised girls’ and they accused you of having insulted them you were to be circumcised by force. If you were to insult them, what was to happen to you?

**Audience:** You were to be circumcised.

You were to be circumcised by force. So we met with them! We met with them! They passed in our midst and we passed in their midst. We passed them without running away! Such a thing had never happened in our place! After passing them, we turned round and faced them as we laughed at them. We laughed at them loudly and derisively. And this story about how we laughed at them has never been forgotten. And nobody ever questioned us and we never heard anybody ever talking about this incident again. From that day, girls getting circumcised in our place lost the prestige that it used to have. And you girls who have been circumcised (ARP), do not shy away from them because you have the strength (to fight back).

**3. Narrative: One child**

**Narrator: Bishop Alice Baariu**

**Age: 44 years**

**Profession: Bishop**

**Audience: Guests, nitiates and their parents**

**Place: Wesley Academy- Nturuba**

There was once a boy who went to school many years ago. The parents of this boy were rich and thus bought pants and shoes for him before they sent him to school. While this boy was in school, the boy realized that all the other boys who were with him in school never wore pants and were always barefooted. When he went home, he told his mother that from that time henceforth, he would neither wear the shoes nor the pants. Why? He wanted to be like other boys in the school who never wore pants.

**4. Narrative: The mannerless child**

**Narrator: Bishop Alice Baariu**

**Age: 44 years**

**Profession: Bishop, Nyambene Synod**

**Audience: Initiated boys, their parents and guests**

**Place: Wesley Boarding School, Nturuba**

There was once a boy born in a certain family. The boy was well taken care of by his parents as he grew up. His mother loved the son very much. The mother would always protect the boy from being disciplined by the father (whenever he would make a mistake). Whenever the father was away from home the mother would talk ill of her husband and would tell the son,

“Do not pay attention to your father. He is just a drunkard.”

So the boy grew up knowing that the father was not good. A time came when the boy beat his father after a disagreement and unfortunately the father died. The boy was taken to court and was sentenced to death. The boy called the mother (on the day the verdict of the court was being given) and told her,

“Thank you, mother; for bringing me into this world and for helping me to leave it.”

**5. Narrative: A woman and her husband**

**Narrator: Gladys Muthoni**

**Age: 27 years**

**Profession: Secondary School teacher**

**Audience: Initiated girls**

**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

**Narrator:** Let me tell you a story. This is a true life story.

**Audience:** Ehe!

There was a woman and this woman was married to my grandmother’s houseboy. This woman was older than her husband. Is it possible to be married to somebody older than you?

**Audience:** Ehe!

It is possible. Isn’t it?

**Audience:** Ehe!

After the marriage of this man and woman, they went and worked hard and worked hard to acquire wealth. God blessed them even with a good place where they could settle down. They built their home and got how many children? Three children! Do you know what this man did? After they had built a home, bought a vehicle and were financially stable, this man started complaining that the wife had grown very old and was looking elderly! Sometimes, I feel like scratching the faces of some men. Just imagine a man saying that a woman has grown old! I wonder whether a man also grows old!

Does it mean that as a woman grows older, the man grows younger? Do you hear them {men} confessing so? That such and such a lady looks elderly? And he was saying this about his wife that he had married? Sometimes I am tempted to ask them whether the lady was adding years plus! Plus! Plus! And the man's years were being deducted minus! Minus! Minus! Now that I am growing older, the man is growing younger! This is bad manners; I always hear them say so! So this man said what about his wife...?

**Audience:** That she was looking elderly.

I believe we are together now. Thus, the man kept a young mistress somewhere. The man had looked for a young woman because they had become quite rich. He had even built for the second wife a house somewhere else. After building for her a house, he had stopped going to visit the first wife. The first wife was staying with her three children alone. She would go to church every Sunday because she was a member of a certain church. She would go and arrange everything in the church where she was the chairlady. She was hurting inside although this was not visible to many people. Life went on. Life went on. One day, this mistress, just as I told you yesterday that, "He who dwells in the shadows of the highest God will never be ashamed and God ensures his words come to pass." Can I hear you say...Praise God?

**Audience:** Amen

**Narrator:** Somebody say amen...?

**Audience:** Amen.

So this woman continued to pray. One day this mistress as they are called today told the husband that she wanted to visit him in his home. The man told her, "I had also wanted to request you to visit me but became hesitant. I want you to accompany me home so that we can humiliate this wife of mine. I hope she does not dare to attack you. If she dares even to touch you, we shall kill her."

Some ladies are quite evil. They follow married men as if there are no more men out there. I want you to tell somebody this, "When you are of age, please do not pursue married men!"

**Narrator:** Is it not bad manners to do so?

**Audience:** This is bad manners.

It is an offence and a sin to do so because there are many single men out there. You will take this man and later your husband will also leave you for somebody else. Whatever goes around comes around. This is what we usually say that whatever goes around...?

**Audience:** Comes around.

Whatever happens in this world will always go back to where it started. Always strive to do the right thing because what you do to others will be done to you. Remember the *Waswahili* say that:

The one, who digs a well ...?

**Audience:** falls into it himself or herself. ) x2

So do not be digging wells for others because you can also fall into one of them. As you can see, this woman had dug a well for the other woman.

Let me continue with my story. This woman accompanied the husband to his home. He carried his mistress's things. I believe she had dressed herself very well the way people say, I am dressed to kill. Do you always hear people saying this?

**Audience:** Yes

That you look sexy! By the way, you have dressed till you look sexy! Even in the church! Do you go to have sex even in the church? You are supposed to look sexy only in your bedroom, but not in the church and on the road! Don't you think so?

**Audience:** Yes.

I hate such statements. So this mistress had deceived herself that she had dressed like that. They came together up to the gate and knocked *Tu! Tu! Tu!* The first wife came very fast. This woman had a watchman at the gate. But she had earlier on instructed the watchman that, from the day that she had gotten married, that she was the one to open the gate for the husband so that she can welcome him back home. She therefore went and opened the gate to welcome him but *wuuuuui!*

She saw a woman who had proudly sat in the front seat of the car and she was looking beautiful. The first wife went to hug the husband because it was long since he had come home to visit her. The man did not allow her to hug him. He was like *msssss!* He ignored her and entered into the table room with the mistress! If it were you, what would you have done? Do you know that this is a unique woman, one out of two hundred? The woman did not give up because she was a very goodhearted lady. Jesus! Can any one of you endure such embarrassment? If a woman is brought into your house, won't you start a war with her? But this woman never gave up. Jesus Christ! Do you know God says that those who dwell in Him, He gives them revelations? This first wife went to the kitchen cooked tea and served them everything. Do you know what she told the visiting woman? She told her that after eating and taking the drinks she should go to the visitor's room, take a towel and take a bath! *Msss!* What a wonderful woman! Then the first wife left them and went to her bedroom to sleep. Do you know what guilt is? Have you ever heard of somebody judging oneself? This is why we say, if all wishes were horses even beggars would ride. All beggars would ...?

**Audience:** Ride.

That is why we say, I wish I knew. The mistress started telling the man that she wished she knew the kind of a wife that he had. Do you know the mistress had expected this woman to talk to her rudely which she did not! This woman did not

spend the night with the husband. Instead she went to sleep in the visitor's room. The husband went and slept in his own room alone. The following day very early in the morning at 4:00 AM, the visiting woman woke up and went to plead with the watchman to allow her to leave the compound without anybody being informed of her exit. The watchman opened for her the gate and she left. Meanwhile, the first wife woke up, prepared breakfast for her visitors and set it in the tableroom. When the man of the house woke up and went to wake up the mistress. He went and met that she was not in her room. He thought that it was the first wife who had chased her away. He asked her why she had sent his mistress away with an intention of beating her up. But the woman told him,

"I am not the one who sent her away. Please fear God. You can even ask the watchman."

The man went to ask the watchman how the mistress had left the house. The watchman informed the boss that the mistress had left the house on her own volition very early in the morning at 4:00 AM after pleading with him to open the gate for her. The man made a phone call, *tu! tu! tu!*. He put a loudspeaker on, "Hello?"

The mistress responded, "You are more than a devil. Is that the kind of a wife you have and you have been mistreating her? Come for everything that belongs to you from my house." That is a woman and half. Respect that woman.

Let us all clap our hands for this woman! This is a real life story. Do you know what this man did? He cried like a small child. He was very humiliated. Since it was on a Saturday, he could not do anything. The following day was on Sunday. As usual the woman with her three children prepared themselves and walked to church as they had always been doing. She went and sat at the front seat as always and the husband came later and sat at the backseat in the church. The pastor preached and preached. Then he asked if there was anybody who wanted to give his life to Christ to raise his or her hand up. Somebody at the back raised his hand up. Since this woman was the usher in the church, she went to see who it was that had raised his hand up to get saved. Gosh! When the woman went to him, she realised that it was the husband. She was unable to usher him because of shock. The husband was crying. Do you know it is bad for a man to cry? Men do not cry anyhow my friend. Is that not so?

**Audience:** Yes.

I personally do not understand why it is hard for them to cry. I do not know whether they were told that when they get circumcised they should never cry even if they experience anything hard. I am always surprised by the fact that they never cry just like that. The man went up the podium in the church. He cried, cried and cried. He called the wife in front and when he was given the microphone to speak he said, "I have been oppressing this woman... but today what she has done to me... He explained the whole story to the congregation. Then he said that because of his wife's actions, he was going to get saved.

The man was prayed for and he got born again. He stopped all the wicked things he had been doing. He asked for forgiveness from his wife. After the church service, he carried the wife and their children in his car while going home. Today, this couple has two or three more vehicles if I am not wrong and they are like role models to the other people.

**6. Narrative: A girl and her mother**  
**Narrator: Dr Joseph Mugambi**  
**Age: 35 years**  
**Profession: Medical health officer.**  
**Audience: Initiated girls**  
**Place: Amwamba Girls Secondary School**

Let me tell you a story. There was once one girl. How many girls...?

**Audience:** One.

Now, I want to give you information about prevention from sexually transmitted diseases. I want to give you information on what?

**Audience:** Prevention from STDs.

The mother of this one girl called her, "Kanana...?"

Sorry, is there a Kanana here?

**Audience:** Noo...

Let me call her an English name like the name of the mother of Jesus. Is there any Mary here?

**Audience:** Noo...

She told her, "Now Mary, a girl does not remove clothes for men." A girl does not remove what for men?"

**Audience:** Clothes.

Do you hear me?

**Audience:** Yes.

Mary left and went. She met with her boyfriend and they discussed their own things. Then she told her boyfriend, "Do you know what? My mother told me not to be removing what for men?"

**Audience:** Clothes

Just listen to me. I said one should not remove what for men, clo...?

**Audience:** Clothes

Are you listening?

**Audience:** Yes.

Mary met with her boyfriend and they discussed their own things. Then she told the boyfriend, "Do you know what?" My mother told me not to be removing what for men?"

**Audience:** Clothes.

Then they did their own things. Mary was in trouble. So when she went back home, her mother asked her,

"Mary, didn't I warn you against such things? What did I tell you?"

"You told me I should not remove clothes for men."

But if we did this thing while standing up and I was dressed up, is there any problem?"

Now Mary had agreed to do it. She got gonorrhoea and a *ball*.

**7. Narrative: A Woman and her Children**  
**Narrator: Mr John Lika**  
**Age: 34 Years**  
**Profession: Works with Igembe South Youth enterprise Fund**  
**Audience: Initiated girls, their parents and guests**  
**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

There was once a parent who had a son and a daughter. The age difference between the two children was not very big. This girl grew up well but was always troubled whenever she would go to urinate. She would ask her mother,

“Mother, why don’t I have something to urinate with like Boy’s?”

Her son used to be called Boy. Whenever the girl went to urinate the girl desired to urinate like Boy, her brother. According to the mother the daughter was still a child and she never wanted to tell her the truth {about the different sex organs for males and females}, she would tell her daughter,

“Do not worry. One day you will be given” (an organ for urinating like her brother’s).

Now, instead of the mother telling her daughter that she is the way she is and her brother is the way he was because that is how they were created; she would just tell her,

“You will just be given (one day)!”

The boy grew up and got circumcised. The girl grew up and was never circumcised. The daughter grew up desiring to have an organ like her brother’s. When she was over ten years and about to go to form one, she started wondering why she still did not have an organ like her brother’s. One day she went to form one. She befriended a boy from the neighbourhood and shared with him what her mother had told her about “having an organ like Boy’s”. This boy promised to give her an organ “like the one Boy had.” So after term one, the girl did not go back to school because she was expectant. She had been impregnated. She had a *ball*. The mother asked the daughter, “What is this that you have done now?”

The daughter told the mother that she had desired to urinate like Boy and when she went to the neighbourhood, she had met a young boy called Musa. After sharing with him what the mother had told her, he promised to give her “an organ like the one Boy had!”

So, didn’t Musa give her (an organ)? Who is to be blamed here?

So it is important to bring these girls together so that we can educate them in a forum like this one, otherwise if we do not, the world will teach them.

#### **8. Narrative: A woman and her child.**

**Narrator: John Lika**

**Age: 34 years**

**Profession: Works with Youth Enterprise Fund (Igembe South District)**

**Audience: Initiated girls, their parents and guests**

**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

Once upon a time, there was a family which was financially humble. The family had a child who was hardly two week’s old. One day in the evening the woman left the child lying on their bed and went to buy some things from the shop. The mother had lit a lantern and had placed it next to the baby’s bed where the mosquito net was hanged. While the mother was away, the mosquito net caught fire and the baby was severely burnt to the extent that the mosquito net got stuck to her body. The baby however was still alive by the time the mother came back. The husband told the wife that they should kill the child because it was likely to grow up being disabled. The mother of the child refused and took the baby to Maua Methodist hospital. The doctors gave it just painkillers since they did not have the ability to do anything more for the child who was badly burnt. While in the hospital, some Europeans came to visit the hospital. They saw the baby whom they took together with its mother and

went with them to America so that they could facilitate this child's medical attention. What is it called...?

**Audience:** Plastic surgery.

Yes, plastic surgery. Today, the child is six years old and the mother did a course in education (with support from the Europeans). Today, she is furthering her studies and is driving a very expensive car by our standards in Kenya.

**9. Narrative: A child and her mother**

**Narrator:** Mrs Lilian Kathure Njagi

**Age:** 31 years

**Profession:** Nturuba Secondary School teacher

**Audience:** Initiated girls

**Place:** Amwamba Girls Secondary School

Do you know, there is a story that I read somewhere? There was a child whose mother got a job in Nairobi. So, they left the rural areas and went to Nairobi where the mother had gotten a job. This child joined a primary school and was being picked from their home and brought back by a vehicle from school in the evening. They were staying in a residential place and nearby were homes for the rich. With time, this child befriended the children from the rich families. Unfortunately, these children were being trained to be *Alshabab*. With time this child who had befriended these other children started to be indisciplined. Do you know he had been radicalized?

Then one day, this child came back from school without his school bag. The mother asked him,

“Why did you leave the school bag in school? What are you going to use to do your school assignment with?”

The mother got no response from the child. The mother then caned the child. Iii! Imagine caning the child and the child told the mother, “Next time you think of caning me, get a better cane!” .The child had already been radicalized. The mother was shocked! Iii! The mother registered those words in her heart so that in case the same misbehaviour recurred, she would remember this incident. The following day this child went to school but never came back home. The mother went to his school the following day to report to the teachers what had happened. The teachers caned the child so that he could reveal where he had been the night before. The police had also been called in. The child disclosed that he had joined an *Alshabab* group and was being trained through the internet. The child had even known how to use a gun. He had joined a group of other children who wanted to join the *Alshabab* and who had been radicalized and they used to chat with each other; while watching different styles of fighting using guns via the internet.

**10. Narrative: A lady**

**Narrator:** Mrs Lilian Kathure Njagi

**Age:** 31 years

**Profession:** Nturuba Secondary School Teacher

**Audience:** Initiated girls

**Place:** Amwamba Girls Secondary School



I once saw a woman at matatu stage in Maua. The lady had worn a pair of tight trousers. While the lady was alighting from a vehicle, the trouser she had worn got torn *paa!* The woman got stranded. The girls of today do not even carry needles! The girls of today do not even carry *lessos!* So, if it was during the olden days, the girl would have been helped. But women of today do not carry needles! Women of today do not carry *lessos!* Unfortunately, it was during the morning hours when shops had not been opened. This girl was laughed at by the touts (at the stage). I boarded a vehicle and left for I did not want to stress myself. Even if I had a *lesso*, I could not have helped her. This is because I did not know her and I was going my way. Just imagine that situation! I was told in the evening that the girl was laughed at and some people even wanted to rape her. They were telling her, “This is what you wanted. Let us give it to you.” This is erosion of culture and loss of dignity!

