

The Significance of the Nandi Traditional Religious Practices on Traditional Medicine among the Nandi

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Abstract- The practice of traditional medicine has been affected by challenges such as arrival of Europeans which marked a significant turning point in the history of this age, long tradition culture which threatened its survival. However, the practice of traditional medicine among the Nandi could have been affected by challenges such as modernization, stigmatization, and urbanization. This paper has elucidated the significance of the traditional religious practices on traditional medicine among the Nandi of Uasin Gishu County including curative significance where different health issues facing community members were dealt with accordingly, use in religious and cultural activities where sacrifices were offered to god as a form of worship to god, maintaining peace and order where errand members were brought to order by being punished using a certain tree species observing totems, taboos, rituals among other functions.

I. INTRODUCTION

According to WHO (2019), 80% of the people living in developing countries rely on indigenous medicine. In addition, Romero-Daza, (2002), observes that, prior to the introduction of the cosmopolitan medicine, traditional medicine used to be the dominant medical system available to millions of people in Africa in both rural and urban communities. Indeed, it was the only source of medical care for a greater proportion of the population. Furthermore, WHO (2005) also argued that over 75% of the Kenyan population depend on indigenous medicines. This has been attributed to the religious significance and the benefits the traditional practices on medicine holds in the society which include but not limited to the following; healing of patients attacked by different kind of disease, protection from physical

and spiritual attack. The practice of traditional medicine has been affected by challenges such as arrival of Europeans which marked a significant turning point in the history of this age, long tradition culture which threatened its survival as observed by (Hillenbrand, 2006). However, the practice of traditional medicine among the Nandi could have been affected by challenges such as modernization, stigmatization, and urbanization, unsustainable harvesting practices of medicine, Christianity, formal education, population increase, political interference and corruption. This paper sought to find out the significance of the traditional religious practices on traditional medicine among the Nandi of Uasin Gishu County.

II. CURATIVE SIGNIFICANCE

The use of local flora is important in traditional medicine. The findings of the study indicated that the Nandi in Uasin Gishu County, practice the use of herbs, leaves, roots for healing illnesses. The herbalists prepare it in form of ashes or liquid so as to administer to the patient. The medication is administered depending on the age, weight of the sickness and the type of the attack, i.e. is the disease caused by spiritual forces or physical cause (FGDs, 27/11/2022).

The above findings are supported by eye Russelet. al., (2004) when he argued that majority of native plants are used to treat various illnesses. Herbs can be utilized in a traditional setting to welcome good spirits to a homestead, ward off evil spirits in an individual or in the community, and protect children and expectant women from witchcraft and the evil.

Uprety & Asselin (2012), agree with the findings of the study and the above scholar when he argued that

medicinal plants have been used in traditional healthcare systems since prehistoric times and are still the most important healthcare source for the vast majority of the population around the world. They further estimate that 70% to 80% of people worldwide rely on traditional medicine to meet their primary health needs. This might be because of the reasons based on traditional knowledge systems that existed in the local communities for generations.

Sibanda & Mothibe, (2019), wraps up the discussion on the findings by agreeing with the above scholars when they reported that traditional medicine has been used by African populations for the treatment of diseases long before the advent of Orthodox medicine and continues to carry a part of the burden of health for the majority of the population; and further that plays a role in health, in terms of preventive, curative and even palliative health care.

Table 1: Plants conserved through the Nandi beliefs and practices

Name	Nandi beliefs and practices
<i>Simatwet</i>	Sacred tree
<i>Emitiot</i>	Sacred, lit fire, weapons for ceremonies
<i>Sinendet</i>	Coronation for runners, winners and initiates
<i>Lamaiywet</i>	Preserve water towers
<i>Tendwet</i>	Lightning arrester

Source: Diviners, (8/11/2022), Herbalist, (10/11/2022), Elders, (15/11/2022).

The study findings further revealed that the Nandi traditional medicinal practices have brought about well-being of the community hence a many people are dependent on it to cure the different ailment that they are suffering from. This was supported by Iwu (2014) who noted that medicinal plants have been a vital source of both curative and preventive medical therapy preparations for human beings, which also has been used for the extraction of important bioactive compounds. WHO (2019) also agreed when it estimated that almost 80% of the world’s total population, regularly, depends on traditional medicine and products for its healthcare needs especially in third world countries. Many sick people in the developing regions combine the conventional medicine with traditional medicine. Traditional

medicines are usually cheaper than modern medicines, and probably the only natural remedies available and accessible in the remote rural communities in developing countries. Rural dwellers prefer traditional medicines because of their close proximity to the traditional healers and the fact that the healers understand their culture and environment as well as their patients. In rural areas, access to western healthcare is a problem especially in the Sub-Saharan countries, because conventional healthcare is concentrated in towns.

