

**PUPILS', TEACHERS' AND PARENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE
INFLUENCE OF CIRCUMCISION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A
CASE OF WEBUYE DIVISION OF BUNGOMA DISTRICT, KENYA**

BY

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY
DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**MOI UNIVERSITY
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JULY, 2013

DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY THE STUDENT

I, Sella Okolla Mutsotso, declare that this research proposal is my original work and has not been used for research by any other person in any other university.

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DECLARATION BY SUPERVISORS

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DEDICATION

To

My loving sons

Wabwoba and Mutsotso.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I recognize my supervisors Dr. Mulambula, S.M. and Prof. Rev. Walaba A.A for their special contributions and dedication towards the writing of this thesis. They helped making this thesis a must read for all, scholars and non-scholars alike.

Gratitude to my husband Barasa towards the preparation for the actual research. My children Wabwoba and Mutsotso, for their patience as I went about the research and the preparation of the report.

Special thanks to Dr.Beneah, M. M for the special support towards completion of the course. Above all, were it not for the almighty God, the thesis would never have come to completion.

My God bless all of you even those whose names are not mentioned.

Sella Okolla Mutsotso

ABSTRACT

Circumcision as a rite of passage among the Bukusu people of Bungoma District is primarily meant to serve as a transition from childhood. Only boys are circumcised although girls are active participants in the preparations preceding the surgery. The boys are basically in the early puberty and in upper primary school. More than half the number of children enrolled in school drop out before completing their primary education. This was thought to have serious implications concerning the quality of labor produced which may have a direct effect on the quality of life in the area concerned. The dropout rate for boys was reported to be higher at 57.45% than that of the girls at 53.1% (Bungoma DDP 2002-2008). This study was conducted to investigate the perception of the influence of circumcision and related beliefs and practices on academic performance of primary school pupils in Webuye Division of Bungoma District. The study was based on the Eriksonian theory of Psychosocial Personality Development. The theory proposes that at every stage of life people go through crises, which must be adaptively resolved. The resolution involves a shift in perception that requires refocusing of instinctual energy in accordance with the needs of each stage of the life cycle. This necessitates a change in behavior and personality. The findings of this study will help teachers to understand the pupils' attitude towards circumcision and with that knowledge they can be able to plan their teaching programs to cater for their pupils' academic needs before and after the ceremonies. The government through the ministry of Education may formulate guidance and counseling programs that help to retain the youngsters in the education system by reducing the drop-out rates. The study was conducted as an ex-post-facto research with data being collected by use of questionnaires. The target population was 148840 primary school pupils and accessible population was 2440 class eight pupils. Eighteen schools were randomly selected so that 488 class eight pupils, thirty teachers and thirty parents formed the sample in which girls and boys were represented in the proportions in which they appeared in the population. The data was analyzed by use of two-way analysis of variance. Validity of instruments was established by expert judgement. A pilot study was conducted and using test-retest method reliability indices obtained as 0.82, 0.78 and 0.91 for pupils, teachers and parents questionnaires respectively. Pupils, teachers and parents have a neutral perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. Pupils' perception is influenced by sex while teaching experience does not influence the teachers' perception. Male and female parents have no significant difference in their perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. There was improved academic performance after the ceremonies. Pupils actively take part and eagerly look forward to the next season. More research is required with a larger spectrum of subjects to investigate and establish the existing state and conditions prevailing in the schools during the circumcision ceremonies and factors that attract pupils to these ceremonies.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
THE PROBLEM.....	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the Study	3
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	13
1.3. Objectives of the study	17
1.4. Research questions	18
1.5 Hypotheses.....	19
1.6 Variables	19
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	19
1.8 Delimitation of the Study.....	21
1.9 Assumption of the Study	22
1.10 Theoretical Framework.....	22
1.11. Operational Definitions of Terms.....	27
CHAPTER TWO.....	31
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	31
2.0 Introduction.....	31
2.1 Types (Categories) of Circumcision.....	31
2.2 Initiation among the Bukusu	32