#### **11. Narrative: A man and his wives**

**Narrator:** Ms Gladys Muthoni

**Age:** 27 years

**Profession:** Secondary school teacher

**Audience:** Initiated girls

**Place:** Athi Methodist Church

There was once a man who had gotten married to a woman. This woman did not know how to spread her bed well. Do you know what it means to spread a bed? To spread the bedding neatly! Now, this woman never knew even how to spread her bed. Her children did not even know how to clean their house. Now, what do I do? Do I go and get remarried? The husband wondered! He finally decided to abandon the wife and went and married a second wife. The second woman he got married to was wetting their bed. Do you know what it means to wet a bed?

**Audience:** Eehe

Now, between this woman who used to urinate on the bed and the one one who did not know how to spread the bed, who is better?

**Audience:** The one who did not know how to spread a bed.

So this man said, “*Uui* my God my father, I have gotten myself into a bigger problem!”

What will I do? Do I marry another wife or what should I do? He went and married the third wife. This woman was an alcoholic. Which number is this wife?

**Audience:** The third one.

The man said, “I am unable to deal with this problem.”

What will I do? I will leave her because I cannot deal with the problem of alcoholism. He went and married the fourth wife. This woman he married was a dangerous thief. She even used to steal water! The man wondered what to do. He asked, “Oh! My God and father, what made me do this? I wish I knew. He left this wife and went and married the fifth wife.

He then said to himself, “I have married this wife being the last one and then I will be satisfied.” The fifth woman he married turned out to be a witch who used to bewitch people. This man said to himself, “Oh God my Father, what had motivated me to do this? How many wives had he married now?”

**Audience:** Five.

Yes, they were five of them: the one who wets the bed, the one who does not know how to spread a bed, the one who steals, the one who drinks alcohol and the one who is a witch. Then he declared, "From today henceforth, I want to have nothing to do with women ever again." He went and built five different houses for each of his wives and then built his own house a distance away from their houses. He then said that each woman was to stay in her own house and nobody should ever disturb the other one. Each one of them was to take care of herself. They continued like that until one day when the alcoholic woman went and got drunk. She fell on the tunnels on the road at night and slept there. Don't we see alcoholic people getting drunk and lying on the tunnels like that?

**Audience:** Yes.

The woman who was a witch met her sleeping on the road and beat her to death. She then cut her into small pieces and carried the dismembered parts of her body with her *lesso* hoping to make use of the parts of body for her witchcraft. When she reached the house, she realized that the *lesso* belonged to one of her co-wives and thus, she had killed her unknowingly. Now, this woman went and called her husband to come and see what she had done. She went and told him, "Please, I want to tell you this even if you want to kill me, you can do so. I met a woman lying on the road side and killed her. I never knew she was your wife. Now, what are we to do?"

The man told the wife, "put her in the sack very fast. I shall show you where we are going to dispose her body."

So the woman was escorted by the husband and they went to throw the parts of the dead body away. Unknowingly, the woman who used to urinate on the bed was following them to go and see what they were carryng. After the sack was left behind, she also took it and carried the sack to their home to go and see what she had collected. On reaching home and opening the sack what she saw shocked her. She ran to call her husband to come and see what she had brought into the house. When the husband saw what had been brought he exclaimed, "*Uuuu!* What kind of women are these that I got married to? Take this load very fast. I shall show you where we will go to dispose it."

This woman went and called the other woman who never knew how to spread the bed to help her carry the load and to dispose it. When the other woman who used to wet the bed saw her two co-wives carrying some load with their husband, she also followed them from a distance *kubu! Kubu!* This is because she had become jealous and had started wondering why the husband and her other co-wives were carryng things at night. After disposing this load at a far distance, the woman who never knew how to spread her bed and had been following them went and opened the sack to see what was inside. Don't you hear people saying that to be dissatisfied is a very bad thing? By the grace of God this woman was a clever one. She opened to see what was inside. "*Uuuuu!*" You have always heard that the downfall of woman with a loose tongue is caused by her own loose tongue. By the way, have you ever heard the song about the *Kachina village* and the way she was a very bad person because she was a rumormonger? Have you ever heard about this song?

Listen to the words of the *Kachina village* (village rumormonger)

Her main preoccupation, her mouth is ever talking *cucucucu!*  
When I am in trouble, she is talking and talking *cucucucu!*  
Even when I am blessed, she does not stop talking  
She is always saying I am an illuminat worshipper  
Where is your goodness, you who is said to be my friend?

A bad woman is a bad woman. She went and reported to the police what she had seen and the people who were involved. The police came and arrested all the women and their husband. Why did they arrest the man? Because of his wives! After being questioned by the police, his wives implicated him in the crime by confessing that they did what they did because they were advised by their husband to do so. At the end of it all, they were all imprisoned.

## **12. Narrative: A man and his wife**

**Narrator:** Mr John Mungathia

**Age:** 44 years

**Profession:** ECDE teacher

**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests

**Place:** Wesley Boarding School, Nturuba

Once upon a time, there was a man and his wife. Are you listening to this story?  
There was a man and who else?

**Audience:** And his wife.

He had chosen his wife who was very beautiful and very smart. She was very very beautiful, loving and admirable. And the man was also very handsome and admirable. And they both loved each other and were blessed with two children.

Praise the Lord?

**Audience:** Amen.

How many children were they blessed with...?

**Audience:** Two

But this woman was very careless and dirty. You know somebody can be dirty and careless and when people see her, they would always say,

“Here comes the dirty and careless woman. Here comes the careless and dirty woman.”

Their children began to defaecate anyhow in the compound. Where were the children defaecating?

**Audience:** Just there in the compound.

The man would complain to the wife,

“Why are the children defaecating everywhere and you are not questioning them?”

The next day the man would meet another heap of faeces in his compound again. It happened again and again and again. The man told the wife,

“Do you know this will go beyond your control one day? I want you to stop the children from defaecating all over.”

The woman did not pay attention to that. The woman did what?

**Audience:** Did not do as directed (to stop her children from defaecating in the compound).

Once again the woman did not heed to what the husband had told her to do. The man was left with no options. He did not know what to do next because the house and compound had become messy with faeces all over. Then the man went and looked for his friends. He went and did what?

**Audience:** Looked for his friends.

His friends came and left dung (defaecated) all over the place during the night. When the woman woke up the following day, she was shocked by what she saw. She exclaimed,

“*Abababaa!*! I wish I knew.”

The man told her, “Didn’t I tell you that things would get out of hand?”

May the devil be defeated?

**Audience:** May he be defeated.

“What did I tell you? Didn’t I tell you things would get out of hand?”

The woman spent all her time that day clearing the heaps of faeces she never knew where they had come from. What do I want to tell you? If you do not seal a crack on a wall you will rebuild a complete wall. What are you going to build?

**Audience:** A complete wall.

If you see a crack on the wall of a house and you do not repair it with some little cement, the house would collapse and you would be forced to rebuild a new house.

### 13. Narrative: Builders

**Narrator:** Mr John Mungathia

**Age:** 48 years

**Profession:** Kambene, ECDE teacher

**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests

**Place:** URA Methodist Church

Once upon a time, there were two builders who were working together. They had a machine that is used for mixing cement and sand. They were building a storeyed building. One was on the ground loading the mixer with sand and cement for the one building up the building. The one down was busy loading. He was loading and loading for the one up there. There was a lot of noise emanating from the machine mixing the cement and the sand. The mason up there in the building wanted to talk to the mason working down there in the building. The mason up the building called for the attention of the one down in vain. So the mason up there got a fifty shillings note and hit the man down there with it *kuu!* The man down took the fifty shillings note and put it into his pocket. He continued with his job of mixing the cement and the sand. The mason working up the building became impatient. He started wondering why the man down the building was not looking up so that he could talk to him. Why was he not getting the message that his colleague up there wanted to talk to him? He took a one hundred shillings note, folded it and hit him with it again *kuu!* He took the one hundred shillings note again and put it into his pockets. He was not bothered to know where the money he had been taking and pocketing was coming from! The builder up the building threw even a two hundred shillings note and hit him with it again *kuu!* Again he builder down just took and pocketed the money without looking up to find out the source of the money.

“Are you getting what I am talking about?”

**Audience:** Ehee!

I see you are following.”

Lastly, the mason up the storeyed building took a stone. What did he take?

**Audience:** A stone.

He took a stone like this one and hit him with it *kuu!* Now, the young man working down looked up the building and asked the builder up there,

“Young man, why are hitting me?” The man up there responded angrily,

“Why have you not been listening to me yet I have been trying to talk to you? You have just been pocketing the money I have been hitting you with! Now that I have hit you with a stone, is the time you want to see who is it that has hit you?”

**Narrator:** Praise the lord?

**Audience:** Amen.

I now want to tell these newly initiated men here that, even when the going is good; you should always remember where your blessings come from. Remember your teachers who have been teaching you and remember your parents who have been teaching and taking care of you. Do not stay away from them and only remember your pastor who has been praying for you when you are in problems.

#### **14. Narrative: The fingerlings and a small boy**

**Narrator:** Mr John Mungathia

**Age:** 48 years

**Profession:** Kambene ECDE teacher

**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests

**Place:** Athi Methodist Church of Kenya

There was once a river. This river came and flooded beyond its banks and left behind a trail of fingerlings on its banks. Then a small boy came by and started throwing those fingerlings back into the water. The boy would pick the fingerlings and throw them back into the river. He would pick them and throw them back into the river tirelessly. Then a passerby came and asked the boy,

“I can see many fingerlings. They are almost a million. Will you be able to rescue all these fingerlings by throwing them back into the river?”

The boy replied, “I may not be able to return all of them but I will rescue those that I can.”

**Narrator:** Praise the Lord?

**Audience:** Amen.

**Narrator:** Praise God?

**Audience:** Amen.

So, though you (initiated girls) may be few, but you will be the ones to spread the gospel to the others in the village and spread the good news (about the anti-FGM campaign). Just as you lit the candle (during the procession), may you spread the good news together with your parents so that we can stop what?

**Audience:** Circumcision of girls.

**Narrator:** Praise the Lord?

**Audience:** Amen.

#### **15. Narrative: A ground squirrel and the trap**

**Narrator:** Pastor Caston Lubetaa

**Age:** 52 years  
**Profession:** Pastor East African Pentecost Church  
**Audience:** An initiated boy, parents, relatives and friends  
**Place:** St Peters' Academy school, Kiji town

Those who farm in Kianda, do you know an animal called a ground squirrel? Once upon a time, a snare was set (by the farmers) to trap the rodent called a ground squirrel. The farmers wanted to kill it for it was eating their maize. Where is Munene (name of the initiate), the one I am addressing this to? When this ground squirrel came and entered into the set snare, the snare snapped and trapped it. When this happened, the ground squirrel said that all the ground squirrels had been covered by the sky that had fallen on them. I want to remind you that it was not all the ground squirrels that had been trapped. It was only the ground squirrel that entered into the set trap that got trapped. All these people have been advising you (Munene). If you are disobedient and find yourself ensnared by a trap, you will be saying that it is all the people who have problems like you. But I want to tell you that it will only be you who will be in trouble. If you become promiscuous and contract **A-I-D**! Ehe! I want to say that, you are likely to claim that it is everybody who has contracted AIDS. I am telling you, it is you alone who will be crying as your saliva drips from your mouth. Son of my father, my son, this is wisdom I have shared with you. Keep your salvation for it will help you to overcome all these things. If you keep salvation, you will be able to discern where there is trouble and thus make the right judgement.

## APPENDIX IV

### TRANSCRIBED TEXTS: ORAL SONGS

- 1. Song: Asifiwe**  
**Performer: Initiated Girls**  
**Age: Varied**  
**Audience: Parents and guests**  
**Place: Kiegoi Methodist Church**
- Soloist:** Asifiwe ee } x2  
**Response:** Asifiwe kanisene ndeeta ntaanirwe mwari, athomerwe  
Baibu mwari noa Jesu ii atikiinyaga nthi iii } x2  
**Soloist:** Nkuire } x2  
**Response:** Ntieendaa mwari arethia kuinyangua } x2
- 2. Song: Wananiambia nitahiriwe**  
**Performer: Initiated Girls**  
**Age: Varied (12-16 years)**  
**Audience: Initiates' parents and guests**  
**Place: Kangeta girls**
- Soloist:** Wananiambia nitahiriwe na mimi sikuzoea,  
Mimi siwezi kutahiriwa sababu yako wewe ee } x2  
**Response:** Wananiambia nitahiriwe na mimi sikuzoea,  
Mimi siwezi kutahiriwa sababu yako wewe ee } x2
- Soloist:** Tohara ya zamani na sasa haina maana,  
Siwezi ii kutahiriwa kwa sababu yako wewe } x2  
**Response:** Tohara ya zamani na sasa haina maana,  
Siwezi ii kutahiriwa kwa sababu yako wewe } x2
- Soloist:** Wengine waliotahiriwa na sasa hawana ladha,  
Siwezi kutahiriwa sababu yako wewe } x2  
**Response:** Wengine waliotahiriwa na sasa hawana ladha,  
Siwezi kutahiriwa sababu yako wewe } x2
- 3. Song: Ni mapambano na tohara**  
**Performer: Initiated girls**  
**Age: Varied**  
**Profession: Varied**  
**Audience: Initiates, their parents and guests**  
**Place: Kiegoi Methodist Church**
- Soloist:** Ni mapambano na tohara ni mapambano uu  
**Response:** Pambano uu } x2
- Soloist:** Sisi zote tumekuja kuupambana aa  
**Response:** Pambano uu } x2
- Soloist:** Sisi zote tumekuja kupambana uu  
**Response:** Tutashinda aa } x2

**4. Song: Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya**  
**Performers: Initiated girls**  
**Age: Varied (12-16) years**  
**Audience: Initiates' parents and guests**  
**Place: Kiegoi Methodist Church**

**Chorus: Soloist:** Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya  
Haitaki wasichana waliokeketwa  
**Response:** Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya  
Haitaki wasichana waliokeketwa

} x2

**Soloist:** Waliokeketwa ni wajinga  
**Response:** Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya  
Haitaki wasichana waliokeketwa

**Soloist:** Waliokeketwa ni wachawi  
**Response:** Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya  
Haitaki wasichana waliokeketwa

**Soloist:** Waliokeketwa ni Kombo  
**Response:** Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya  
Haitaki wasichana waliokeketwa

**Soloist:** Waliokeketwa si wasafi.  
**Response:** Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya  
Haitaki wasichana waliokeketwa

**Soloist:** Wasiokeketwa ni wasomi  
**Response:** Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya  
Haitaki wasichana waliokeketwa

**Soloist:** Wasiokeketwa ni madaktari  
**Response:** Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya  
Haitaki wasichana waliokeketwa

**Soloist:** Wasiokeketwa ni waalimu  
**Response:** Kenya ya leo ni Kenya mpya  
Haitaki wasichana waliokeketwa

**5. Song: Tuuthame tuinthe**  
**Performer: Kirema Masharufu**  
**Age: 61 years**  
**Profession: Village Elder**  
**Audience: Initiated girls, their parents and guests**  
**Place: Athi Methodist Church of Kenya**

**Soloist:** Tuthame tuinthe ii  
**Audience:** Tuume *analogue* ii  
**Soloist:** Tuite iii *digital* ii  
**Audience:** Tuite iii digital  
**Soloist:** Uitu kinya atongerii ii



**Audience:** Tuthame tuinthe ii  
**Soloist:** Tuume *analogue* ii oo  
**Audience:** Tuite iii *digital* oo  
**Soloist:** O kinya rahisi wetu ii  
**Audience:** Tuthame tuinthe ii  
**Soloist:** Tuume *analogue* ii  
**Audience:** Tuite iii *digital* oo  
**Soloist:** O kinya tuyuyu tuetu ii  
**Audience:** Tuthame tuinthe ii  
**Soloist:** Tuume *analogue* ii  
**Audience:** Tuite ii *digital* oo  
**Soloist:** Kinya *Reverend* wetu ii  
**Audience:** Tuthame tuinthe ii  
**Soloist:** Tuume *analogue* ii  
**Audience:** Tuite ii *digital* oo  
**Soloist:** O kinya ekuru ii  
**Audience:** Tuthame tuinthe ii  
**Soloist:** Tuume *analogue* ii  
**Audience:** Tuite *digital* oo  
**Soloist:** Okinya kaniseni ii  
**Audience:** Tuthame tuinthe ii  
**Soloist:** Tuume *analogue* ii  
**Audience:** Tuite *digital* ii

**6. Song: Weru nibuejire**  
**Performer: Thirindi Mitine**  
**Age: 67 years**  
**Profesion: Retired primary school teacher**  
**Audience: Initiates, their parents, and guests**  
**Place: Mr Kaberia's home, Amwamba village**

**Chorus:** Weru buejire nturere cietu burathara  
 Burera ngekuru ntaano cia aari tukuinga } x2

**Audience:** Weru buejire nturere cietu burathara  
 Burera ngekuru ntaano cia aari tukuinga } x2

**Soloist:** Ciingwe na *seminar* tukinye gukinya ngekuru uu

**Audience:** Weru buejire nturere cietu burathara burera ngekuru  
 Ntaano cia aari tukuinga

**Soloist:** Tuinge na maromba ii

**Audience:** Weru buejire nturere cietu burathara burera ngekuru  
 Ntaano cia aari tukuinga

**Soloist:** Tuinge na kithomo ii

**Audience:** Weru buejire nturere cietu burathara burera ngekuru  
 Ntaano cia aari tukuinga.

**7. Song: Ntaano cia nkenye**  
**Performers: URA Methodist Church Women Group**  
**Age: Varied (30s-50s) years**

**Profession:** Varied  
**Audience:** Initiated girls, their parents, and guests  
**Place:** Athi Methodist Church

**Call:** Wee mwari wakwa itu ndakwira ntaano  
Iu cia aari ureke nacio, kithomo mbere  
Uthome bwega, *university* na woone ngugi,  
Witwe *mdosi*, biria bionthe ukoona,  
Na mbere kithomo kia utheri *nchini* Kenya.  
Mwari wetu reeka na ntaano

**Response:** We mwari wakwa itu thikiria warega gutaanua  
Utiona wagukugura oo nthaka cieya, ikauruthiria mwari wa ng'ania  
Kethiira niataani, wee niakirire na amatukaa nawe aratia mutaani  
kianine  
Na ngembe ciake ugatua gwitawa, mukira kuenjwa  
Mwari wetu, uumiria uutanwe.