Banquar (1995), in the same breath, argued that traditional medicine plays a vital role towards the well-being and development of rural population and that herbal therapy although still an unwritten source is well established in indigenous people’s cultures and traditions and has become a way of life for almost 80% of the people of Africa. Further he adds that many diseases which could not be cured by the allopathic or other systems of treatment have been cured by African traditional medicine.

The above is supported by Kipkore (2014) who argued that Traditional Medicine remains an important component of healthcare in Sub-Saharan Africa largely due to prevailing poverty, inadequate health services and the shortage of health workers.

A Nandi herbalist claimed that all diseases including those transmitted sexually, those allegedly terminal illness and those resulting from supernatural forces such as curses are treated able by the use of Nandi traditional medicine.

Furthermore, in Nandi community traditional medicines were used to protect women and children from evil eyes. According to (*Elders*, 20/11/2022):

People with evil eye were evil men and women. Their powers are in their eyes, this power were released anytime they see anything good, like healthy animals, beautiful homestead or even people who are healthy. Whenever they see such, the power is released mystically. Usually they discover with horror that they can cause harm without their intention by merely looking at an object or person. To treat the affected patient an herb was given to them in powder form. To

protect one from being affected the medicine was tied round the waist of an individual or in the arms wrist. The animals were protected from evil eye by planting a tree in their shade



Figure 1: a tree planted to protect the animals from evil eye

Source: Research 2022

Kombo (2003) agree with the Nandi when he pointed out that evil eye is witchcraft and not a disease. It caused by people possessing mystical powers. He further argued that the problem could not be treated by using ordinary medicine but an herbalist could treat using liquid jelly and tobacco leaves through massaging.

The researcher noted that indigenous plants among the Nandi are commonly used in healing various sickness like mumps, diabetes, cancer among others and also for spiritual healing for chasing of demons, protection of infants, adults and homestead. Women are the best custodian of the practice of the traditional medicine.

III. UTILIZATION IN RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The study found that the Nandi had their own ways of practicing the religious and cultural activities to bring about wellbeing in the community. This according to the respondents brought religious fulfilment to the individual or the community at large.

The elders and the women are to gather in a tree known as (simatwet) Baobab for ceremonial activities. The elders take with them an animal which is considered pure for sacrifice; this involves the shedding of blood of that animal. Sometimes they also take offerings such as milk, foodstuffs and honey. The religious gatherings can also be held in or around caves and mountains.

Kigenet, al., (2013), concurs with the above when he pointed out the secular and holy activities coexist in every African community. The activities might include making sacrifices, praying, participating in initiation rituals, producing beer, and managing weather conditions like drought and rain. Other customs include the ritualistic cutting down of sacred trees, gardening, gathering and consuming freshly gathered food, and creating native dishes for cooking and serving meals.

The sacrifices and offerings offered to God was considered as a form of worship which expresses their appreciation of what God has provided for them. Also, this was done in recognition of Gods ownership of their lives and properties. They invoked god (*Asiis*) for special blessings in this holy tree (*kapkoros*), fire was lit and women who are barren were encouraged to take the remains of the lit firewood to their homes so as to continue lighting it for it is believed that the barren woman will immediately conceive. Farmer could also do the same in order to ask for Gods favour upon his farm. (elders, 20/11/2022)

They offered sacrifices and offerings to thank God for their success in life. The elders used a tree known as (*kagarwet*) to avert evil spirits in this community. The elders took a gourd put some seeds and mixed it

with water after which it is used to sprinkle to people and the ground to appease the spirits. The tree is also useful for treatment of mothers, a child suffering from it is given its fruits to carry on her head and go before that tree, and sing then drop the fruits there and run away without looking back. It is believed that the sickness will never appear again. errant members in this community, are punished by use of this tree for instance, if one was accused of stilling and denies the action, the person is taken there by the elders who gave him an arrow to strike that tree, if the person strikes and was guilty he dies on the spot, that is why people in this community fear to do evil. Today the tree is not used for firewood because it is seen as a sign of bad omen. (Herbalists, 20/11/22; Elders,20/11/2022).