2.3 Origin of Male Circumcision among the Bukusu People	37
2.4 Functions and Importance of Circumcision	41
2.5 Effects of Circumcision	47
2.6 Conclusions.....	51
CHAPTER THREE	52
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	52
3.0 Introduction.....	52
3.1 The study area	52
3.2 Population of Study	55
3.3 The Sample	55
3.4. Sampling Technique	56
5.3 Research Design.....	57
3.6 Instrumentation and Pilot Study.....	58
3.6.1 Validity of the Research Instruments	58
3.6.2 Pilot Study and Reliability of the Research Instruments.....	59
3.7 Data Collection	59
3.8 Data Analysis	60
CHAPTER FOUR.....	61
DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS	61
4.0 Introduction.....	61
4.1. Sample Demographics	61
4.2 Pupils', Teachers' and Parents' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance	62
4.3 Teachers' Teaching Experience and their Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance	65
4.4 Type of School and Pupils' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision of Circumcision on Academic Performance	67
4.5 Parents' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic.....	70

Performance.....	70
4.6 Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Pupils’ Academic Performance Before and After Circumcision	71
4.7 The Influence of Pupils’ Gender on the Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance	73
4.8 Summary of Results	74
CHAPTER FIVE	76
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	76
5.0 Introduction.....	76
5.1 Summary.....	76
5.2 Conclusion	81
5.3 Recommendations	81
5.4 Suggestions for Further Research	82
REFERENCES	84
APPENDICES	87
APPENDIX 1: Pupil’s Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance.....	87
APPENDIX II: Teachers’ Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance.	92
APPENDIX III: Parents’ Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance.	97
Appendix I: Introductory Letter.....	101
Appendix II: Informed Consent Request.....	102
Appendix III: The pupils’ perception of the influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance.....	103
Appendix IV: Teachers’ Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance.....	104
Appendix V: Parents’ Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic	105

Performance..... 105

Appendix VI: Map of Study Area..... 106

Appendix VII: Research Permit..... 107

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 ANOVA Source Table for Pupils Teachers and Parents Perception of the 63	63
Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance 63	63
Table 4.2: The Mean Scores for Perceptions of Pupils, Teachers and Parents on the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance. 64	64
Table 4.3 Anova Source Table for the Teaching Experience and its Influence on the Teachers’ Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance 65	65
Table 4.4 ANOVA Source Table for the Type of School and Pupils’ Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance for Boarding and Day 68	68
Table 4.5 ANOVA Source Table for Type of School and Pupils’ Perception of the 69	69
Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance for Public, Private and Special Schools. 69	69
Table 4.6 ANOVA Source Table for Parents’ Perceptions of the Influence of 70	70
Table 4.7 ANOVA Source Table for Pupils’ Academic Performance before and after Circumcision Ceremonies (Cignificant at $\alpha=0.05$) 71	71

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of variance
Bungoma DDP	Bungoma District Development Plan
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
REM	Rapid Eye Movement

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

1.0 Introduction

Circumcision among the Bukusu is a compulsory rite of passage that marks the end of childhood and the entry into adulthood. For purpose of identification with the community every young Bukusu man undergoes circumcision, which involves the removal of the foreskin (precipuce) from the penis.

Circumcision which is known as *siikhebo* in *Lubukusu* dialect is celebrated at two years interval, always coming in the even year. The operation is performed by specially trained traditional surgeons called *bakhebi* (*omukhebi* singular) who are believed to possess the spiritual talent or gift of *bukhebi* bestowed unto them by *Wele Khakaba* (God the Provider).

Ability to circumcise which is known as *bukhebi* in *Lubukusu* dialect is rare and is only practiced by specially selected individuals through the ancestors for the benefit of the Bukusu community. Hence the art of circumcision is found in specific families from specific clans of the Bukusu community. They include: Babaasaba, Bayaya, Babamanga Basime, Baley, Batobo, Babasaya, Basonge, Basang'alo and Baengele.

