

Abstract

There is a current growing interest in intercultural studies throughout the world emerging from an increasing desire for people to learn something about their neighbours in order to boost inter and intra communal harmony. This paper documented some aspects of African male circumcision rites which are threatened by western modernizing trends. In the contemporary society, there is an ongoing debate on the preservation and expansion of indigenous knowledge with regard to religio-cultural practices. The nature and practice of pre-modern Tharaka male circumcision rite, the changing trends due to the introduction of modern circumcision methods, the effects of modern circumcision on traditional view of male initiation rites are discussed. The data informing this paper was gathered through library research and was supplemented by oral interviews with purposefully selected respondents. The main argument is that, both the pre-modern and modern forms of Tharaka male circumcision have merits and demerits hence, the need to integrate both systems. This is only possible if dialogue is instituted between practitioners of both systems. The article concluded by expressing the view that African culture has numerous cultural elements that can be utilized to suggest possible solutions to some of the challenges facing the contemporary Tharaka society.