On contrary, another tree known as (*sinendet*) was used for good purposes. It is planted on the homesteads and sometimes it grows in the forest. The Nandi believe that the tree carries success, victory and its only used on occasions that depict happiness. For instance, after the prayers at (*kapkoros*) under the (*simatwet*) tree, they travelled home putting on (*sinendet*) to show victory. When members of this community see them come home in that state, they will begin to celebrate because they believe that God has answered their prayers. The initiates in this community were given (*sinendet*) to put on only after they come out successful from their place of seclusion. (Elders, 20/11/22).

The findings of the study revealed that the Nandi attributed illness to many sources. According to one of the respondents;

to us illness does not just occur from nowhere, it must have been caused by something like poor diet, curses from parents, attack by an evil spirit among many other. Various methods were employed to counter the deal with the issue, the ill persons were given the herbal medicines which was to cure their ailments. At times the herbs failed to cure the illness and other procedures like exorcism and other rituals were used in combination with the herbal medicine.

Rasamiravaka, et al., (2015) supports the findings when he argued that ‘African traditional medicine is

characterized by a belief in the supernatural as a cause of illness, divination as a diagnostic tool, and the ritualized use of a wide variety of plants and animal-derived agents in its treatment’

Ebu (2021), agree with the findings of the study when he argued that while allopathic medicine is mainly clinical-based and views disease and illness in terms of organic malfunction, African traditional medicine for its part is holistic in approach and views disease and illness to be disequilibrium of social groups with environment. Unlike conventional and biomedicine, African traditional medicine attempts to provide therapy for supernatural and spiritual etiological agents such as curses, evil spells and bad omen. Conventional medicine has no similar belief system and is more biological and scientific in character; based on science concepts and scientific method for all its claims. The closest it comes to African traditional medicine is perhaps with regard to psychosomatic and psychiatric ailments. Its cure claims unlike allopathic medicine cover diseases and illnesses arising from spiritual and supernatural causes. Notably, traditional medicine practice primarily comprises application of medicaments from natural extracts and appeal to spiritual forces. In African traditional medicine, the aetiology (aetiology) of diseases and illnesses incorporates social, cultural, supernatural as well as spiritual factors and causal agents. With its afore going profiler, African traditional medicine can be a significant contributor not only to Primary Health Care and Universal Health Coverage (meaning medical/ health care for all), but is also one of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasizes having all people receive.

Nyamwaya (1992), agree with the above when he reported that African disease etiology attributes diseases and illnesses to multiple causes, namely: evil acts of humans (e.g witchcraft, black magic, curses and evil spells); violations of taboos and ritual prohibitions by the sick/ill or their family members and blood relatives; other supernatural and spiritual causes such as ancestral wrath; as well as environmental factors such as pollution and contamination. Jomo Kenyatta for his identifies four spirits that are believed to cause diseases and illnesses in the Kikuyu community, namely: Spirits

of departed parents (parental spirits), spirits of departed clan members (clan spirits), spirits of age-group members (age-group spirits, and spirits of other community members (community spirits).

Masaka & Chingombe (2009) argued that among the Shona people of Zimbabwe, illness and death did not just occur without spiritual force behind it. According to them even if the cause of death of a relative is uncontested and apparent, the Shona world will still want to know it. Their argument slightly relates to the findings of the study only that the study revealed about the illness and not illness and death as they have.

IV. MAINTAINING OF PEACE AND ORDER

The Nandi community had their ways of maintaining law and order using different methods. One of the common methods was to use *kagarwet* tree which was used to punish members who had committed a crime and denied. The findings are supported by Iwu (2014) when he pointed out that all African communities have rules of maintaining peace and harmony in the society, and the practice of traditional medicine helped in the maintenance of law and order. Vegetation plays a major role in this system; errand members in the society are punished using certain plant which varied among communities.

An elder interpreted how the errand members were punished. He said that;

In case one committed a crime and denied the action, he/she was taken to where the tree was and he was instructed to shoot it with a spear. If indeed he/she had committed the offence and they go ahead and shoot the tree, they would die on spot.