A circumciser must be a first-born circumcised male who is married and whose first-born child is a boy. When a woman is possessed by the spirit of circumcision she is accorded the cultural treatment but is not allowed to perform the actual operation. This is because in the Bukusu culture females are not circumcised. Nevertheless, the circumcision period among Babukusu is a period full of activity. All are involved irrespective of the age, sex, or occupation. The actual surgery is a reserve for young boys since girls are not circumcised. The main stakeholders of the education system (learners, teachers and parents) are not excluded. Their activities may have a direct influence on the quality of education. This chapter discusses the research problem under the following subheadings: the background to the problem, statement of the problem, the significance, purpose, objectives, hypotheses, assumptions, limitations, theoretical framework and operational definitions of terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Circumcision is a rite of passage, which is keenly observed among many communities of the world. It marks an important transition stage in a person's life. In most of the Kenyan communities, circumcision of boys involves the removal of the foreskin (precipuce) from the male sexual organ. According to Magesa (1998: 62), "if there is a time an African person's (read-Bukusu) life during which a veritable forest of symbols is employed for the sake of instruction, it is during the period of initiation (circumcision) "Initiation is marked by special symbolic activities such as seclusion from the community oaths of secrecy, induction into certain groups, societies and blood friendship and dramatized instruction.

Chapple (1970: 317) observes that, 'symbols produce a state of heightened awareness. In most cultures, a variety of techniques are used to intensify and stereotype the interactional activities such as chants, incense, drugs, alcohol and music with its primary emphasis on the beat, expressive movement in form of dance or prolonged gymnastic gyrations'. The Bukusu initiates, *basinde* in *Lubukusu* dialect hit jingles or bells known as *chinyimba*, rhythmically to create a beat that flows in the music and chants that accompany and characterize circumcision ceremonies. This usually marks the beginning of the elaborate circumcision ceremony and is known as *khuminya* in *Lubukusu* (cheering the initiate).

Circumcision as a rite of passage involves separation, transition as well as incorporation of those participants who are undergoing the rite. It is a crisis that

requires a shift in interaction forms and ordinarily for the participants (initiates), learning new ones. The initiates shift their childhood interactions to adult, responsible and respectable interactions. There is a change in language and general behavior and conduct which involves discarding the childish, immature ways of behaving and adopting new ones associated with adulthood.

Once circumcised the boy's relationship with the mother is expected to mature and gradually end the childish attachments. He is separated from the uncircumcised children and avoids the company of the mother, girls and other women. He sleeps in a separate house (*esimba*) from his parents' house. The mother's bedroom becomes out of bounds to him. This separation is meant to lead maturity in the emotional attachment developed during the Oedipal stage of the psychosexually development. Also, the games and sex roles associated with these interactions are gradually thinned out to ensure end of childhood.

Circumcision is obligatory in societies that embrace it. Not only must one undergo the surgery but also participants must carry out the rituals even if, as is sometimes observed, they have to be dragged through the motions by other. The initiates who must also observe the laws and taboos of the community for a happy and successful adult life must adhere to cultural education and guidance. For instance the initiate takes an oath that he has crossed from childhood and will no longer be seen naked in public. The initiates are cautioned against irresponsible sexual activities. The circumcisor gets the opportunity to explain the relevance of the painful surgery that

one goes through. They are taught about God the creator of the community. They are required to have unquestionable respect and obedience to God (*wele*) who is perceived to be greater than anything else. The saying employed is ‘*wele kachoa akhila ekekile*’- meaning that God is greater than even an incalved cow.