**Call:** We mwari wakwa thikiria witikio bwaku bukare ya  
Muti yuandi miukine  
Nawe Misheck, Shadraki na Abedinego,  
Baiithua na mwanki bararema kuuya, witikio buuao  
Burabatethia, mantu ya nthii yatigutethia we wirigire mantu ya  
Murungu kama utashinda yote hapa duniani  
Mwari wakwa reeka na ntaano.

**Response:** We mwari wakwa nthuki yeenu yonthe niyaatanirwe  
Buacemania nabo bagaguikia manyiri, nii nkuria atiri  
Aciari baaku nimbi baajitie? Mwari wa *grade* wakirire gutanwa  
Ngombe beenacio, mbuuri beenacio mwere na mpempe  
Biujuri ncukune, wee witikirie gutanwa wukume nyumba kirario  
Ukaanyua, mwari wakwa uumiria uutanwe.

**Call:** We mwari wakwa itu thikiria maantu ya ntaano  
Ureke nayo kuwatangwa ni rwekulu rukumbuyaanu  
Ilwala, ruuko, ng'embe ciina kutu, mirimo irikuoo igwuitwa  
Mkingo na *tetenus*, *hepatis* ni *viral infection killer diseases*  
Wooni ndariara ngwati ni mkingo uthunguthiite witite gutanwa  
Kanisene msingi yuku nio yukauma wikire *T.shirt* yaandike mbere  
“*No Circumcision, Jesus you are the true answer*”  
Mwari wakwa reeka na ntaano.

**Response:** We mwari maantu yaathuka aa riria wakiinya *maternity*  
*kujifungua uchungu teele ulichagua wewe mwenyewe kutahiriwa*  
Kawoone, *ngoja*, *pilipili usioila yakuachia nini?*  
*Mimi niko kaando*, niwaere nturika *tuheshimiane*.  
Mwari wakwa, reeka na ntaano.  
Mwari wa cukuru werwa utaanwe mwire  
“*Mama pole sana*” Mungu nakuomba msaidie mama atambue  
*madhara yakutahiri wasichana*, riria we watanwa ukawatwa ni  
*tetenus* kana ndamu yuume ithire. *You are at risk of severe*  
*infection and haemorrhage*.

**8. Song: Muutani urirwa nuu?**  
**Performer: Initiated girls**  
**Age: Varied (12-16) Years**  
**Audience: Initiates' parents**  
**Place: Kangeta Girls Secondary School**

**Soloist:** Mutaani urirwa nuu, muuwa mbuu urirua nuu?  
**Audience:** Mutaani urirwa nuu, muuwa mbuu urirwa nuu? } x2  
**Soloist:** Ukristo...  
**Audience:** Buri baita  
**Soloist:** Muuwa mbuu?  
**Audience:** Urirwa nuu?  
**Soloist:** Uritaani...  
**Audience:** Buri baita  
**Soloist:** Muuwa mbuu  
**Audience:** Urirwa nuu?  
**Soloist:** Akuru...  
**Audience:** Bari baita  
**Soloist:** Muuwa mbuu  
**Audience:** Urirwa ii nuu?  
**Soloist:** Na mwari...  
**Audience:** Ari baita  
**Soloist:** Muwa mbuu  
**Audience:** Urirwa nuu  
**Soloist:** Kaberia...  
**Audience:** Irii baita  
**Soloist:** Muwa mbuu  
**Audience:** Urirwa ii nuu?  
**Soloist:** Na twana...  
**Audience:** Turi baita  
**Soloist:** Muwa mbu  
**Audience:** Urirwa ii nuu?  
**Soloist:** Mutaani urirwa ii nuu muwa mbu urirwa ii nuu  
**Audience:** Mutaani urirwa ii nuu muwa mbu urirwa ii nuu  
**Soloist:** Na akuru?  
**Audience:** Bari baita  
**Soloist:** Muwa mbuu  
**Audience:** Urirwa ii nuu?  
**Soloist:** Mutaani urirwa ii nuu muwa mbu urirwa ii nuu  
**Audience:** Mutaani urirwa ii nuu muwa mbu urirwa ii nuu  
**Soloist:** Dicii...  
**Audience:** Ari baita  
**Soloist:** Muwa mbu  
**Audience:** Urirwa ii nuu?  
**Soloist:** Grace?  
**Audience:** Ari baita  
**Soloist:** Muwa mbu  
**Audience:** Urirwa nuu?  
**Soloist:** Mutaani urirwa ii nuu muwa mbu urirwa ii nuu  
**Audience:** Mutaani urirwa ii nuu muwa mbu urirwa ii nuu.

**9. Song: Mbirira muutani akuunje kiruunya**  
**Performers: Initiated girls**  
**Age: Varied (12-16) years**  
**Audience: Initiates' parents and guests**  
**Place: Kiegoi Methodist Church**

**Soloist:** Mbirira mutaani acokie kiruunya, ntaano cia aari tukureka kwetuuu  
**Response:** Mbirira mutaani acokie kiruunya, ntaano cia aari tukureka kwetuu } x2

**Soloist:** Yi rii rii tukurega kwetu  
**Response:** Yi rii rii tukurega kwetu } x2

**Soloist:** Mbirira mutaani acokie Kirunya,  
Ntaano cia aaari tukurega kwetu  
**Response:** Mbirira mutaani acokie Kirunya,  
Ntaano cia aaari tukurega kwetu } x2

**10. Song: Njiira ni ijili**  
**Performer: Mzalendo Mithika**  
**Age: 45 years**  
**Profession: Works with NGOs**  
**Audience: Initiated girls**  
**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

**Soloist:** Njiira ni ijiiri mucore } x2  
**Audience:** Uthure ira ukwenda njira ni ijiiri mucore  
**Soloist:** Uthure ira ukwenda } x2

**11. Song: Ni nkenye ikumurika**  
**Performer: Initiated girls**  
**Age: Varied (12-16)**  
**Audience: Initiates' parents and guests**  
**Place: Kangeta Girls Secondary School**

**Soloist:** Ni nkenye ikumurika ii  
**Response:** Ni nkenye ikumurika ii  
**Soloist:** Ti ngutu  
**Response:** Ni nkenye ikumurika ii  
**Soloist:** Imatu  
**Response:** Ni nkenye ikumurika ii  
**Soloist:** Iinthongomu  
**Response:** Ni nkenye ikumurika ii

**12. Song: Kiretheretie**  
**Performer: Pastor Gitonga Jeremiah**  
**Age: 46 years**  
**Profession: Pastor- EAPC Thunguma church**  
**Audience: An initiate, his parents and guests**  
**Place: Mr Kailiba's home, Red Canteen village**

**Soloist:** Iii itu kiretheretie giakwa gitiiacio  
Ni rutheko bata na bata ni ruununo

**Audience:** Aaa } x2

**Soloist:** Kiretherio giakwa gitiiacua ni rutheko itu bata ni ruununo

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Itu mbitikiria kiretherio giakwa, bumbitikirie nkaaria ndabuaura

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndiburimirie mburi yakwa ni ya muurani

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe kuaria ii niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Iii Jisu aciarirwe Nazarethi ii keenda twinthe tuona ii moyo

**Audience:** Jisu aciarirwe Nazarethi ii keenda twinthe tuona ii moyo } x2

**Soloist:** Ancia Momati ndakwira mwana wakwa ukeeja kwaa

Mwamba wa into biaitha kokuinyangia uthaka

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ancia ukeeja kwaa munyui bangi

Timothy mwana okwa ndakwerenca

Kokuinyangia uthaka

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Timothy mwana wakwa ukeja guuta kanisa ukaria

Maromba ya Murungi ii nika ukuinyangia uthaka

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Itu kiinya nkeeja gugutangatang'ira ii ntigutuiru irandu

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Au ngugutwira mwana ookwa kongomaitu ukauma muntu mubii

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Alleluya Jisu aciarirwe Nazarethi keenda tuinthe tuona moyo

**Audience:** Jisu aciarire Nazarethi keenda tuinthe tuona moyo } x2

**Soloist:** Itu kuri mwekuru nkirite noo Mariamu waciarire mwonokia

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe kwari ii niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Arambua mutharabeni nikeenda tuona moyo

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Jisu ari mutaana wa Murungu athithagia

Mawega nikeenda tuona moyo

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ariuwa buonka ngakinya makinyo yau yake tukoona moyo  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ndemwe ni kwari ii niki?  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Jisu aciarirue Nazarethi ii nikenda tuona ii moyo  
**Audience:** Jisu aciarirue Nazarethi ii nikenda tuona ii moyo } x2  
**Soloist:** Ancia Timothy ukeeja kuguatwa ni *AIDS* nika ukuinyangia uthaka  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ituu ukeja kuathikira Jisu mutaano oo Murungu mutaano  
Okwa ukeja kuona ii moyo } x2  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki?  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ukeeja kwaa muthomi wa Bibilia mutaano okwa ukeeja  
gukuui na Murungu na ukooona moyo  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ndemwe ni kwari niki?  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Indi ukeeja kwaa muutei wa kanisa,  
Mumaramari kokuinyangia uthaka  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki?  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ukeeja kwaa mwamba wa ilaa biaitha kokuinyangia uthaka  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki?  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Nkauwa nikutangatangangira ii kongo maituturo  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Kongo maituturo ukauma muntu mubii  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ndemwe ni kwaari ii niki?  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Nkoma ikeya kuiya tuamiringa ikoona mpanga kwa Murungu ii } x2  
**Audience:** Nkoma ikeya kuiya tuamiringa ikoona mpanga kwa Murungu ii } x2

**13. Song: Bwana Asifiwe**  
**Performer: Ms Kathao and Ms Karambu**  
**Age: Varied**  
**Profession: Students**  
**Audience: Initiates, their parents and guests**  
**Place: Kiegoi Methodist Church**

**Chorus:** Bwana asifiwe sibitari ndeeta ntaanwe bubuega  
Nthaka cia Jisu cieje na gari alleluya  
Bwana asifiwe ntienda mwana arethie kuingaingua } x2  
**Response:** Aucithitue ruiro aitithua akenamua nkuire ee  
Itu tuakara nthi bubuega tukathambua njara  
Tukaria na iciko nkuire.  
**Soloist:** Nituaumire nao ii nitaumire nao ii,  
Nitaumire nao teene } x2

**Response:** Nituaumire nao ii nitaumire nao ii  
Nitaumire nao teene  
**Soloist:** Nituaumire Kimirune  
**Response:** Nituaumire nao tene  
**Soloist:** Nituaumire ntaanone  
**Response:** Nituaumire nao tene  
**Soloist:** Nituaumire ba *digital*  
**Response:** Nituaumire nao tene

**Soloist:** Nituaumire nao ii nitaumire nao ii  
Nitaumire nao teene } x2  
**Response:** Nituaumire nao ii nitaumire nao ii  
Nitaumire nao teene } x2

**Soloist:** Nituejire kanisene  
**Response:** Nituaumire nao tene  
**Soloist:** Tuejire nau ndithiene  
**Response:** Nituaumire nao tene  
**Soloist:** Ndithiene ya Baibu  
**Response:** Nituaumire nao tene  
**Soloist:** Nituaumire kimirune  
**Response:** Nituaumire nao tene  
**Soloist:** Tueja gichunkune  
**Response:** Nituaumire nao tene  
**Soloist:** Nituejire kanisene

**14. Song: Kiretheretie**  
**Performer: Ms Thirindi Mitiine**  
**Age: 67 years**  
**Profession: Retired teacher**  
**Audience: Initiated girls**  
**Place: Amwamba Girls High School**

**Soloist:** Uuii igiita riria riakaraya Murungu niaturaga akiaragia na muntu  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Uu ii igiita riria riakaraya Murungu niaturaga akiaragia na muntu  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Oo kinya nandi Murungu niaragia na muntu uu  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Njuuni buinthe ee seminene ee  
**Audience:** Njuuni buinthe ee seminene  
**Soloist:** Uui nanu bukeeya guutila kuibua buria nkuua aana bakwa  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Bukeeya kuwatua na mantu yau ya ntaano  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ntaano cionthe cia aari niciaingirwe  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ntaano cionthe itiri na gitumi kiri mwana wa mwari  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Oo njuuni buinthe yiii buinthe

**Audience:** Njuuni buinthe seminene  
**Soloist:** Oo njuuni buinthe yii buinthe  
**Audience:** Njuuni buinthe yii buinthe  
**Soloist:** Wuuui mami tiga nkwire buria nkuenda uukwira  
 Na wuuni nindaumire ntaanone cia aari ndirerwa  
 Ntaano cia aari itiina gitumi  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** O kinya nandi ninkuenda gukwira ntaano cia aari itiina gitumi  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Na biria nkuenda gukwira ni mwana wakwa uthome  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Yie njuuni buinthe yii buibue ii  
**Audience:** Yie njuuni buinthe yie buibue.

**15. Song: Kiretheretie**  
**Performer: Kirema Masharufu**  
**Age: 61 years**  
**Profession: Village elder**  
**Audience: Initiated boys, their parents and other guests**  
**Place: Amungenti Catholic Church**

**Soloist:** Uuu Murungi uuu baba ii  
**Audience:** Uuu Murungu uuu baba ii } x2

**Soloist:** Ancia uitu Murungu ndakuthaitha  
 Kunura matu wibue iriro bietu  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Witu tuina kieba niuntu bua mirimo iria ireja  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ancia itikuona ndawa nthigurune yonthe ona  
 Kinya tugetaita kuunthe kinya naa matuine  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ancia tuina kimako niuntu buakuithirwa  
 tuina mirimo ikuacia antu bonthe  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Iu ikurema madaktari ikarema  
*malawyers na maprofessor*  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Ii kunura matu nkuurie kiiuria  
**Audience:** Ii kunura matu nkuurie kiuria  
**Soloist:** Uuu Murungi uuu baba ii  
**Audience:** Uuu Murungu uuu baba ii  
**Soloist:** Ancia Murungu baba ndikuuria ukeeja kuuinga matu  
 Yaku ukaarea kuibua kiriro kietu, nuu ugatuibua?  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Na Murungu nkurie kiuria ukeja kuuinga matu yaku  
 Mirimo ikariaa kuona ndawa kiriro kietu, nuu watuibua?  
**Audience:** Aaa  
**Soloist:** Waturetere nthiguru iji tugukumagia na  
 tukuathikaira ritwa riaku rirokumagua mono  
**Audience:** Aaa



**Soloist:** Uuu Murungu uuu baba iii  
**Audience:** Uuu Murungu uuu baba iii } x2

**Soloist:** Ancia Murungu baba agatuibua maromba  
Yetu agatutumiira Jisu akeeja kutwonokia

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Bionthe biria tukeenda tukaromba tugikurukiira  
Jisu nawe agatunenkerera

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Tuamuitia bionthe biria tuamuitia  
Agatunenkerera nontu Baba ni gitonga.

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Nontu utii bio atiina bio kuuma kuu  
Iguru kuija kuu nthigurune.