This was a great way of ensuring that the virtue of honesty is maintained at all time in the society. No person would commit an offence and get away with it.

V. AFFORDABILITY AND EASE OF ACCESS

The study revealed that most members prefer using the traditional medicine that the modern healthcare

system due to its availability and the low cost that it is involved. According to one of the herbalists,

we believe that the herbs have been put to this earth by God for the service of humanity which is why when patients visits us for medication, we don't charge them exorbitantly but instead just take 'cherowot' which is a small token that we are given so that we bless the medicine to work as expected this is unlikely to the modern healthcare; they are very expensive and at times the low class in the society fail to afford their services. Another good thing about us herbalists is that we are readily available to offer our services at any given time including at night. Our clients do not have to book appointments whenever they need our services, they simply avail themselves or when the condition is critical we simply go to their homes. The low cost of traditional medicine can majorly be attributed to the morals of our society that promotes brotherhood and caring for one another that has been in existence since time immemorial. The willingness of the holders of this knowledge to freely disseminate to the young ones cannot be ruled out also as a factor to the low cost.

Gathara (2018), supports the findings when he argued that western medicine is based on science, infrastructure and costly hospital-based curative care that puts undue premium on expensive technology and the meeting of international health standards whilst ignoring local disease problems. Besides, since there is no regulation on pricing and is suited to the economic reality of the economically vulnerable countryside and a majority of the population.

Sindiga (1995) agrees with the above when he pointed out that one of the contributing factors for this affordability of African traditional medicine is that it utilizes indigenous knowledge in the indigenous local communities to meet the health care needs of the people of these communities and is based on community philanthropy of alleviating pain and suffering and achieving the public and community common good rather than profit-making. It is also attributable to the fact that African traditional medicine does not require extensive or fancy infrastructural outlay as does allopathic

medicine and practice. The later requires extensive, expensive, elaborate and structural infrastructure hence requiring huge financial and technological commitment. Pillsbury (1974) has reported that even where such health infrastructure (hospitals, dispensaries and health centers) exists, they suffer from shortage of trained health workers, inadequate supplies and poor management; all translating into non-availability of services.

Wanjohiet. al., (2020) argued that traditional medicine is more affordable than biomedicines (allopathic pharmaceuticals) since being largely non-prescription, they do not need prescriptions to be dispensed, hence they are easy to obtain. Besides, they are mostly existing in their natural state hence cost less to extract as opposed to pharmaceuticals or biomedicines which are developed and manufactured through industrial processes by licensed pharmaceutical companies hence cost more as the research, development, manufacture, marketing and other incidental costs have to be factored into their prices. Traditional medicines are more available in society and traditional medicine has more practitioners (traditional medicine practitioners) than conventional medicine. Regarding its accessibility as compared to allopathic medicine, Sindiga (1995) has argued that traditional medicine is usually decentralized in the sense of being everywhere in the community, hence is available everywhere, unlike in the case of conventional medicine where people have to travel to urban areas and built-up areas to access healthcare- which is time-consuming, inconvenient and costly. Moreover, it is socially acceptable to the community where it is applied, hence has a wide spatial coverage in terms of access, as each community has its own traditional practice, ethno-medicines and ethno-pharmacopoeia.

VI. OBSERVATION OF TABOOS

According to the findings of the study observance of taboos had a significance among the Nandi as it influenced the relationship between human beings and the supernatural. Taboos were also used to ensure good behaviours in the community for both young and old. In support of the findings Turnbull et.al., (2010) pointed out that taboos are passed orally from one generation to another and varied from

community to community due to social cultural and economic organization of a particular community. He further said that taboos are accompanied with reasoning and beliefs; therefore, it influences relationships between human beings and animals, human beings and plants and finally human beings and the supernatural.

Kasere (2010) argued that taboos were a useful way of keeping check on children. Taboo had two parts namely; a 'surface meaning' (a lie) and the truth. He adds that Shona people often use *zviera* (taboos) as one of the ways of teaching young members of their society. The argument of Kasere agree with the findings of the study only that for him taboos were meant to check on children's behaviour but as per the study findings the Nandi used taboos to regulate the behaviours of both the children and the old.