Respect for parents is stressed. They are taught that life is sacred hence they must never kill through the saying “*enyama ya mboko okinyola khusibumba*”. Mboko is a metaphoric reference to human being and that one should not murder. Another law that is keenly taught concerns theft. That they should not steal (*siabene sia moni, kulikho nebabikha*- one should only see but not steal what does not belong to him). Incest is discouraged and it carried a penalty of death. In the Bukusu traditions, an initiate must be 12 to 15 years of age or older (Makila, 1978). It is believed that at this age can understand issues and contribute to discussions.

Societies that practice circumcision have cultural expectations to observe. Deviation from the cultural expectations induces emotional stress. Any disparities contribute to disturbance. For example among the Maasai of Kenya, the boy cannot undergo circumcision, or a girl clitoral excision, unless the father has performed a ceremony known as “passing over the fence” which signifies his acceptance of the status of an “old man” to be called from then on ‘father-of (his child)’ (Van Gennep, 1960). Among the Bukusu an uncircumcised father cannot perform the welcome ritual for his initiate son, as is custom on the morning of circumcision. He is sidelined and his duty performed by a circumcised elder brother or classman while he remains a spectator.

A Bukusu initiate visits his maternal uncle on the day before the actual operation. His uncle offers a gift of appreciation in form of bullock. During this occasion the maternal uncle guides, counsels and encourages the nephew to face the painful operation that will transform him into a man. The breast meat of the bullock is cut into an apron (*likhoni*) that is worn over the initiate's shoulders. He walks back to his father's home with it where it is removed by his father amid circumcision songs. At this point the initiate is at the threshold of the operation to be performed early the next morning. That night there is feasting, dancing and singing that goes on until the next morning. The father's generation-set gathered and they keep vigil all night long.

Slaughtering the bullock is pleurably done if the initiate's mother's dowry was fully paid. Otherwise the boy may be denied this gift of appreciation by the maternal uncles. This is usually demoralizing to the initiate since it is cruel and humiliating. Circumcision is a doorway to both social as well as physiological maturity, which begins and becomes pronounced at the onset of puberty. Social maturity involves formation and identification with social groups also known as age-sets or generation sets (*lubaka* among the luhya, *riika* among the Kikuyu). Each generation set has a special characteristic title by which the members are addressed as a sign of respect. There are eight (8) such titles; *kolongolo*, *kikwameti*, *kananachi*, *kinyikeu*, *nyange*, *maina*, *chuma* and *sawa* (Makila 1978).

People who get circumcised in the same year belong to the same age-set and refer to each other as *bakoki* in the lubukusu dialect. Bakokis interact and behave like blood brothers. Their children cannot intermarry since they are considered to be like siblings related through circumcision. A man cannot marry a daughter of his age mate since such a girl is like his daughter. Men who are circumcised in hospital are not culturally incorporated into the generation sets. They are considered to be weak and only belong to the generation-sets of their mothers (these do not exist in the cultural set up). The community generally despises them, as people who were circumcised under anesthesia since they could not withstand the pain of circumcision. The cultural education given after the operation is not fully given to them.

Circumcision among the Bukusu takes place once every two years for four to six times to form a generation set. Thus a generation set can last between eight to twelve years before a new one is formed. It can be shortened to last eight years if the period has many misfortunes. Otherwise, the normal duration is twelve years. When all the generations have been covered, the cycle begins with the first as the Kolongolo age-set. The individual after circumcision develops a conscious self-awareness of his duties and responsibilities, his new status in the community and how to interact with different groups of people in the community.

Socially therefore, circumcision among the Bukusu is a transition during which a boy acquires a new status in the community by being transformed from childhood to adulthood. The initiate gets to acquire the necessary cultural education about the origin

of the community, myths and beliefs about life, the language used by adults and above all the significance of the operation. They are even taught how to swear for example when they are completely honest about what they say or do and are not ready to retract (here they exclaim '*bakheba*'! implying finality or that he is completely honest. They acquire a new form of self-expression, which is distinct from childish language.