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Tukeeja kuremwa nigukuromba tukakacua ni nkoma

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Aaa nontu tukuthura na tukuthuria aka betu  
nontu bua mirimo itiina ndawa

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Aana betu itu bukarukirwa ni aciari cokeeni kiri aciari

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Nabui aciari bukarukireni twana cokeni kiri tuo

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ii kunura matu buibue buungi iii

**Audience:** Ii kunura matu uu buibue buungi iii } x2

**Soloist:** Thikiria Murungu niuntu ngukuiru Murungu atunenkere  
Mathaana yake ikumi na ukaibua waatho buria buumba kuija  
Kukuongera matuku ni kuathikira muciaru na aciari

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Nawe ukeeja kuruma mwana uamuthuura  
Uamwingiira nau njira ya kithaka

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Yiii tucookeerie kibarene iii

**Audience:** Yiii tucookeerie kibarene iii } x2

**Soloist:** Yiii meria kau nkuire kangu iii

**Audience:** Yiii meria kau nkuire kangu iii } x2

### Interlude

**Soloist:** Iya meria kau nkuire kangu ii

**Audience:** Iya meria kau nkuire kangu } x2

**Soloist:** Au aciari bakwa kuuma riria ndiraria kuriwe urawata no buu?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ukethirwa ukuwata menyera nthaka iii ciakwa, ikinye mucii bwega

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ciakinya bubwega bucoke buithomethie bwega  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Indi kinya ukethirwa wiina thiina ukeeja kurea  
Kuubonelia cukuru iri bata ni uria uuciona  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ukeeja uuciumia ukendia tuluku tuaku kana tuuliu nima  
Ukoona mbeca cia kumwikia secondari reeka mwana athome  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** O buonka uciumie na kithomi ii  
**Audience:** O buonka uciumie na kithomo } x2

**Soloist:** Nthaka yekwa ciumie na kithomo ii  
**Audience:** Obuonka uciumie na kithomo } x2

**Soloist:** Obuonka waciumia na kithomo ntento cia mma kinya kethira abagu  
Nakuundire *Kibondi* mwanka awa mitarune uuwe ukathomethua  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Safari (Kanuni *Ward MCA*) uu ukuona aa eena mbeca cia ukathomethia  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ukeeja guita ba Linturi (Meru *County Senator*) baaria bari  
Naaria beena mbeca ciaukathomethia  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Baatiri uju ukuona akari nthi aaa eena mbeca ciaukathomethia  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Na kinya *Pastor* baa ukuuona bakari nthi aa beena mbeca ciaukathomethia  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Na aciari baku baria bari na aaria mucii ntuurene  
Bari na mbeca ciaukathomethia  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Obuonka uuciumie na kithomo iii  
**Audience:** Obuonka uciumie na kithomo iii } x2

**Soloist:** Nthaka yekwa ciumie na kithomo iii  
**Audience:** Obuonka uciumie na kithomo } x2

**Soloist:** Ancia nontu ngukaira mwana okwa ukeeja guciumia  
Na kithomo ukeeja na 'A' kana 'B' kana 'C'  
Bithiatene "baba" ukuija kuthomethua aa  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Mwarimu uria waturaga akikuritanaga kiri mweketha  
Kimwekethe mwanka acie tooro mwanka eete aite  
Bangi beeje babange nteto ciaku  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Eete kinya *committee* ya sukuru imuwatie nteto ciaku  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ugetirua kinya ba Safari (Kanuni *ward MCA*) bakare nthii  
Nthii bakubangire uria ukathoma  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** O buonka ciumia na kithomo iii

**Audience:** O buonka ciumia na kithomo iii } x2

**Soloist:** Na kinya batiri uyu ukuona akaririte alitari ya  
Murungu ni muciaru wa baili } x2

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Na kinya kuri antu bari aaa na ni *mamillionnaire*  
na barina na kiiro bagagutethia

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Kuri kiomano kia ba batiri kikakuthomethia iii

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Na kinya kiama kia ba *Sister* kikakuthomethia ii

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Yii thoma kithomo ii na wendo

**Audience:** Yii thoma kithomo ii na wendo } x  
2

**16. Song: Watoto ni baraka**

**Performer:** URA MCK senior Sunday school

**Age:** Varied (11-17) years

**Profession:** Students

**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests

**Place:** Athi Methodist Church

Salamu alaikum hadhira,  
Mimi ni mwana, ambaye binadamu,  
Bali na hayo katu sionewi maana,  
Mbona nanyanyaswa? Haki zangu kama mtoto-oo,  
Kumbuka mimi, ni Baraka toka kwa maulana.

Shukrani kwa penzi lenu watu wawili wa mola,  
Kaungana pamoja, kwa shauku na furaha,  
Mmoja kabarikiwa, mama kupata mimba  
Salaala! mbona penzi kafifia?  
Mbona hivi mimi? Mbona kuniwaza kifo?  
Si penzi langu, penzi lenu nyinyi.

Baada ya mwezi mmoja, mtoto sina uhai,  
Visidano, madawa tofauti hutumiwa,  
Bila shaka, chooni chumbangu,  
Mama hunitupa huko, bila huruma na penzi,  
Mimi si kinyesi, mwana baraka toka kwa Mungu.

Aibu ya nini, kunizaa kwa huruma na penzi,  
Nipakache kwa mapenzi, ninyonyeshwe kwa upendo,  
Tafadhali mama, nakuomba usinitupe,  
Mimi mwanadamu, Baraka toka kwa Mungu.

Wazazi nauliza? Mbona muna lipa pesa  
Wasichana wenu watoe mimba eti wasome?  
Masomo na watoto yepi muhimu?

Kwani wewe , uliwalipia pesa wapate hao watoto?  
Ombeni Mungu awasamehe, kwa kuua baraka zake  
Watoto ni Baraka kutoka kwa Mungu

Madaktari nawaomba, taabia mbaya tuacheni,  
Bibilia yasema tusiue, mbona nyinyi mwaua?  
Naomba muache, kuuzuia Baraka za Mungu,  
Msipo acha, hukumu ya wangoja.

**17. Song: Nthuuki ikiuya**  
**Performer: Kirema Masharufu**  
**Age: 61 years**  
**Profession: Village elder**  
**Audience: Initiated boys, their parents and guests**  
**Place: Amungenti Catholic Church**

Womorani nthuki ikiuya aa na mantu uu  
Aaa womorani nthuki ikiuya aa  
Na muntu ariinira uu akiinira murata  
Uuu ndainira murata ii ambitira aa  
Oaba, ndainira murata ii ambitira akuru.

#### **Interlude**

Mukuru ubua na ntui arinirwa aa  
Na mukuru ubua na ntui arinirwa na mbii ii?  
Na nguo nituralunga aa irakinya aa  
Na nguo turalunga irakinya aa  
Iralungwa cirakinya maruu uu  
Iralungwa ciananua na mutumu wa uta  
Mukuru Mutui na ulaila buu ndi laila mugongo oo  
Nawe laila tulima aa tulima twa Njaambene  
Nawe ulaile tulima ii twa Njaambene.

**18. Song: Ancia Murungu**  
**Performer: Kirema Masharufu**  
**Age: 61 years**  
**Profession: Village Elder**  
**Audience: Initiates, their parents and guests**  
**Place: Amungenti Catholic Church**

**Soloist:** Ancia Murungu baba katu wiikiria aana baa  
Betu mata ii barobua ii

**Audience:** Ngai ii

**Soloist:** Barobua ii

**Audience:** Ngai

} x2

**Soloist:** Tuubatharima

**Audience:** Ngai ii

**Soloist:** Batuure ii

**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bububwega  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Batiina irigie  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Njiirene  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Iraa bageta nacio  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bakinye ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bubwega  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Naitharimo  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Biakuu ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Batuure ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Baiguitaa ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nawe waa betika ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Wabaoria  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nawendo buuaku uu  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Iwe Muumbi wetu  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Iwe Ngai ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Muumbi wetu  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Utiungi ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tuuinue ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Niweenka  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Muigoko  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Yuetu ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Wirigiro  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bwetu ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Kuria kwetu  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na kunyua ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii

**Soloist:** Na ithomo  
**Audience:** Ngaii  
**Soloist:** Na afya  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na mwiri ii  
**Audience:** Ngaii  
**Soloist:** Yumuega ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nthuki iji ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Jatuuma  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Twithirwa  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Turia aa  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tuinthe ee  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na aciari  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ba akuru  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na ekuru  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na antu  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ba nthuki  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Cionthe  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na akaa  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na aaria  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na twana  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na ciuujuju  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bakethirwa bari aa  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nontu bwa nthuki ijii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Barotharimwa ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bubueya ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bagaitia  
**Audience:** Ngaii  
**Soloist:** Ya muumo  
**Audience:** Ngaii  
**Soloist:** Bakonanirua

**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ya Kirimara  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bakawatana  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nguataniro  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Batutumene  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ya Kirimara  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bakawatanira  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nguataniro  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Batutumene  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ya mwithu uu  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Yua Nyambene  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Beena nguataniro  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Yuakucia  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ngai inene  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Beena nguataniro  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Inene  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Kuuma iguru  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Yuaturia marimba  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Marimba ya ruui.  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Yuaturia  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ithima  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bia ruuji  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nthuki ijii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Iroturia  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Maweega  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Yo utonga  
**Audience:** Ngai ii

**Soloist:** Ya ithomo  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ya ithomo  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ya mbecha  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ya *degree*  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ya *diploma*  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ya *masters*  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** *Phd*  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** *Doctor*  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bireeja kiribo  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Baa boonthe  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ibutharimi  
**Soloist:** Nabui aciari  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bubanenkere  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bionthe  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Biria winabio  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bubueya  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nookaremwa  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Itaana  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Murungu aari oo  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tuawitika aa  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tuutethie  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Mwana uu athome  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Aitie bubueja  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nirio irima  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Igiita rii  
**Audience:** Ngai  
**Soloist:** Ria nthuki iji iriikuu  
**Audience:** Ngai



**Soloist:** Kithomo  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nirio irima ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tuinario ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Nirio tukuenda ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Biashara  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tuukiire ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bubueya ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Ya Kirimara ii  
**Audience:** Ngai  
**Soloist:** Bakaliungairua ni miongo  
**Audience:** Baageta riitwa  
**Soloist:** Kenya na nthiguru iingi  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bakonanirua ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bageeta na gari ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bageta na ndege  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Cia iguru  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Na meli  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bageeta nacio  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Bakauna iriia  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Uti iirige  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Uti mitiino  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Baacoka  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Baaturairi  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tukawirua ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Baaturumia ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tukaaria ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tukatheka ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tuabatharima ii

**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tukatheka ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii  
**Soloist:** Tuabatharima ii  
**Audience:** Ngai ii

**Soloist:** Ali...  
**Audience:** Alilili (Ululations) } x 4

**19. Song:** Ngai nguatia kutharima  
**Performer:** Kirema Masharufu  
**Age:** 61 years  
**Profession:** Village Elder  
**Audience:** Initiates, their parents,  
**Place:** Amungenti Catholic Church

**Soloist:** Ngai nguatia ii kutharima ii ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe } x2  
**Audience:** Ngai nguatia kutharima ii ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe } x2  
**Soloist:** Ngai wetu uu  
**Audience:** Uuu Ngai nguati ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai iria nkuru uu  
**Audience:** Uuu Ngai nguatia niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai uria wari kuu  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai uria ukethirwa ari kuu  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai nowe urikuu  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai wa uturone bwetu uu  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe

**Soloist:** Ngai nguatia ii kutharima ii ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Audience:** Ngai nguatia kutharima ii ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe } x2

**Soloist:** Ngai wetu uu  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ii ngai wa aciari  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ii ngai wa nthuki cionthe  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai wa Kiramunya  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai wa Ithalii  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai wa Michubu  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ii Ngai wa Ratanya  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai wa Lubetaa  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai ya Miriti

**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai wa Buantai ii  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ii Ngai ya Gichunge ii  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Ngai wee mutura moyo  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Iwe Kini Kiiruuu  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Soloist:** Kithuku Kaimba aa  
**Audience:** Ii Ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe

**Soloist:** Ngai nguatia ii kutharima ii ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe  
**Audience:** Ngai nguatia ii kutharima ii ngai nguatia ii niwe Mugwe } x2

**Soloist:** Arii...  
**Audience:** Aririiririii (ululations) } x2

**20. Song: Kirarire**  
**Performer: Mushete Michubu**  
**Age: 38 years**  
**Profession: A renowned village singer**  
**Audience: An initiate, his parents and guests**  
**Place: Mr Mithika's home, Antubochiu village**

**Soloist:** Uuui mutaano okwa muntu ugwitua Thuraira muga  
Na ringi muga, muntu utaani atikethagua rimwe  
**Audience:** Aaa } x2

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki?  
**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua  
**Audience:** Weeja mbijire kuuona ukibua } x2

**Soloist:** Wuuni ni mutaana ugwitwa Thuraira muga  
Na ringi muga muntu utaani atikethacua rimwe

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Wuuni na muntu ugwitwa Micubu na Lucy taamburukie  
njara ndibuathire nthaka

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe ni kwari niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ncooke nkuire muntu uria utaani nuria uri na degree yawe ii

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe ni kwari niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua ii  
**Audience:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua } x2

**Soloist:** Wuui mutaano okwa kuuma riria karaja Murungu  
Atuuraga akierencage muntu

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Na kinya nandi atuuraga akierencaga muntu

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua ii

**Audience:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua } x2

**Soloist:** Wuui ni mutaano okwa ncoke nkwire ndakulukite muthungu  
Arungama ambiira “*how are you*” nikamwambia “*I am fine*”

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua ii

**Audience:** Weeja mbijiree kuona ukibua } x2

**Soloist:** Wuui ningi nkwire kirarire giakwa gitiiacua  
ni rutheko bata ni rugunuunu

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki?

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua ii

**Audience:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua } x2

**Soloist:** Wuuini mutanokwa mbitawa Michubu na  
Ntiijagirua niuntu ni rukungi ntiiri

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua ii

**Audience:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua } x2

**Soloist:** Wuui nanu mutaana okwa ugwitwa Thuraira muga na  
Ringi muga muntu utaani atikethagua rimwe

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua ii

**Audience:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua } x2

**Soloist:** Wuuini nanu muntu uguitwa Lucy na Mithika  
Tamburukia njara nkuathira nthaka

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Wuuini mutaana okwa nkwire muntu utaani atikethagua riimwe

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ncooke nkuire muntu utaani ni uria uri biawe

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ncooke nkwire muntu utaani ni uria urina na *degree*

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Ndemwe nikwari ii niki

**Audience:** Aaa

**Soloist:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua

**Audience:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua } x2

**Soloist:** Wuui ni mutaana okwa ngekuru iria irii aa iringe  
rukimi rua guturia nthaka

**Audience:** Aaa lii lilili

**Soloist:** Wuui ngekuru iria iri aa buringe rukiimi rua guturia nthaka

**Audience:** Aaa lii lilili } x4

**Soloist:** Weeja mbijire kuona ukibua

**Audience:** Weeja mbijire kuuona ukibua } x2

**21. Song: Judas ti umwe**

**Performer:** URA MCK choir

**Age:** Varied

**Profession:** Varied

**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests

**Place:** Athi Methodist Church

Ciirringi nthiguru nithukiitie maantu antu boonthe bareeta ngoa  
Barahata Murungu icunci bia ikumi, na niwe muumbi wa bionthe.

**Chorus:** Jiisu niariukire Lazaru wa Bethania na bararijanira meetha imwe  
Itu tutethie tutikeeye gutewa niba Judasi nthigurune  
Natwi utujukie uturekere meya turiyanire nawe iguru.  
Niima ukienda ngugi utiumba kuuandikwa mwanka uriite kitu kidogo  
Tuura ofisini *mdosi* akwire mwanka uriite ngiiri ikumi  
*Mimi ni kasisi by profession kama hakuna elfu kumi toka sikujui.*

Weeta kanisene ukerwa uriite sadaka kuuma mirongo iili,  
Na waandike riiwa nikenda Murungu amenya kiria we waareta,  
*Sadaka ni lazima kutoa kutoka ishirini hapana chini.*  
Mwekuru uria mwagiru amenyagira mucii kuuritana aana na ukiri  
Werwa ukuunde kamwe uthirie maathuganio mwisho yuakuu yugukiinya  
*One for the road is not dangerous.*

Mukuru acererwa mwekuru amuuria,  
“Unatoka wapi usiku?” riria eetia biakuria mwekuru amwira  
“Rudi kwa malaya yaako, nusinisumbue niondokee!”