One of the elders pointed out that;

taboos are relevant as it helps in the promotion of cultural values for instance; it is a taboo to practice 'ngokik' engaging in evil activities because when it is done it can lead to death of the descendants ,memwalembech meaning it is a taboo to cheat and this ensures transparency in the daily activities, it is a taboo for pregnant women to eat the meat of an animal which died by strangling because it is believed that the spirits of this animal will follow the baby and will kill the baby by coiling the umbilical cord around the baby's neck. This community also considers the burial of our members at our ancestral land. Therefore, it is a taboo to bury our member away from our ancestral home because it is believed that the spirit of the diseased will haunt the family and cause trouble. Using someone's knowledge on the medicinal plant is also considered a taboo. Also, it is a taboo for the young to quarrel with the elderly for they can be cursed and the same will repeat to them when they come of age. Additionally, taboos ensured preservation of certain tree species for instance simatwet which was used as a place of worship, sinendedet used as medicinal plant and also during celebrations and kagarwet which was used to punish errand members of the society. All this led to conservation of the environment in the long run

for they were only to be used prescribed by our traditions.

Finally, all members of the Nandi community were expected to abide by the taboos failure to which they were meted with severe consequence likes chronic illnesses and madness.

Tatira (2000) supports the finding when he argued that breaking of taboos invites misfortunes such as bad luck, drought or death.

The study further revealed that elders educated the youth during seclusion period on taboos on matters of sex and marriage life. This led the youth to always live an upright life, but if a girl misbehaved and got pregnant before marriage, the child was given out to a barren woman and later on the girl is married off to an old man. The observation of taboos brought about the wellbeing of the individual and the community at large.

VII. OBSERVATION OF TOTEMS

A totem is a practice in the Nandi community that enhanced good relationships between families (Elders 10/10/2022). Before any union or marriage was allowed, a man or a woman, the family elders gathered in the man's home to know which totem one belonged to. They insisted on observance of totem because they were avoiding the practice of endogamous marriage (marriage between relatives), they also avoided marrying from bad families or families with history of chronic diseases inherited from their families, for example, epilepsy, madness, those with super natural powers such as *Orkoiyik*, those practicing witchcraft among others.

To support the above sentiment, Kurgat (2004) argued that totems may be a plant or an animal that people regarded with special awe reverence and respect. Different families attempting to marry brought a tree known as *Koroseek* and put them in front of the house of the girl's family. The elders from the man's family will then decide which family will marry their daughter and a totem helped or guided them.

The findings of the study further indicated that the Nandi used a tree called *simatwet* as a totem to

represent their god *Asiis*. Durkheim, (2016) agree with the findings when he said that totems can be used as symbols that represent God and man. For example, a particular community can worship an object in form of a tree. This shows that the community does not worship the tree but they reflect on what the tree represents.

The study further revealed that members of the Nandi community were discouraged from eating their animal totem because the animal was associated to ancestor and there were repercussions. According to one of the elders,

I belong to hyena totem and when for example the hyena comes to eat the goat of a neighbour I am not supposed to chase it away instead I will just talk to eat and it will go away.

Pfukwa (2014) agree with the above findings when he argued that it is believed by the Shona people that those people who share the same totem are related and may help each other, and if a person may eat his/her totem animal, misfortunes such as illness will haunt him or his family.

The fact that trees and animals are used as a totem ensures that natural trees are being taken care that in turn gives young people an opportunity to learn their heritage.

VIII. MAINTENANCE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SACRED

The study found out that the Nandi had a way of maintaining the knowledge of the sacred as pointed out by one of the elders;

Nandi prayed to god (asiis) as their creator, protector and one who sustained their lives. The elders led the men and women to a shrine (kapkoros) to perform a ritual of sacrifices and offerings for more favour. Children were to accompany their elders to the shrine for it gave them a chance to observe and learn on how the practice was conducted. This ensured that they are in a position to take over the future role of leading the coming generation on the worship. They had sacred plants and sacred animals.

Sacred plants such as the Sinendet were a sign of victory while Simotwet was used as a shrine (Kapkoros). The sacred animals and birds such chepkokosiot, cheptirkichet guided the elders and herbalists to know if the journey will be good, successful or not. Sacred trees represented a church, a holy place of God where people gathered to pray and give thanks to God. The sacred plants tied on the neck of the initiates, tied on the matatus during ceremonies and on the pot carrying beer signified victory to the people concerned.

Durkheim (2016), supports the above discussions when he urged that the plants, animals and other natural objects such as hills, rocks, rivers and cave can be preserved through the knowledge of the sacred.