Sex education is carefully, but openly imparted. The young adults are taught rights and privileges of adults such as marrying, acquiring and owning property, defending families in times of crisis and contributing in decision making at family level and the community at large. In a community such as the Pokot, initiation is the time to identify warriors since it was through circumcision that the young men displayed their bravery and courage. They were exposed to extreme pain, which prepared them for the difficulties and challenges of adult life (Katam1996).

Circumcision also has a religious aspect. The shedding of blood is meant to blind the initiates to the land and to ancestors who are believed to dwell underground in the spirit world. This is successful only if the skin is successfully cut off to allow some blood to fall on the earth. This blood is treated as sacred and if mishandled it may be a source of failure in the future and is therefore it is guarded and secretly disposed off to prevent witches from getting it. It is believed that among the observers there are witches and people who are evil with ill intentions against the initiate. Due to this, group circumcisions are not popular in the Bukusu community. It is believed that

when it happens, some of the initiates die before they heal and some of those who survive and heal are generally unsuccessful in their adult lives.

The initiate is nude like a newborn at the time of the operation symbolizing the meeting of the living with the dead. The initiate is assumed to die from the physical world just before the operation and to be born in the spirit world among his ancestors, until he is completely healed. He is therefore covered in white clay to emphasize oneness with his ancestors. This concurs with Erny's (1981:149) description of initiation that, "to be born is to die to the beyond; to die is to be born in the beyond while initiation is both rebirth and death". Every step in life is considered to be an advance towards death. It is therefore necessary not just to die in childhood, but to assume death in adolescence in order to accept life. The initiates learn that in spite of their new status as adults, they are mortal. That man has to learn how to die in order to know how to live truly. The initiates symbolically undergo death in reverse. "Initiation death is an entry into culture and therefore a failure of nature, while physical death is a failure of culture," (Katam, 1996:20). The return from seclusion is a rebirth. One is new, with a new title, new status with new roles and responsibilities. There is generally a new rhythm of life since the individual acquires a new personality.

Circumcision also has a psychological function. It involves dramatization of sex-roles. Boys are expected to shake off the feminine tendencies and put on masculine garments to wholly belong to the men's world. They are instructed in ways, which weaken the feminine bond with their mothers. They are kept away from household chores, which

are a preserve for women of their respective households. This is aimed at weakening the bond between the boy and his mother and instead encouraging him to forge a stronger relationship with girls of his age. The rite therefore resolves the cross-sex identity or resolving the Oedipal constellations.

Circumcision symbolized a fertility rite since the penis is considered to be reborn without the foreskin. This meant that even men could have babies thereby clearing the jealousy held by men about the women's ability to make children (Katam ,1996). Initiation involves five significant steps that follow physiological initiation into adulthood. These include seclusion (separation), instruction (transition), physical impression (removal of foreskin), integration and covenant. Initiation among the Bukusu is in form of a physical surgery that involves the cutting and removal of the foreskin from the penis.

Circumcision of boys among the Bukusu involves activities which are awe inspiring. The initiate sleeps in the same room with the circumcisor on the eve of the operation. He wakes up earlier leaving the surgeon a sleep as he is escorted to the source of clay. There he is smeared with cold watery clay, which causes numbness to the skin. This has an anesthetic effect and reduces pain and bleeding during and after the cut. The initiate is escorted back to his father's homestead amid a specific cultural chant known as *siwoyayo*, which dares and teases the initiate to abandon the operation at the last minute. It symbolizes the end of the song and dance and ushers the initiate into the actual operation. This forms the climax of the circumcision ceremony.

The song is sung in full only once for any Bukusu man facing circumcision. Only men sing it since women are forbidden. The initiate is met by his father who holds his right hand and leads him to hearth. While all this is taking place, the initiate's mother, accompanied by other women, are seated with their legs stretched straight on the floor of her house so that she does not catch a glimpse of her son. Men brandishing clubs and ensuring that he cannot catch an eye of his mother also surround the boy. The mother only comes out of the house after the whistle has been sounded to signify a successful operation. Immediately the whistle is blown the mother ululates and rushes out the house to join in the dance. There are praise songs and gifts for the successful operation.