**22. Song: Arailiba na iiru**

**Performers:** Initiated girls

**Age:** Varied

**Audience:** Initiates' parents and guests

**Place: Kangeta Girls Secondary School**

**Soloist:** Arailiba na iiru iuu iii mwari mutaane  
**Response:** Arailiba na iiru akiuragia, akiuragia  
Winanu mukai nindaitanirwe, ndiratiwa gitilii } x3

**Soloist:** Arailiba na iruu ii ui ii mwari mutaane  
**Response:** Arailiba akiuragia  
Winanu mukai ni ndaitanirwe ndirathira murio } x2

**23. Song: Laitha kithomi ii**  
**Performers: Nkiro group**  
**Age: Varied**  
**Audience: Initiate, initiate's parents, and guests**  
**Place: Mr Kaberia's home**

**Soloist:** Wiitu laitha Murithi ii  
**Response:** Mbeeria

**Soloist:** Iuu iii  
**Response:** Laitha ii kithomo } x2

**Soloist:** *Degree* ya kithomo ii  
**Response:** Mbeeria iuu ii  
**Soloist:** Laitha ii kithomo  
**Response:** Mwana ii ni wetuu ii  
**Soloist:** Mbeeria ii uu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii kithomo  
**Soloist:** Tukumie Ngai ii  
**Response:** Mbeeria  
**Soloist:** Iuu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii kithomo ii  
**Soloist:** Mbeeria uu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii kithomo  
**Soloist:** Murimo yurikuo ii uu  
**Response:** Mbeeria  
**Soloist:** Uui ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii kithomo  
**Soloist:** Yugwitwa muingo ii  
**Response:** Mbeeria  
**Soloist:** Uu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii Kithomo  
**Soloist:** Yuriwata muntu ii  
**Response:** Mberia  
**Soloist:** Mbeeria ii uu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii Kithomo  
**Soloist:** Akathira ya nguo ii  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii uu ii  
**Soloist:** Uu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii kithomo  
**Soloist:** Ntuku ii ni nene ii

**Response:** Mbeeria ii  
**Soloist:** Uu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii kithomo  
**Soloist:** Tuikirwe degree ii  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii  
**Soloist:** Ii uu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii kithomo  
**Soloist:** Degree ya kithomo wee  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii  
**Soloist:** Uu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii Kithomo  
**Soloist:** Tukumie Murungu ii  
**Response:** Mbeeria ii  
**Soloist:** Uu ii  
**Response:** Laitha ii kithomo  
**Soloist:** Mwana ni wetu ii

**Response:** Mbeeria ii uu ii  
**Soloist:** Laitha ii Kithomo

} x2

**24. Shairi: Aliyoyapanga Muumba**  
**Performer: Anonymous**  
**Age: Unknown**  
**Profession: Unknown**  
**Audience: Initiated boys, their parents and guests**  
**Place: Wesley Boarding school, Nturuba**

Aliyoyapanga Muumba leo ameyatimiza,  
Aliyoyapanga Muumba leo yametimia,  
Wazazi kama munayo furaha pigeni vigelegele ee.

Vigelegele pigeni Muumba tumshukuru,  
Ndipo tumpeni heshima sote tumshukuru,  
Na iwe kwetu amani, upendo na uvumilivu,  
Wazazi kama munayo furaha pigeni vigelegele ee.

Tulitania hakika kama siku ya leo itafika,  
Kwa mapenzi yake Bwana, vijana tuliwatahiri,  
Vijana wametahiriwa, waheshimiwa ndio hao,  
Munaowaona wanang'ara kweli kweli ii,  
Hakika wametahiriwa,  
Wazazi kama munayo furaha pigeni vigelegele ee.

Matunda ya elimu ni tamu kupita asali,  
Someni kwa bidii mkiwa na furaha,  
Msome mkijua mvumilivu hula mbivu,  
Wazazi kama mnayo furaha pigeni vigelegele ee.

Aliyoyapanga Muumba leo yametimia aa,  
Wazazi kama munayo furaha pigeni vigelegele ee,  
Vigelegele pigeni muumba tumshukuru,

Ndipo sote tumpeni heshima.

Wazee wa Nyambene walikuwa na maono,  
Walichukua hatua wakashikana mikono,  
Walishikana mikono vijana wakawatahiri,  
Wanaume ndio hao mnaowaona wako mbele zenu,  
Hakuna wa kuwatisha wamefundishwa mambo yote,  
Maandili ya wanaume, yote wamefundishwa,  
Wazazi kama munayo furaha pigeni vigelegele ee.

Askofu, wachungaji na wazee wa kanisa,  
Hongera kwa uongozi wenu uliotuunganisha,  
Maandili na uamini na kuwatia motisha,  
Wazazi kama munayo furaha pigeni vigelegele ee.

Ujumbe nimefikisha vijana wametahiriwa,  
Kwa mapenzi yake mola tutaonana tena,  
Matunda ya elimu ni tamu kuliko asali,  
Wazazi kama munayo furaha pigeni vigelegele.

**25. Song: Aciari thomethieni aana beenu**

**Performer: Ms Makena**

**Age: 23 years**

**Profession: Student (Masinde Muliro University, science and Technology)**

**Audience: Initiated girls, their parents and guests**

**Place: Kangeta Girls Secondary Schools**

Aciari thomethiene aana benu,  
Keenda bethirwa bari na umeenyo,  
Bwa guitania na igiita riri,  
Muntu utithomi, ari muundune.

**Chorus:** Kithomo nikiyo weru bwa muundu,  
Uria atithomi, ari muundune.

Ofisi cionthe ni cia athomi,  
Muntu atithomi aari muundune,  
Ruutano ti ruo weru bwa muuntu,  
Kinya uria uutani, aari muundune.  
Aciari thomethiene aana benu,  
Nikeenda bethirwa bari na umeenyo,  
Bwaguitaania na igiita riri,  
Uria atiithomi aari muundune.



**APPENDIX V**  
**TRANSCRIBED TEXTS: PROVERBS**

- 1. Proverb:** Ugeetaa arusine utitii  
**Performer:** Mrs Karambu Mururu  
**Age:** 30 years  
**Profession:** Evangelist, URA Methodist church  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** URA Methodist church
- 2. Proverb:** Ugeetania na mpunduka ukaunduka yayo  
**Performer:** Karambu Mururu  
**Age:** 30 years  
**Profession:** Evangelist, URA Methodist church  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** Athi Methodist church
- 3. Proverb:** Uti mwamba na mutegeri  
**Performer:** Robert Mwirigi  
**Age:** 28 years  
**Profession:** Tailor, Kiiji market  
**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests  
**Place:** Kiiji Seventh day church grounds
- 4. Proverb:** Uti mbiti iti munyanya wayo  
**Performer:** Pastor Kaunyangi  
**Age:** 46 Years  
**Profession:** Pastor, Athi Live Gospel Church  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** Mr Mitiine's home in Amwamba
- 5. Proverb:** Ukinjiira baangi mariinya, injaa ya manene  
na yamanini niuntu noowe kuu  
**Performer:** Ms Gladys Muthoni  
**Age:** 27 years  
**Profession:** Tiira Day Secondary school teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** Athi Methodist church
- 6. (i). Proverb:** Mutaane ni uria uri na into biawe  
**Performer:** Pastor Gitonga Kaithungu  
**Age:** 49 years  
**Profession:** Pastor, Kiiji Live Gospel Church  
**Audience:** Initiated boys  
**Place:** Kiiji Live Gospel Church
- 6. (ii). Proverb:** Mutaane ni uria uri biake  
**Performer:** Mrs Eunice Kanini  
**Age:** 32 years  
**Profession:** P1 teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boy, his parents, relatives and friends.

- 7. Proverb:** Itigua ta ithe igua ta ina.  
**Performer:** Mercy Nkatha  
**Age:** 41 years  
**Profession:** Ryenya primary School teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** Mr Kithinji's home, Antubochiu village
- 8. Proverb:** Nkima ya mutu yiina mwanki irijawa na rutere  
**Performer:** Mr Tarsius Mugambi  
**Age:** 26 years  
**Profession:** Political Science Graduate from Moi University  
**Audience:** Initiated boy, parents, relatives and neighbours
- 9. Proverb:** Mwathoa kirira nuuri kiawe  
**Performer:** Mrs Margaret Kanampiu.  
**Age:** 61 Years  
**Profession:** Retired primary school teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** URA Methodist church
- 10. Proverb:** Ukia kuona kinyuuru oo, uwezi oona moja  
**Translation:** If you see a mongoose you do not see one.  
**Performer:** Dr. Joseph Mugambi  
**Age:** 35 years  
**Profession:** Doctor Maua Methodist Hospital  
**Audience:** Initiated girls  
**Place:** Amwamba Girls Secondary school
- 11. Proverb:** Itindikagwa iri mauruu yayo  
**Performer:** Mr Silas Muriithi  
**Age:** 28 years  
**Profession:** Teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boy, parents, relatives, and neighbours
- 12. Proverb:** Nkingo itikilaa mutwe  
**Performer:** Mrs Nkatha Kamui  
**Age:** 37 years  
**Profession:** Accounts clerk  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents, and guests  
**Place:** Mr Kithinji's home, Antubochiu village.
- 13. Proverb:** Icau ria muti yuungi litulumataa muti yuungi  
**Performer:** Ms Gladys Muthoni  
**Age:** 27 years  
**Profession:** Tiira Day secondary school  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** Athi Methodist church
- 14. Proverb:** Mbonia uria ugwitania nawe nani nkwire uria ukarii

**Performer:** Mrs Margaret Kanampiu  
**Age:** Initiated boys, their parents, and guests  
**Profession:** Retired primary school teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests  
**Place:** URA Methodist church grounds

**15. Proverb:** Uuithoe aria uwikinyila  
**Performer:** Ms Gladys Muthoni  
**Age:** 27 years  
**Profession:** Tiira Day Secondary school teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated girls in seclusion  
**Place:** Athi Methodist Church

**16. Proverb:** Bukeeja kwaa Dicii:  
**Performer:** Mrs Mukiri Gituma  
**Age:** 32 years  
**Profession:** Accountant, Maua Methodist Hospital  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents, and guests  
**Place:** URA Methodist Church grounds

**17. Proverb:** Uria kanyua kaugaa nibuo gukaraga  
**Performer:** Mrs Margaret Kanampiu  
**Age:** 61 years  
**Profession:** Retired primary school teacher  
**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents, and guests  
**Place:** URA Methodist church grounds

## APPENDIX VI

### TRANSCRIBED TEXTS: ORAL NARRATIVES

**1. Narrative: Kamwali na atanong'ina**

**Narrator: Ms Gladys Muthoni**

**Age: 27 years**

**Profession: Secondary school teacher**

**Audience: Initiated girls**

**Place: St. Rita's Amwamba Girls Secondary School**

**Narrator:** I want to give you a short story.

**Audience:** Ehee

Nikwari mwekuru na mukuru na ni baari na tuana tuthatu; *tuboy*s na kamwali kamwe. Kamwali kaa niko kaari *last born*. *Alafu* rii, nikwari na kirima kikinene *sana*. *Alafu* iuru ria kirima kiu, nikwari na katheti kaa dhaabu, ruui rua dhaabu, na kamuti kaa dhaabu. Into biu bionthe ni biarii bia dhaabu. Na nikwerikanaga ati uria ukaumba gutia kirima kiu, niwe ukaumba kwija na ruui rua dhaabu, kamuti kaa dhaabu, na Katheti kaa dhaabu. Na nikwerikanaa uria ukaumba gutia kirima kiu niowe ukaumba gutacia ruui ruu rua dhaabu na gwita na ruu. *At the end of the day*, akaa *very famous* muntu uria ukaumba kujukia into biu biobithatu. *So, this is what happened*. *Alafu*, nthii ya kirima kiu ni kwari na muntu *like a seer* kana kiroria. Na uu niwe wa *kuinstruct* uria ukaitaitia kana kukathithua. *So msichana akakuja*. *Si mnajua* ukethirua kwenu uri mwari akii, tika unanukaa muno?

**Audience:** Eehee

Nokaa unanukaa mono *especially* ukethirwa iuwe uri mwari akii na bangi ni *gents*. *Ukiwa wewe tu ndio* dame ati *huwezi* ukafanya *chochote*. Unakuwa na maringo. Nakunanukaa. Si unananukaa sana?

**Audience:** Eehee.

**Narrator:** Utinanukaa mono?

**Audience:** Eehee

*So this is what happened*. Kamwari kaa kera *brother* wake atiri, “Ndirienda kuuma a *very famous lady*. *I want to be a very famous lady*.”

“*So*, ndirienda bwitie kirimine kiria. Ndirienda bundetere muti yua dhaabu, kathetu kaa dhaabu, na ruui rua dhaabu.”

*Sawa*, atonoina batimwendete na kamwali tikonka aki niatia batiketheria. Toka bakathithiria buo! Atonoina beeta. Baiguita beeta uria mukuru aitia kirimene kiria. Eeta atirima kiroria kiria kiamuria niku eeta. Amucokeria amuira eeta kirimene kuira katheti ka dhaabu na muti yua dhaabu na ruui rua dhaabu arairi *sister* ooke.

Amuria, “Itu yoontu weta rii, babaingi nibaaititie na bakaa maiga na nyanki baitiitie oau.”

“Ye nontu weeta. *Instruction number* imwe. Ukethiatia? Ukaluelia nyuma. *Tuko pamoja*? Ukeethia atia?”

**Audience:** Ukaloelia nyuma.

Oburia ukaibua, ukaciula nyuma. Muthaka auwa, “Obuu uuthu.”

Eeta. *Akaanza safari*. Ondiria eeta *step* uu ithatu aibuaa atiri, “Umwone. Mwikumia. Turoona babaingi. Muringe. Ai mbi muringe.”  
Muthaka aucia kuolelia nyuma. Akiolelia rii ooaa nyanki!

Atanoina beetera ungi aria ikuiya. Mwari nawe eera mutanoina nooka uambirira into biu. Niuntu nieendete mwariong’ina niata agaciietheria? Toka ageeta kumuirira mukai. Mtonong’ina uungi eeta atirima kiroria kiira kiamwira atirii,  
“Yii nontu weeta kirimene rii, ukeja kuciula nyuma.”  
Muthaka eeta. Aibua, “Aaai mbetera tuitie kamwikumia. Yukia iiya umuringe. Aai turoona babaingi muno. Ai nikaciethetie. Ai turoona babaingi muno. Muluelie. Ai. *what?* Olelia nyuma. *What?* Aa iiya!

Mwari eera mutanoina ungi itu nooka nkaa *famous*. Itu nooka uampirira into biu. Niuntu nibakuenda mworoina kabakethia atia? Tooka baamuirira into biu bia dhaabu. Mutonoina uungi eeta atirima kiroria kiria kiamwira atiri, “Noontu weta, ukeeja kuciula nyuma.”  
Etite aibua, “Reeka nikamwikumia. Yuukia iiya umuringe. Ai, nika aciethetie. Turoona baangi yawe. *What?* *Akaangalia nyuma*. Aaa iiya!

Atatiwa mwana uumwe aki mukai! Nawe amua ni omwanka mbitie mpire into biu bia mworocia aae *famous*. Muthaka eeta kiri kiroria kiria amwira atiri, “Itu baba rii, atononyakwe nibeetire kirimene nabatacoka. Nibairire iiya na nyanki. Nontu weta ukeeya wita atia?

**Audience:** Guciula na nyuma.

Mutanoina uria watii umwe nawe eeta.

Eendi akinya *step* ijiili rii aibua, “Mwikumia, muringe, kwenda turoona baangi baumite *conference* *cia FGM* na beeja kubuithua riinge.

Mutaane olelia nyuma aai. *What?* *Msss!* Mantu yakuiiaa yaa.

Kamwoloina katiwa ko...?

**Audience:** Koongwa.

Kamwali nako keeta kauwa na ntiina baba tii ningwa ngatiwa na kiriro nomwanka mbitie tukare *pamoja na mabro* bakwa.

Kamwali keeta, keerwa ni kiroria, “itu nontu weta atononyakwe batietire boonthe ai buongwa wabatiga aciari na kiriro?” Mwari araua, “ni *lazima* ngaitia.” Kamwali kaitia kocho! kocho! kocho! Noka ketite. Kerua, “*what!* Nina uyu etite? Ni nkatha ya muka iria iri inya. We mwikumia. Utiwe tutoona eee.” Wooria awitia kirimine noobu *sautu* ikuingia *kabisa*. Noka akuibua tuiya ka! Ka! Ka! Lakini utiyo yakumuringa.  
“Muringe, riu riikuatia, utibuu uyu akaumba uyu. Nkooma aciindwe. *Sijui nini*. *Sauti* ciaingia eee!”

Mwari eendelea. Oona aaciula. Aukumia njara ciondone ariita mbamba, eekira utune kuu na kuungi. Aendelea na *safari*. Au kuri nendi akuibua *stori* ii ikuiranua. Eeta akinya kuria iguru *as a winner*.

**Narrator:** *Has a..?*

**Audience:** *Winner*.

Aiwitia iguru karimene eeta ethira kathati ka mwira atiri, “Thikiria nkuire.”