Since the sacred is perceived as a hallowed location deserving of respect and standing for the supernatural, this instils in the populace thoughts and emotions that enable them to perform their traditions. The Nandi people believed in a supernatural being, (Asiis) (sun), to whom they presented prayers every morning and evening. They also had special prayers conducted under sacred trees, especially after harvesting to offer thanksgiving. They would slaughter a white sheep whose intestines were read by the elders to establish if there were any impending calamities. They also wore charms on their bodies for protection against evil spirits and sicknesses.

Each clan had a sacred site which was an area set aside for prayer and consulting their God called Asiis. Some mature men who were set apart after undergoing several traditional ceremonies and considered clean (*'libwoben'*) in the community would go to these sites, usually a hill, for a period of time to carry out their sacred activities, pray and consult their ancestors and Asiis. These people actually served as priests (*tisik*) in the community. They performed special roles in cleansing, blessing and, in extreme situations to 'curse' if individuals never owned up for crimes committed. Herbalist (18/11/2022) reported that every family had their hill *'kitinyeikapchitugultulwengwai'*.

IX. EXECUTION OF RITUALS

The study found out that in traditional Nandi community, preservation, prolongation and transmission of human life was the major concern of all religious rituals. Human life was protected and prolonged in the world to an old age. Tradition required everyone in the community to preserve and transmit life to the next generations through marriage between opposite sex with an objective of getting children. Earthly life however prolonged did not make life complete among the traditional Nandi. There was belief in life after death. (Elders, 10/10/2022) argued that;

The dead who enter and live in the emetaboi, the world of the living dead become oikabkapchii, family ancestors. The oikabkapchii does not only live in the world of the living dead. More importantly, every family name their new born babies after their oik, the living dead in a naming ceremony called guurset. The guurset, ancestral name became the spiritual guardian of the child for the rest of his/her life.

Hence, everyone in traditional Nandi was connected with the world of the living dead and the ancestral world through the *guren* name. However, no dead person was elevated to ancestral level and new born children named after them until his/her *ng'anyet* ritual was performed which made *ng'anyet* a critical ritual in the life of an individual in the community. Without the ritual, dead persons neither entered the land of the living dead nor were the new born children named after them. Instead, the dead would remain roaming around the family homestead and in their anger caused sickness, dead or barrenness to the family members for being abandoned. Hence, the living family members were careful not to ignore *ng'anyet* ritual for a deceased member. They had a religious duty to facilitate the journey of their dead kinsmen and women to the land of the living dead by performing *nganyet* ritual. Everyone knew that after his/her death, he/she would be made an ancestor and children born thereafter were named after them. Evidently, the ritual was a form of traditional canonization of the dead as those who entered the ancestral land became family and community saints (Ndungu & Mwaura, 2008). Everyone in the

community looked forward to a time in the distant future beyond death when he/she would be canonized through *ng'anyet* ritual. Therefore, the future nostalgic bliss made the ritual a source of inspiration, confidence and hope in the face of death.

The desire to be made an ancestor protected the traditional Nandi from indulging in any immoral behaviour or committing suicide common among the contemporary Nandi

as pointed out by one of the elders.

The ritual was a pivot, the meeting point and hinge for the traditional three stages of cyclic life namely: earthly life, life after death, and spiritual rebirth of the dead in the world. The ritual played a critical role in the religious structure of the traditional Nandi.

X. FOLLOWING THE RITES OF PASSAGE

The study found that the Nandi trained their initiates on the practice of traditional medicine and the significance of the practice to the community. Initiation included not only rite of circumcision but also initiation into the secret rituals of the tribe and the teachings of tribal customs. Kilonzo, et. al., (2009) supports the findings of the study when he argued that rites of passage in almost all African communities bound the initiates to the natural environment. The initiates are secluded, taught and oriented to their future roles which varied between communities.

The study further found out that the months the initiate spent in camp were a time of training for adulthood. It was almost like being in school for that period of time. The teaching done to initiates while in seclusion was known as *kaayaaet-aaptaarusyeek*. The initiates learned many practical things which would help them later in life. On leaving, they were proud of what they had learned in camp. The passage of rite was and still is training that aims at churning out responsible men and women that drive the community. The initiation is like baptism in Christianity which gives the new convert membership into the church.

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