The activities, songs, the fear-rendering attire (*endubiri*) of the operator, together with the wild leaps and sounds of the operator are meant to intimidate and test the courage of the initiate just before the surgery. Everyone is relieved and joyous when it is successful and this is illustrated by the songs of praise and dance. Girls are among the spectators and they admire boys who courageously go through the circumcision process. These activities subject the initiate to psychological experiences and one has to be brave to face and endure the painful process. Any signs of flinching are met with hostility. For example the father is expected to stab to death a child who fears to be circumcised or he is chased away from the community. This leads to a strained relationship between the parents of such boys such that the mother is openly disregarded and even mistreated by the family. To avoid this mistreatment, boys

summon their best courage and girls support them unconsciously out of fear of rejection. Girls adore such boys and pray incessantly to give birth to heroic boys who will earn them praise and love from their husbands. Among the Kipsigis, the cowardly young man is completely sidelined by the family and community until he feels alienated, unwanted, and insecure and finally flees. For the Bukusu, clansmen hold a coward and after the forced operation girls and women sing songs of derision gifts are withheld; he is smeared with blood on the face, which remains unwashed for days. This is an embarrassing experience for the boy and his family.

Presently boys are circumcised when they are still young and still of primary school age. They cannot marry immediately after healing since they are psychologically, psychologically and socially still too young handle wives and children. They are still children who according to the laws of the land, should be in school and under their parents care until they are eighteen years of age. They take a lot of time to adjust and settle back into the demanding school routine both initiates and the escort group (girls and boys who are not getting initiates) may their studies affected as a result of their psychological involvement. There is a lot of distraction since pupils disappear from school with their parents' support. This reduces their school attendance and leads to non-coverage of the academic syllabi by the teachers. As a result, teachers may require more time to be able to adequately complete the work planned for the academic year. Parents support their children's participation in circumcision ceremonies by getting loans from financial institutions to spend on the celebrations.

Some teachers are involved directly since some are circumcisers or circumcision assistants or parents who cannot keep off from the ceremonies once they have started. Thus with the teacher absent the remaining pupils are free to loiter and join the singing and dancing groups outside the school. These activities begin as early as the month of June when the initiates start practicing the playing of jingles and dancing. This being in the middle of the school term, they practice at night after school. Pupils may become sleepy in class during the afternoon lessons. This may affect their concentration, which may have a direct influence on their academic performance.

Some of the cultural education may place the boys at a crossroads of discipline and indiscipline, tradition and modernity. As a rite of passage, a lot of significance is attached to circumcision among the Bukusu. It is an expression of a culture, having its place in a comprehensive pedagogical scheme; it stirs up considerable emotional powers both at the individual and group levels; it takes place according to symbolic ordering which touches man at the deepest level of his consciousness, it proposes to guide him by means of a particularly intense spiritual experience to the threshold of mystical life (Erny1981:139).Activities experienced by the initiates are challenging and may have an influence on their academic performance when they get back to the demanding school program.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the past circumcision rites were performed to usher the young adolescent boys into adulthood. Thus it marked the line between ignorant childhood and knowledgeable

adulthood. It was expected that after these rites of passage the initiated became adults who were mature and could be entrusted with communal responsibilities such as bringing forth the next generation, protection of community welfare and participate in communal decision-making processes.

As such for one to be circumcised had to be above twelve years of age since such a person was believed to be able to understand fairly complex issues and was capable of making vital contributions to important discussions (Makila, 1978). The initiates were guided in matters of family life and were made to appreciate the fact that circumcision was not the end of life but just the beginning of it. As a transition between childhood and adulthood, it was performed in stages through ceremonies involving all the extended family, neighbors and friends, who shared responsibilities, ate and feasted together.