“Buonka nyanki ii uukuona ni antu baria bathukirue. Nendi ndirienda utuurire nyaanki iyi yae ruui. *Sorry*. Ndirienda *usprinkle* ruui ruu antu beenu bature kinya kiri maiga yaa yoonthe. *Alafu* uite icunci kimwe kia muti juu jwa dhaabu wite nayuo. Obuonka

muka uuria ukaa icunci kia muti yuu yua dhaabu akaa *so so famous person in the nation and above that* obuonka muntu wajitue weeta na itu rii wamuaka kinya kethira ni meetho yakoona.”

Kamwali kayukia katheti ka *gold*, katuriria nyanki ruui yaaluka yaa aantu amwe na maiga. *At the end of the day this woman is the power and the strength of a woman. Si at the end of the day she was a winner na akasaidia watu wengine wote na akakuwa saviour of their family and the saviour of the generations and the saviour of the whole nation?*

**Audience:** Eehee

## **2. Narrative: Kamwari na aari baria batani**

**Narrator:** Dr Kinanu Ntalala

**Age:** 41 years

**Profession:** Doctor Nyambene District Hospital

**Audience:** Initiated girls

**Place:** Amwamba Girls Secondary School

**Narrator:** Ogwata ruono?

**Audience:** Tukuguata.

Igiita riria ndakuraga kwetu nikwatananawa. Na ntuku imwe ndi umunini ndiracemania na mwari, na mwari uu ni aari umenene. Mwari uu mpumite kanisene oona *team* ya aari baria bataani. Aari bau nibaaikite laini o kuuma rutere ruu mwanka ruu rungi. Wuuni ni ndari umunini. Nabaria babengiritie ni bari nyuma yao. Nakinya bo, nibataani ouria wonaga nthaka ciitumite laini. Riu bakenama na barabara betite kwa uumwe wao uria wataani. Baujurite barabarene na *rule* yao rii, buaboona bukamatuka.

Mwari uu atwiira atiiri, “Kujeni hata sisi tupange laini yetu.”

Na sisi tukapanga laini yetu. Natulikuwa tunawaona huko na sisi tuko pande hii. Tukapanga yetu natukaenda kukutana na yao. Wanakuja na hata sisi tunakuja. Na *rule* ilikuwa ukiwaona na utitaani ukamatuka nontu ukeja kubaruma ugutanwa. Bukeeja kubaruma uguitwa atia?

**Audience:** Ugutanwa.

Ugutaanwa kilazima. Turabanga laini yeetuu turatirimana. Turabanga laini yeetuu turatirimaana. Turakurukiira gatigati kao nabo barakurukiira gatigati getu! Nabuu butari buathithika kairi gwetuu. Riu turikuamba kubakuruka natutira matuka natutirabebela turagaruka turaringa rutheko turabathekela. Ntheko iu niciari inene muno. Na rugono ruu rwakuithirwa nituabathekere rutiakua. Na tutorua. Natutonere muntu wa kwaria ruteto ruu kairi. Kuuma ntuku iu gutari gutanwa nau kwetu kuraa *issue*. Nawe we utaani ukaiitha. Nontu kinya batwi turi na inya.

## **3. Narrative: Kaana kamwe**

**Narrator:** Bishop Alice Bariu

**Age:** 44 years

**Profession:** Bishop

**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests

**Place:** Wesley Boarding School- Nturuba

Kaana kamwe kareta sukuru, miaka imingi ithiri, keeta sukuru, muciaru wako nakinyite antuana. Nakuouu, nakauririte iratu na *panti*. *Kaboy* kau kaita sukuru kairinganira na *tuboy* tungi na kuona batikirite *panti*. Na kacooka koono batikirite kinya iratu; keeta kera mami oke katikwenda guikaira iratu na *panti*. Ndirienda kwita sukuru ntiina iratu na kinya *panti* ntikira. Nikenda mbi? Nikenda kakara ya bau bangi.

**4. Narrative: Kaana kaagi nthoni**

**Narrator: Bishop Alice Bariu**

**Age: 44 years**

**Profession: Bishop, Nyambene Synod**

**Audience: Initiated boys, their parents and guests**

**Place: Wesley Boarding School, Nturuba**

Mwana umwe aciarirwe mucii jumwe, arerwa na akuura. Ina wawe namwendete mono mono. Naa ariumwenda, atua *kumprotect from the father*. Atua kumukaracia kiri ithe. Ithe eenda kumchambura, iina akamuuria. Na riria ithe eeta, mami akumuiru mwana wawe atiri,

“Ukanoana na uju ni mulevi”.

Mwana akuura aicie ithe ati uumwega. Na eitene rimwe, kiiri ukurene bwawe nontu mwana nakurire akimenyaga ithe atiumwega, rirakinya igiite rimwe mwana arauura ithe na *bahati mbaya*, ithe arakua. Ithe ariukua, mwana eeta nceera na atuirwa kinyonga. Aikuitirwa kinyonga erire mami wake atiiri,

“Nibwega mami niuntu bwa kutenthia kuija nthii iji na kuuntethie kuuma yo!”

**5. Narrative: Mwekuru na mukuru wawe**

**Narrator: Gladys Muthoni**

**Age: 27 years**

**Profession: Secondary school teacher**

**Audience: Initiated girls**

**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

Wacha nimuambie *kastory*. *Kalife* story.

**Audience:** Ehe!

Kulikuwa na mama mwingine na huyu *mathee* aliolewa na *houseboy* wa *cucu* wangu.

**Audience:** Ehe!

Mwanamke huyu alikuwa na miaka mingi kuliko bwana yake. *Is it possible* kuolewa na mtu mkubwa kukuliko? *It is possible*. Si ndio?

**Audience:** Ndio.

Nendi mukuru uu arikuoya mwekuru uu, beeta bauria into bauria, bauria, bauria. Beeta mwathani abaa kwa kuoka kukega. Wakajenga na wakapata *how many children?* Watoto watatu. Sasa unajua huyu bwana alifanya nini? Alipoona wamejenga na wamenunua gari na wamekuwa *stable*. *Imagine* mukuru uu akauwa atiiri, ati mwekuru uu akuura ati amechapa! Sasa mimi sijui kama wanaume wengine nasikianga kuwakuarua uso. Ati mwanaume anasema bibi amezeeka. Nashangaa kama wewe ujazeeka. Kwani mimi naenda mbele na yeye anaenda *reverse*? Unasikia wakisema hivyo?

**Audience:** Eehe

Ati huyu *dame* amechapa? Na ni *dame* wake amemuoa. Ati amechapa? Mimi nasikianga kuwauliza mimi, nilikuwa naenda *plus! Plus! Plus!* na wewe unaenda *minus! Minus!* Sasa *when I am growing younger* na wewe *you are growing older*.

Tabia mbaya unasikianga wakisema hivyo. Sasa huyu mwanamume akasema bibi yake amefanya nini?

**Audience:** Amechapa.

Tumepata kila kitu? Sasa yeye alikuwa na kadodogo kengine huko! Mwanamume alienda akatafuta kasichana kengine kakawa akakaoa ndio wametafuta pesa na wamepata kila kitu. Akamjengea mahali fulani. *After* amemjengea mahali fulani sasa hata haendi kwa bibi yake wa kwanza. Sasa huyu bibi alikuwa anakaa na watoto wake watatu, *Sunday* ikifika unakuta alikuwa *chairlady* wa *a certain church* anaenda anatengeneza kila kitu *and she was okay although she was undergoing a lot of pain and had internal stress but externally*, hungejua. Wakaendelea. Wakaendelea. Siku moja huyu dame ndivyo huwa nambuambianga vile nilimwambia jana Mungu anasema,

*“He who dwells in the shadows of the most high God will never be ashamed and Mungu anamfuatilianga statements zake “As I hear you say...?”*

**Narrator:** *Praise God.*

**Audience:** *Amen*

**Narrator:** *Somebody say amen...*

**Audience:** *Amen*

Sasa huyu mwanamke akaendelea kuomba na siku moja huyu mwanamke dogo dogo, si mnasikianga wanaitwa dogodogo na tumipango twa kando kando na twa kati kati. Sasa si kamwanamke ka kando kakaambia bwanake kanataka kumtembelea bwanake nyumbani kwake. Mwanamme akamwambia,

*“Nindirendaga kukuira buuo nikandirakirire. Ndirienda wife uu tuite tumuaibishe na aluo akuurie. Akia kuija kuutonga uu utheri tumuurage.”*

Sasa huyu *dame...* tusichana twingine ni roho mbaya sana tunaendanga kuchukua mabwana za watu ni kama wanaume wameisha. Wewe ambia mtu hivi, “Wewe ukiwa mzima *usidandie* mabwana za watu.”

**Audience:** Wewe ukiwa mzima usidandie mabwana za watu.

**Narrator:** Hiyo ni tabia mbaya. Hiyo ni tabia mba..?

**Audience:** Mbaya.

Na ni makosa na ni dhambi. Wanaume hawajaisha. Utaenda naye na pia wewe atakuacha. Na ukipata mwingine pia yeye atakuja kukuacha. *Whatever goes around comes around.* Si ndivyo tunasemanga *whatever goes around...*

**Audience:** *Comes around.*

Ubuonka buria bukarikaga kuu nomwanka bugacoka naria buanjiriritie. Tenda wema uende zako *because* uria ukuthithiria bangi nobuu ukathithiirua na kumbuka waswahili walisema:

Mchimba kisima uingia...

**Audience:** Mwenyewe.

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Sasa usiende kuchimbia wengine kisima kwa sababu pia wewe unaweza ingia. Sasa si unaona huyu mwanamke amemchimbia huyu mwingine kisima. Sasa wacha niendeleo na stori yangu wamekuja na bwana. Huyu bwana amebeba vitu za mwanamke. Nendi ndathuanacia kejite *kamejidecorate na kamedress* venye watu wanasemanga, *‘I was dressed to kill.’* umesikia watu wakisema hivyo?



**Audience:** Eee.

Ati *you look sexy! By the way!* Eti umevaa umekaa *sexy*. Ati mpaka kwa *church*. Kwani ulikuwa umekuja kufanya *sex* kwa *church*? Unapaswa kukaa *sexy* kwa *bedroom* si kwa *church* na si kwa njia. Si ndio?

**Audience:** Eee.

Hio *statement I hate it*. Sasa huyo mwanamke alijidanganya alikuwa *anadress* hivyo tu. Wakakuja mpaka kwa *gate*. *Bakinya gatiine bararingaringa tu!tu!tu!* Mwekuru uria wambere *eejanga*. Huyu mwanamke alikuwanga mpaka na *watchie*. Alikuwa na *watchman*. Alikuwa amemwambia *watchman*,

“Kutoka narua ii kuuma baikuoyana, *my husband* ndi ni *nkamtreat* kuuma gatiine. Nii ni nkejaga kumurugurira na nii ni *nkamukaribishaga* nyumba. Nendi mwekuru eeja aringaringa. Indi tooka mwekuru uria wa mbere eeja kumuruorira akimwiraga karibu. Eeta abaruorira *gate*. Ari *like* wuuuuu!

Alikuwa ameketi hapa mbele na kamwanamke kalikuwa kameketi hapo kanakaa kasupuu! Maringo wacha tu! Nendi toka mwekuru ageeta *kumhug* nontu mukuru ateeja nja ruua. Muka akamkaribia ndio *amhug*. Akamhepa sasa kama ni wewe ...*The Man was like MSSS! Akaingia na kadame kwa sitting room*. Unajua huyu mwanamke ni *one out of two hundred!* Sasa kama niwewe ungefanya nini? *The woman did not give up* alikuwa na kiroho sijui kinatoshanaye! *Jesus!* Hata wewe unaweza kuvumilia hio madharau yote kweli? Eti kamwanamke kameletwa kwa nyumba yako si nikuanza vita lakini *the woman hakugive up. Jesus Christ!* Sasa unajua Mungu anasemanga wenye wanakaa kwa Jesu Mungu anawapeanga *revelations*. *This* mama, *the first wife*, eeta aingia *kitchen abaruira* chai akawaletea kila kitu. *Nindi niukemenya niatia aberire?* Arera mwekuru huyu bathiria kuria biakuria eete *room* ya visitors *ajukie towel na ruui rua kuthamba ajukie athambe*. *Mssss! What a wonderful woman!* Sasa huyu *first wife* akaenda akalala *bedroom* yake akawaacha. Nukumenya. Uraibua *guilt* nimbi?

*Uraibua kuijudge wengwa?Iira tuugaga if all wishes were horses even beggars would ride. All beggars would...?*

**Audience:** *Ride*.

Na niibuu tuugaga *I wish I knew*. Huyu mwanamke akaanza kusema *I wish I knew this is the kind of a woman you had*. Na nukumenya eterete arirua bubui na areakuarirua bubui. Indi nukumenya niatia kuakarire? Aka kadogodogo kalibaki keetire *room* iria ya *visitors* kinya kati mamire na mukuru. Mukuru eta amama wengwa. Ruukire kuraukia at 4:00 AM, aratura mpaala eeta araera *watchie* uu, “Itu kiira Murungu ukareka kinya wuu amenya, nduurira tafadhali. *Watchie* amuruorira eeta. *Madam, the first wife* aiwukiira eeta aruaa chai eeja abekiira *table room* au meethene ii eterete ageni bake. Akiuaa ati mukuru no amami na mugeni. *What a woman?* Nakuambia huyu mwanamke ni wa kipekee. Au mukuru aiwukira toguita guukia mwekuru wake uria wa baili, kadogodogo. Eeta atirima atiikiu. Tokuthugania ni mwekuru uria wambere aramwingiree mwekuru huu wa baili. Eeta kumuria akiendaga kumuura. Mwekuru amwira,

“Tii wuuni ndiramwingiri itu kira Murungu uuria kinya *watchie*.”

Eeta kiri *watchie* amuria, amwira mwekuru wawe wa baili aturire 4:00 AM eeta na amwira amuruure nawe aramururira. Atuura wengwa *amurequest...* Mukuru araringa thimu tu! Tu! Tu! Araikiira *loudspeaker*, “*Hallo...*”

Aka kamwanamke kakamwambia, “*You are more than a devil. Ukea kwithirwa mwekuru uu waku uu niwe ukuthithiria madharau uu from today iijira bionthe biria ndina bio because that is a woman and a half. Respect that woman.*”

Pigieni huyu mwanamke makofi. *A real story.* Kuumania na au rii nukumenya mukuru huu niatia athithirie? Mukuru ariirire arira ainicia akara ta kaana kanini aacia buakuethia niuntu kuari *Saturday. Sunday* iriu kinya, mwekuru wawe arooka athamba eeta na aana bake na mauru kanisene. Nendi bariukinya kanisene oo uria mwekuru amenyeretie, akinya kitine kia mbeere mukuru eejire arakara oaria nyuma. Pastor atumiria, atumiria auria kethira kuuina aeni kana kuuina muntu ukuenda kuonoka aukiirie njaara iguru. Mwekuru indi utionaga uria muntu akiendaga kuonoka ari *shy?* Mwekuru uu niuntu aari *usher* eeta kuona nuu uu wonoka. Zibora! Mwekuru agiita ni mukuru uria wawe. Indi au akaumiria *kumusher?* Mukuru kwija aa mbere nikurira. Nukumenya mukuru kurira ni mbaya? Wanaume hawaliangi *my friend.* Si ni ukweli?

**Audience:** Ndio.

Mimi sijui. Ni *hard* walie. Nticie kethira kaberrirwe bataanoa bakarorira kinya boona bukari kana bukari. Ndirariarua ni ntento iu, hawaliangi. Mukuru akakuja hapo mbebe akalia, akalia, akalia. Eera mwekuru wawe eeje au mbere. Anenkerwa mike aria. Auwa,

“Nimekuwa nikimtesa huyu bibi yangu, nikimfanyai hivi na hivi lakini venye amenifanyia, yaani akaeleza *story* yote halafu akasema kwa sababu bibi yangu, nimeokoka. Mukuru araromberoa na aronoka. Kuuma au *araapologize akamhug bibi yake na time* ya kuenda nyumbani akambeba na gari lake. Ararekana na mantu yaria athithacia. *Right away* wako na gari kama *two or three if I am not wrong and today they are the best role model couple.*

## **6. Narrative: Mwari na mami wake**

**Narrator:** Doctor Joseph Mugambi

**Age:** 35 years

**Profession:** Medical health officer

**Audience:** Initiated girls

**Place:** Amwamba Girls Secondary School

Wacha niwambie kastory. Kulikuwa na msichana mmoja. Kulikuwa na msichana aa..?

**Audience:** Mmoja.

Sasa nataka kuwapea mambo ya *prevention.* Nataka kuwapea mambo ya... ?

**Audience:** Prevention.

Msichana huyu mmoja mamake akamwita Kanana...? Pole kuna Kanana hapa?

**Audience:** Hapana.

Wacha nimuite jina la kizungu, jina la mama wa Yesu- Mary. Kuna Mary ako hapa?

**Audience:** Hapana.

Akamwambia, “Sasa Mary, mtu aendangi akitolea mtu nguo. Usiwatolee watu nguo...?”

**Audience:** Nguo

Hebu mnisikize. Nilisema mtu asitolee mwanaume ngu...?

**Audience:** Nguo.

**Narrator:** Unasikia?

**Audience:** Ndio.

Mary akatoka hapo akaenda. Akakutana na *boyfriend* yake wakaongea maneno yao. Akamwambia *boyfriend* wake, “Unajua nini? Mama aliniambia nisitolee wanaume nini?”

**Audience:** Nguo.

Wakafanya maneno yao. Mary akapatikana. Sasa aliporudi nyumbani mama yake akamwambia, “Si Mary mimi nilikukanya maneno haya? Nilikuambia aje?”  
“Si uliniambia nisitolee wanaume nguo? Sasa nilifanya hii maneno kama tumesimama kwani kuna shida?”

Kutoka hapa Mary akapatikana akiwa na shida ya *gonorrhoea* na *ball*.

#### 7. Narrative: Mwekuru na twana twawe

**Narrator:** Mr John Lika

**Age:** 34 Years

**Profession:** Works with Igembe South Youth enterprise Fund

**Audience:** Initiated girls, their parents and guests

**Place:** Athi Methodist Church

Ni kwari na mucitari waari na mwana wa mwiji na mwana wa mwari. Batatiene na miaka iigita riinene. Neendi kaana kaa kakamwali nikariaga kacumbukiite muno na karigaga kakiuracia Ngiina okeeta kumaga,

“Mami *mbona mimi sikupewa kama ile ya Boy?*”

Kaana kao bakeeta Boy. Okamwiji keeta kumaa, kamwali nako nikakwenda kumaga ya uu? Nikakwenda kuumaaga ya kaiji. Nibuu ontu nkuubwira atiiri, maantu yaa bwerega kwira aana baa ai bakerwa nau oome na bakeerewa na njira ititite atia? Na njira itibuugi. Oka Boy keeta kumaga kamwali nikakwolelia. Keeta kakauria ng’ina,

“*Mami mbona mimi sikupewa kama ile ya Boy?*”

Neendi ng’ina niuntu ni kaana atikuenda gwita atia? Atikuenda gukeera. Iindi akagacokeria aakeera atiiri,

“*Usijali, utapewa yako tu.*”

Neendi yoontu iina akacokeria akeera yau ni *maumbile yake na Boy yale ni maumbile yake*, amwira, “*Utapewa tu*”. Kamwiji nikakurire mwanka kataanwa na kamwali nikakurire iindi koo katatanirwe. Kamwali nikaariite kacumburi niuntu buu sana kari unkinyithia miaka ikumi naguitia kari mbaaru ya *guita form one* kagiciuragia niatia koo kati eyawa kainto kaaria keeri kakaethia atia?

**Audience:** Kakaewa.

*Sasa siku moja* kamwali kaaria kariwiita *form one term* ya mbeere, nikitire lakini *term* ya mbeere nikeethirwe kari na *mimba* na katiaburi kwita na mbeere niuntu nikekirwe kari na mwaana. Kaliwekwa ‘*ball*’.

Nendi riria keejire kiri ng’ina, niuntu riu katierwe miimba, to iina wiina kamwali kawe au keena miimba. Kamwali kaa ka ndibuire twaana twa tumwali kandibwire uuma, mwana wa mwari na mwana wa mwiji, mwaana wa mwari eethagirwa arii mbeere *times three kidevelopment*, kiimathuganio ethagirwa aari mbere *times three* mbere ya mwaana wa mwiji. Neendi niuntu kaana karia nikaturaga kacumburi niuntu buria riria keejire na *miimba term* ya mbeere karigwita *form one*, keerire ng’ina ariukauria,

“Ni mantu atia yaa wathithia?”

Keera ng’ina atiri, “wuuni ndii mwana rii, ni ndaakurire niatia ntaewa kaintu yoontu kaa ka *my brother* uu *Boy*. Lakini riria wambirire, *nitapewa siku moja*, ndetire naaria ntuureene kiri muthaka ugwitua Musa ndamwira buria wambirire. Aambira, ndamwira uria wambire atia? Ntuku imwe nkaewa kainto ya kaauu ka uu...?”

**Audience:** Ya ka Boy,

Na Musa nambirire atanipatia.Si Musa alinipatia!

*Sasa nani tutalaumu? Ile njia ya kupewa niuntu kamwali nikaiciee nikakaewa kainto yoontu karia ka kamwiji ii. Later on, nikacemanirie na ntomurume akamuweka miimba. Kwa hivyo alipewa. So aana baa ni omwanka tubarete ki mitaratara iiji nikeenda tuumba kuwafunza. Tusipowafunza watafunzwa na ulimwengu.*

**8. Narrative: Mwekuru na kaana kawe**

**Narrator: John Lika**

**Age: 34 yers**

**Profession: Works with Youth Enterprise Fund (Igembe South District)**

**Audience: Initiated girls, their parents and guests**

**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

Igiita rimwe karaja, ndeene ya ntuura imwe , nikwari nja imwe itaari na inya buuru kaana mbeba. Ni kwari mwekuru na mukuru na kaana kanini. Kaana kau katathiritie ciumia biili kuuma kari guciarwa. Nikwari mukuru na mwekuru nyumba iu. Mwekuru aratura oome aratia agwatitie ntandikira au ukui na kitanda. Mwene nyuumba aguatitie taawa ya ntaandikiira. Aikumara oome etite gucua gintu ndukeene atia taa yeelekene nakitanda aaria baculiitie *mosquito net*. *Mosquito net* yuawata mwanki. Mami wake aikuiya atirimire kaana kau kulumatene na *mosquito net*. Kaana kaarea kayiire, kaaja ngosi, kaaja *kila kitu*, kaatiwa maluitu. *Lakini* kaana katakuire. Mwekuru neejire. Aikuija noontu ngekuru ciina kiaao mono kaana kaaria niuntu katakuire, mukuru eeja oona kaana katikuwatika. Kaana kaikua Maua Methodist hospital. Bari ukaikia Methodist batiina *uwezo* bwakukathithiiria noo atia bakamuunta ciindano kidogo. Niuntu nikajite kakalumatana na neti. Lakini iithe wa mwana eera mwekuru nikaaba baurage kaana karia. niuntu kaana kaaria kagatua kutesekaa utherii maishene niuntu nikaagire kawete. Nikaaite kakathira *kabisa lakini* nikaenaa indi katari karigukua. Lakini nibuu oontu tuuga Murungu ari njira cia *kucommunicate* uria agagutethia ndene kinya ya *family*. Kaana karia niuntu niketire Methodist *hospital* nakarema kubua na Methodist kuri acunku beejaga kuu. Baroona kaana kau mwekuru atuuraga nako kuu sibitari. Nanukumenya acunku bari uwezo bwa kuthithia mantu. Barakajukia amwe na iina na bareeta nako nau America nikeenda bakathithiiria iria jiiitawa aatia...?

**Audience: Plastic surgery.**

Yii *plastic surgery*. Kaana kau kabuethua. Narua keena miaka itathantu na nikaitiire kinya sukuru. Ngi'ina wengwa niuntu niathithitie *education*, naari mwarimu indi ati ari aikuandikua aitiire America athoomaga *free* na ngari iria aguitithia ni gari jiina mbeba inyingi muno kuu Kenya

**9. Narrative: Mwana na mami wake**

**Narrator: Mrs Lilian Kathure Njagi**

**Age: 31 years**

**Profession: Nturuba Secondary School teacher**

**Audience: Initiated girls**

**Place: Amwamba Girls Secondary School**

Unajua kuna stori nilisoma. Hii stori niliisoma mahali. Nikwari na mwekuru na kaana kaawe. Kaana kau ka mama uu alipata kazi Nairobi. So siwalitoka gichagi wakaenda Nairobi. Kaana ka keta *primary* sukuru nakakejagirua ni gari. Lakini unajua huko nikwa mitaa. Kulikuwa na plot moja hapo na ilikuwa inaitwa plot ya masonko. Na

*with time* kaana kaa *kabefriend* twana tungi turia tuaumaga *from that home (plot)*. Kumbe hawa watu walikuwa *wanatrain* watu kuwa Alshabab. Kwou kaana kaa *with time* kaanjiriria *kuharden*. *Unajua kakakua radicalized?* Nendi ntuku imwe ng'ina wa kaana kaa oona kaana kauma sukuru katiye mubuuko jwa mauku. Nendi ng'ina amuuria, "Ntuukuri, kootigire *bag* yaaku ya sukuru ukathithia *assignment* na mbi?" kaana kau katamucokerie uuntu. *Imagine* si akamchapa. Iii! Nwijiie ukaringa mwana agakurigarira akamwira, "*Next time get a better cane*"

*Already* amekuwa mgumu. Na areera ng'ina akeeja kuthugania kuumuura rii, nonga acoe kiboko gikiega. Si mamake alishangaa. Iii! Hio maneno akaiweka moyoni mwake. Nontu kuribuo mtu onaa mantu akabuika nkorone yawe keenda ntuku ingi buakarika akaburikana. *The following day* huyo mtoto alienda shule hakurudi. Alilala huko. Sio mamake akaenda kuona vile *ilihappen*. Eta sukuru kuthingatia. Mwana uria arikuurua ni mwarimu na borisi cietwa ni rio augire alikuwa anaaenda *training* ya *Alshabab over the internet*. Niu mwana naari arikumenya kutumiira thimu. Aajukajia thimu na *akajoin groups* iu cia Alshabab na *kuchat* na twaana tungi turia tuari tuikwaa *radicalized* turia tukwenda kuaa *kujoin* Alshabab. *Another negative effect of internet batukuchataa* bakiionaga *fighting styles and how to use a gun via the internet*. Na vile watoto hao wanaibiwa wanaenda na wanakuwa Alshabab.

#### **10. Narrative: Mwari**

**Narrator: Mrs Lilian Kathure Njagi**

**Age: 31 years**

**Profession: Nturuba secondary school teacher**

**Audience: Initiated girls**

**Place: Amwamba Girls Secondary School**

Nimeona mtu pale *stage* ya Maua town. Msichana alikuwa amevaa *trouser*. Ubaya alikuwa amevaa *trouser* hii ya *material*. Saa alikanyanga chini kutoka juu ya gari. ilipasuka, paa! *Na aari ba ntuku iyi batikamataga cindano! Aari bantuku hiyi batikamataga lesso!* So, ingekuwa zamani angepata mtu wa kumsaidia. Lakini kwa kuwa watu wa siku hizi hakuna mwenye anabeba sindano na ilikuwa masaa ya asubuhi hakuna mwenye alikuwa amefungua (duka). Si alichekelewa na makanga. Mimi niliingia gari na nikaenda ndio sikuwa nataka *kujistress*. Ndio hata ningekuwa na lesso singemsaidia nayo ndio simjui na nilikuwa ninaenda. Lakini sasa hebu *imagine that situation*. Nilikuwa naambiwa njioni alichekelewa na watu hata wengine walikuwa wanataka *kumrape*. Walikuwa wanamwambia, "Si hio ndio ulikuwa unataka? Wacha tukupee!" *This is erosion of culture and loss of dignity.*

#### **11. Narrative: Mukuru na ngekuru ciawe**

**Narrator: Ms Gladys Muthoni**

**Age: 27 years**

**Profession: Secondary school teacher**

**Audience: Initiated girls**

**Place: Athi Methodist Church**

Nikwari na mukuru wagurite mwekuru wawe. Arikugura mwekuru wawe oona atikumenya *kuspread* gitanda bubueja. Nucie *kuspread* gitanda nikuga atia?

**Audience: Eee**

Kuuara gitanda. Sasa huyu baba akaona huyu bibi *anabore*. Sasa hata hajui kutandika kitanda. Watoto hawaoshi nyumba. Sasa nitafanya nini? Niende nikaoshe? *What will I*

*do?* Sasa nitafanya nini? Niende nikaoe tena? Unajuaa alifanya aje? Aatiga mwekuru uria eeta aura mwekuru ungi. Sasa huyu bibi naye alikuwa anacucu kwa kitanda. Unajua kucucu kwa kitanda ni kufanya nini? Sasa huyu anacucu kwa kitanda na mwenye hajui kutandika kitanda ni nani mzuri?

**Audience:** Ni mwenye hajui kutandika kitanda.

Sasa huyu mzee akasema “Uuui ni Murungu, baba no wuume buna ugeeta bunanana iii? Niatia nkethia indi? Mbite nkaure uungi kana niatia nkethia indi? Akaenda akaoa bibi mwingine? Huyu bibi naye alioa alikuwa mlevi wa kupindukia. Uuu ni mwekuru wa baana?”

**Audience:** Wabathatu.

Aaua aa wuuni ntiumbana na mpanga ii nandi. Indi niatia nkethia? *Akaenda akaoa bibi mwingine.* Mwekuru huyu noe eejire aari mwamba atari. Mwamba wajaga kinya ruuji. Uraibua mwamba ukuija ruuji? Mwamba wakupindukia. Auria atiiri, “Yii Murungu baba aii ni bubuu bumberekerete? Indi ntikimanya? Ararukiira mwekuru huyu noe. Eeta oja *the fifth wife.*”

Aua indi ndirienda kuoya uu ari wa mwisho na mbaanirwe. Aai kuoja uu noe ri, aari muroi uroete ee.

Auwa atiri, “Indi murungu baba rii, ai nibubuu bumbererete? Akaa bakuana baana?”

**Audience:** Bataano.

Kuuina uria utiumba kubuithia gitanda, na kuina wakucucu ururi, kuina mlevi na kuina mwamba na kuina muroi. Auwa nendi kuuma ruari nkurekana na nteto cia kuojana. Eeta ooka kanyumba kaawe aaria, naaka ka muroi oaria, naka ka muamba oaria, naaka ka uria wacucu ururi wo aaria. Na acoka ooka kangi aa. Auwa o muntu acimenyere wengwa. Bendelea, bendelea bendelea. Indi ntuku imwe mwekuru uria mlevi eeta aleva, aleva, aleva aanite arawa mutaruune. Aikumama mutaroone rii, butionaga nobuo alevi balebaga bakamama mitaroone? Muka uria muroi nawe etite amutirima amami mutarune amuuura mwanka akua acoka amuitankanga inuku inuku bia kubuithia uroe. Mwekuru huu akioona rii nimwekuru muiru oke oroa. Eeta era mukuru wake atiri, “winanuu mukai ninkuora mwekuru waku.”

Neendi toka ageeta kaira mwiru. Nibuibacua mukuru tiwe kiongo kia mucii kuuara kana kuuara. Neendi eta era mukuru atiri, “Itu kankuire ni mukuru, wenda kumboroa umboro, mbithire mwekuru njirene uria waku ndamuraga na nti wicii ni mwekuru waku. Nendi tukethia atia? Mukuru amwira jukia wikire nkuniene harakaharaka tuite nkuonie naria tugeta uuta. Beeta, beeta, beeta kuuraja bamuta imiri bia mwiri juu. Kuumbe mwekuru uria mlevi niabathiatite mbaala, mbaala etite kuona nimbi mukuru wake na mwekuru uju bakamatite. Tuu uu kiguu na njia. Ojukia nkunia ira, na acokia mucii kwawe.

Ariukinya nyumba rii, akunura lessa na nkunia oona nimbi okamatite. Aikunura rii akiona rii,

“Uuui uuui!”

Etanga kaira mukuru, “Eeju umbonere mukai niatia...”

“Uuui niatai mukai ndojere aka babai? Kamata ntuti imwe ucokie naaria uritiire.”

Eta eera muka uria waumaga gitandene bakamate beete gutaa o murima juria juungi. Anukumenya kuria kuanirwa nikukuii? Mwekuru uria *wacucu* gitandene noe abathiatia etite kuuona nimbi akaa babangi bakamatite akiuaa nibo beendi ni mukuru. Etaa kubu! Kubu! *By the grace of God* mwekuru uu akunura oona ni kiimba. Aa! nuibagua mwekuru wa muromo ni muromo yua murire. Oona buu atikiira. Aa uraibua

rwimbo ruria rua kachina *village*? Na naarii muntu umuui niuntu naari na icalii gikii. Buabua kaluimbo kau ka kachina village?

**Audience:** Eehe

Thikiria ntento cia kachiina *village*

Nguui yake ni muromo na cucu cucu

Riria ndiina nthiina muromo ni cucucucu

Nanangi ndatharimua, wee utitigaa nikwari

Utuuraga ukiugaga uuni ndi *illuminati*

Weega bwaku ni buriki we wiira urimuco?

Muka uumui ni uumui. Eeta *aripoti* kwa borisi na aua uria umuragite ni *so and so*. Ngekuru cionthe ona mukuru beeja baguatua. Mukuru aguatirue niuntu buai? Niuntu akaa baa bonthe ni bake. O mwekuru uu aurua, akauwa niwe wambathire nthithie uu na uu. *At the end of it all*, baa boonthe bathekwa.

## 12. Narrative: Mukuru na Mwekuru Wawe

**Narrator:** Mr John Mungathia

**Age:** 44 years

**Profession:** ECDE teacher

**Audience:** Initiated boys, their parents and guests

**Place:** Wesley Boarding School, Nturuba

Ikwari mukuru na mwekuru wawe. Iibuthikiritie kaloono kau luui? Nikwari mukuru nauu?

**Audience:** Na mwekuru wawe.

Naatariite mwekuru wawe, *very beautiful and very smart*. Naari *very beautiful and very loving and can be seen*. *And the man was very handsome and can be seen*. Nendi beendana na batharimwa na twaana two. Bwana asifiwe?

**Audience:** Ameen

**Narrator:** Batharimwa na twaana twana?

**Audience:** Two.

Indi mwekuru uyu nari kimaramari. Noontu nawe muntu ai kimaramari muntu amwona akaua “Tikiu kimaramari kia mwekuru kikwija, tikiu kimaramari kia mukuru kikwija. Twaana tuatua kumia oau. Tuatua kuumia ku?”

**Audience:** Oau.

Akeera mwekuru, “Iwe mwekuru, ka kaana kaatua kuumia aa, oau mwarine na utiukauria?” Ntuku iria iingi akethira kithumba kia maai oau. Riingi na riingi akethira kithumba kingi. Akauria, “Murume ntabwirire buthirie nteto iji? Ai rukaimba!”

Mwekuru aremaa. Mwekuru ethia atia?

**Audience:** Areema.

Twaana tuendelea kuumia oau. Tuendelea kuumia kuu?

**Audience:** Oau.

Mwekuru arema. Nendi nikuthuukirwe mukuru acia bwagwita. Nyumba niagire ya maai. Nendi eeta acuua mashabiki yangi utuku. Noontu mwekuru naregere kueraa maai eeta acua mashabiki yaangi. Acuua mbii?

**Audience:** Mashabiki yangi utukuu.

Neendi noontu naregere kuera maai eeta acua mashabiki yangi utuku. Mashabiki yeeja yaujuria mutoola au cuu, itua. Ai! Mwekuru akija rii!. Abababaa!!! Itua au ri kutiukinyika. Mukuru amwira, “Ntakwirire, ai rukaimba.”

**Narrator:** Shetani ashindwe.

**Audience:** Ashindwe

Ntakwirire atia? Ntakwirire rukaimba. Ntakwirire. Mwekuru eeta gutitika ntintiko atikumanya kuria juumiite. Nendi niatia nkuendaa kuua murume? *Usipojenga ufa utajenga ukuta. Utajenga nini?*

**Audience:** Ukuta.

Ukia kuona nyumba ii ithenduki aa uu nokarea kuthinga na kaciimiti. Utibukairia nyumba ii jiya kumomoka ii jonthe nawooka iingi injaru.

### 13. Narrative: Aaki

**Narrator:** Mr John Mungathia

**Age:** 48 years

**Profession:** Kambene, ECDE teacher

**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests

**Place:** URA Methodist Church

Nikwari na aaki, na nibookaa baibo beeli. Nibaari na kiracha kiria kiunganacia ciimiti na muthaanga. Bookaa ngoroba; umwe aari iguru uungi nawe noka ataira ari nthi. Nooka ataira. Nooka ataira aa. Nendi nontu sauti iria irinthi itikikuibikanua nau iuru na uria uwoka nakuenda kuaria na uria uri nthi aa. Nendi keenda aria nawe nontu akumuita na akurema nikuibua; ararita kanoti ka mirongo itano. Amucia kiongo kuu! Mutane ajukwa mirongo itano iji ekira kiondo. Endelea gukoroa, gukoroa, gukoroa. Ai muntu uju ari iguru aciuria aningi muntu uju nakuibua ninkuenda kuaria nawe? Ajukia iana akuthakutha amwelera iana riu kuu! Ajukia ringi ekira iana riu muukone, atikuenda kumenya ina iana riu rikuma. Acoka ajukia maana jeli akuthakutha ringi amuringa nario kiongo kuu! Ajukia ekira muuko. Atikuenda kumenya inaa igana riu rikuma. Acoka ajukia kinya maana yaili. Akuthakutha amuringa nario kiongo kuu! Ai bukucia *aerial!*. Yakucieni *aerial* mboone. Ari buri kiraci. Ria muuthia ajukia kaiya. Ajukia mbi?

**Audience:** Kaija.

Ajukia kaija yakaa. Aramuringa kiongo kuu! Aii mutaane alolelia iguru amuria, “Murume nimbi undingiira?”

Amwira “kuuma riria ngwitire notikuibua noka ukujukia mbeca ugikaira mubukone. Rii ndakuringa na iija nirio ukuenda kumenya nuu ugwitaana?”

**Narrator:** Bwana asifiwe.

**Audience:** Ameeni.

Nendi nika nkuenda kwira nthaka iji atiiri...kinya riria bukionaga mawega bulikanage kinya mawega naa jakuuma, bukarikana kinya mwarimu noo aburitanaa, bukarikana kinya muciaru no aburitaana, tibukara naria nendi buona mantu yamai nirio bukacoka kiri muthinjiri aburombera.



**14. Narrative: Tusamaki na kaiji**

**Narrator:** Mr John Mungathia

**Age:** 48 years

**Profession:** Kambene ECDE teacher

**Audience:** Initiates, their parents and guests

**Place:** Athi Methodist Church of Kenya

Nikwari na ruii ruruingi. Ruui ruria rwejire rwakondoria rutere rwa iria riu ruacoka iriene ringi. Ruui ruu rwatiga tusamaki tununu nau rutere rwa ruui. Kaiji kanini keeja kanjiriria kuthuranira tusamaki turia kaitwelaa ruujine. Okajukia kakatuela ruujine, Okajukia kakatuela ruujine. Indi muntu umwe eja amuuria, “Ntukuria, inkuona samaki injingi ni uu *million* iri aaa. Ugaitethia murume gucokia samaki ii cionthe?”

Kaiji kaa karamwira aatiri,

“Kinya kethira ntiumba kucokia cionthe ee *at least* nkonokia inkai.”

**Narrator:** Bwana asifiwe.

**Audience:** Amen.

**Narrator:** Praise God?

**Audience:** Amen.

Babui ari kinya kethira nibukuona buri bakai babui nibui buumba gutumiria nkuma injega kiri bangi nau nturere cienu. Babui bueta naa nturere bukeeneza injili ouu ndona buwatiitie misumaa na aciari benu nabo beeta bakieneza injili jeendelee jakuria kuethia atia?

**Audience:** Kutana.

**Narrator:** *Praise God.*

**Audience:** Ameni.

**15. Narrative: Ukuu na mutego**

**Narrator:** Pastor Caston Lubetaa

**Age:** 52 years

**Profession:** Pastor East African Pentecost Church

**Audience:** An initiated boy, parents, relatives and friends

**Place:** St Peters' Academy school, Kiiji town

Baria barimaaga Kianda nibaicie kanyumoo karia keetawa uku? Igita rimwe mutego ni yuaikirwe nikeenda yuwatia uku kenda uku itakaarie mpempe. Aiku Munene niwe nkuira? Uku riria yeyire, iraunkuma muteoni, yathuanacia itiwatuaa. Niirio mutego yualathukire, uku irawatwa. Uku irikuwatua, yawwire atiiri, ni iuru rionthe riakunikila uku cionthe ciawatuaa. Ninkuenda kukurikania atiiri, ti uku cionthe ciakukunikirwe. Ni uku imwe yawatirwe iria yaukumire muteone. Kuuma antu baa bonthe baririe kuri mantu baukwira? Weta kukilana nayo waukuma muteone, watua kuwaa ni antu bonthe bena minga. Indiu niwenka aki ukethirwa uri thinene. Weta umaramarine wawatua ni A-I-D, ehe! Wawatua, watua kuwaa waremera ati ni antu bonthe bawati ni AID. Utiri ni wengwa watua kuriraa ukiculacia mata. Mutana wa baba, mutana okwa, riu ni irungo ndakua. Tuuria wonokuo, buakukulikia mantu yau yonthe. Nontu wina wonokio, ukamenya naria kuina thina.

## APPENDIX VII

### A GLOSSARY OF KIMERU AND KISWAHILI WORDS

Alleluyia	:	A word mainly uttered in the church to praise God
Ameru	:	The indigenous people living in or outside Meru County whose ancestry is linked to the Meru people
Chapattis		Flat unleavened bread whose origin is northern India and Pakistan.
Harambee		It is cooked among Kenyans and is treated as a delicacy. The coming together of community members to willingly contribute for a need in the community such as paying school fees and medical bills for deserving cases
Kachina village		A derogative title among the Igembe people that is given to those who cause trouble in the village by spreading rumours about others.
Kamuithania/ Kamwaa		Refers to the person involved in conducting the last ritual of burning of the boys circumcised traditionally before leaving their seclusion site.
Kiini Kiiru		It is a name used to refer to God by the Igembe people.
Kimeru		Language spoken by indigenous members of Meru community.
Kimunguu		Name of a traditional dance group situated at Kijiji.
Kirarire		The song sang overnight on the eve of traditional circumcision of boys among the Igembe people and is well known for its didactic value. It is also sung on some specific days in the hut where boys are kept in seclusion.
Kiretheretie		This is a Kirarire song that is sang in ARP ceremonies but with changed wordings, has didactic value and has a tune like that of a Kirarire song.
Kirimara		The Igembe people believe that it is the sacred mountain and that their God resides there. It is also called Mt. Kenya.
Kiruunya		A tool used for circumcising girls among Igembe people.
Kiswahili		The national language of Kenya.
Kongo maituturo		An indisciplined person
Lessos		A Swahili word for a piece of cloth tied mainly by women around their waist when doing chores to protect one from dirtying one's clothes
Maendeleo ya Wanawake organization		An organization of women in Kenya that advocates for their rights.
Mbeeria		Name of an age group from the Imenti people
Miraa		Shrubs whose leaves are chewed as a mild stimulant and are mainly grown and sold as a cash crop by mainly the Meru people in Meru county.
Mugumo tree		A sacred tree among Igembe people under which sacrifices to God are offered.

Mugwe	Name given to a great leader/prophet of the Meru people.
Mpithio	The last ritual done on traditionally circumcised boys among the Igembe people
Murungu	Name of supreme God worshipped by the Igembe people.
Mutaani	Name used to refer to a man who traditionally circumcises males among the Meru people
Njuri Nceke	The Meru council of elders
Ngutu	A term used to refer to a circumcised girl among the Meru people
Nkenye	A derogative term used to refer to the uncircumcised girls among the Igembe people
Ntaanira mwana na mugambo mwana athome	Circumcise the child with the word of mouth so that the child can pursue her education
Nthaamo	A tool used for circumcision of girls among the Igembe people.
Salaala	A Swahili word used to indicate surprise.
Ugali	A dish cooked using boiled water and maize flour.
Waswahili	People from Coast who mainly speak the Swahili language.


**APPENDIX VIII**  
**A GLOSSARY OF SLANG WORDS**


<b>Ball</b>	Pregnancy
<b>Cucu</b>	Grandmother / an elderly woman.
<b>Kadogodogo</b>	A young promiscuous woman cohabiting with a married man.
<b>Kibondi</b>	Illegal bottled cheap brew that is mainly drunk by the poor.
<b>Kucucu</b>	A euphemistic word which means to urinate
<b>Kampango</b>	A young promiscuous woman cohabiting with a man who may
<b>ka kando</b>	be married.
<b>kando</b>	
<b>Kupupu</b>	A euphemistic word which means to defaecate
<b>Mdosi</b>	A very rich person.
<b>Sponsors</b>	A term used to refer to men who keep young girls as their mistresses. The man and the woman have a symbiotic relationship. The man receives sexual favours from the female who reciprocates by offering financial support to the woman he is having an affair with.
<b>Watchie</b>	A watchman.

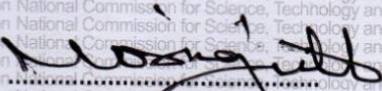
**APPENDIX IX**  
**PERMIT FROM NACOSTI**

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**  
**MS. SEVERINA NKATHA IMIRONGO**  
**of CHUKA UNIVERSITY, 79-60600**  
**MAUA, has been permitted to conduct**  
**research in Meru County**  
**on the topic: ORAL LITERATURE IN**  
**ALTERNATIVE RITES OF PASSAGE**  
**AMONG THE IGBEMBE PEOPLE OF MERU**  
**COUNTY, KENYA.**  
**for the period ending:**  
**16th November, 2017**

**Permit No : NACOSTI/P/16/54538/13989**  
**Date Of Issue : 16th November, 2016**  
**Fee Received :Ksh 1000**




  
**Applicant's Signature**

  
**Director General**  
**National Commission for Science,**  
**Technology & Innovation**

**CONDITIONS**

1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit.
2. Government Officer will not be interviewed without prior appointment.
3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.
5. You are required to submit at least two(2) hard copies and one (1) soft copy of your final report.
6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice

  
**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

  
**NACOSTI for Science,**  
**Technology and Innovation**

**RESEACH CLEARANCE**  
**PERMIT**

**Serial No. A/1934**

**CONDITIONS: see back page**

**APPENDIX X**  
**NACOSTI RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER**



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,  
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,  
2241349, 3310571, 2219420  
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249  
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke  
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke  
when replying please quote

9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Utalii House  
Uhuru Highway  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/16/54538/13989**

Date:

**16<sup>th</sup> November, 2016**


Severina Nkatha Imirongo  
Chuka University  
P.O. Box 109-60400  
**CHUKA.**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Oral literature in alternative rites of passage among the Igembe people of Meru County, Kenya*," I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Meru County** for the period ending **16<sup>th</sup> November, 2017**.

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Meru County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

  
**DR. M. K. RUGUT, PhD, HSC,  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner  
Meru County.

The County Director of Education  
Meru County.

**APPENDIX XI**  
**PERMIT FROM CHUKA UNIVERSITY ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**CHUKA**

Telephones: 020 2310512  
020 2310518



**UNIVERSITY**

P.O. Box 109  
Chuka

**OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN**  
**INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Our Ref: CU/IERC/NCST/16/10**

30<sup>th</sup> June, 2016

**THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**  
**P.O. BOX 30623-00100**  
**NAIROBI**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE AND AUTHORIZATION FOR SEVERINA NKATHA**  
**IMIRONGO REGISTRATION NUMBER, AM10/07868/12**

The above matter refers:

The Institutional Ethics Review Committee of Chuka University met and reviewed the above mentioned MA Literature Research proposal titled: Oral Literature in Alternative Rites of Passage among the Igembe People of Meru County Kenya. The Supervisors are **Prof. Zachary Waita and Dr. Colomba Muriungi**

The committee recommended that after candidate amends the issues highlighted in the attached research clearance and authorization check list, the permit be issued. Attached please find copies of the minutes, research clearance and authorization check list for your perusal. Kindly assist the student get the research permit.

Yours faithfully,

**Kibet Komen**  
**For: CHAIR**  
**INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

cc: BPGS

Chuka University is ISO 9001:2008 Certified



**APPENDIX XII**  
**PERMIT FROM MERU COUNTY COMMISSIONER**



**THE PRESIDENCY**  
**MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND COORDINATION OF NATIONAL**  
**GOVERNMENT**

Telegrams:  
Telephone:  
Email: [ccmeru@yahoo.com](mailto:ccmeru@yahoo.com)  
Fax:

COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
MERU COUNTY  
P.O. BOX 703-60200  
MERU.

When replying please quote  
Ref: ED.12/3 VOL.II/8

And Date 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION – SEVERINA NKATHA IMIRINGO**

This is to inform you that Severina Nkatha Imiringo of Chuka University has reported to this office as directed by the Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation and will be carrying out Research on “**Oral literature in alternative rites of passage among the Igembe people of Meru County, Kenya**”.

Since authority has been granted by the said Commission, and the above named student has reported to this office, she can embark on her research project for a period ending 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2017.

Kindly accord her any necessary assistance she may require.

*C. Keah*  
COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
MERU COUNTY  
P. O. Box 703 -60200, MERU

*C. Keah*  
C. Keah  
For: County Commissioner  
MERU



### APPENDIX XIII

## A MAP OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING OF THE RESEARCH IEBC REVISED IGEMBE SOUTH CONSTITUENCY COUNTY ASSEMBLY WARDS