Circumcision involves vigorous activities. The initiate goes through dancing singing, moving from one homestead to another for a couple of days inviting relatives to come and witness the surgery. These activities are strenuous and may leave the young boys with mental and physical fatigue, weak and psychologically stressed as they await the surgery. There may be idlers who indulge in immoral activities of careless casual consumption of alcohol, use of illicit drugs and a general use of obscene language. Girls tease boys to face the cultural circumcision publicly and this discourages those who would have wished to have a private operation in hospital.

Circumcision ceremonies go on alongside formal school programs such that boys are torn between attending school and the impending circumcision. Even during school holidays there are extra tuition and remedial programs to improve the pupils' academic performance. High academic performance in school is the surest way of improving one's social status while enduring circumcision elevates the parents socially, making them proud of their sons. It is also the way to ensure continuity of the Bukusu nation. Both of these make the boys adorable and heroes to their parents, young girls and important others. It is therefore a difficult test the boys must undertake.

To achieve the cultural admiration, the boys begin absconding school as early as the month of June. Some even miss the end-of-term examinations, which are conducted in late July and early August. They delay in reporting back to school when third term begins. Girls are not left behind in this as some also leave school before the term ends and some delay in reporting back in the new term as a result of responsibilities assigned to them due to cultural demands.

School dropout rate for boys is estimated at 57.45 percent and 53.1 percent for girls in Bungoma District. It is not very clear as to why more boys drop out at primary school level but circumcision and related activities are thought to account for some. The Bungoma district development plan, DDP (2002- 2008) raised concern over the same. For a long time now a lot of campaign has been done to sensitize the population about the need to have girls attending school to acquire modern formal education for self

reliance. Early cultural marriages have been discouraged among the Bukusu community, Masaai, Kuria and among other ethnic groups. This is supported by Dobson James (2000) who reiterates that a result of the campaigns on feminism, girls seem to be stabilizing and performing highly in academics.

There is limited documented research to show concern for the influence of male circumcision on academic performance among the Luhya people of Western Kenya. 'It is of concern to note that over half of the children enrolled in school drop out before completing their education. This will have serious effects on the quality of labour being produced and urgent measures must be put in place to ensure that they are retained in the education system. Studies will need to be conducted to find out the causes of high drop – out rates' (Bungoma District Development Plan, 2002–2008: 18). In this relation a study of the perception of parents, teachers and pupils, about circumcision and related activities and its possible influence on education (academic performance) could not have come at another time.

The district suffers high poverty levels among its population. For instance out of the 143, 489 residents of Webuye division it was estimated that well over 61,120 are poor. It represents a very high percentage of the population that is largely youthful (0-24 years). One cause of such poverty, which is highlighted in the development plan, is what they term as 'inhibitive cultural practices.' Inclusive among these practices is circumcision.

Some teachers are deeply and actively involved as circumcisers or parents to the initiates. This may negatively affect syllabi coverage and may translate into pupils' poor performance. The second term's programs are affected since teachers are also absent from school. For instance, according to Wakhisi (1994a), teachers from non circumcising communities are threatened with circumcision and this forces them to flee early before the end of term. According to this report, about one hundred teachers were forced to flee in Wanga division of neighboring Kakamega County as a result of threats of forced circumcision. This interrupted the normal teaching thereby affecting pupils' learning.

Among the Samburu, adolescent girls are circumcised and immediately escorted to their future husband's homes from where they heal their wounds. Those who remain in school do so half-heartedly since they merely wait for marriage. Among the Masaai the circumcised boys train to become morans (warriors) whose responsibility is to guard the community and take part in raiding other communities for cattle. Few continue with formal school education. As a result of this concern, this study investigated the pupils', teachers' and parents' perceptions of the influence of circumcision on academic performance in the primary schools of Webuye Division.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The main objective of the research was:

1. To determine the pupils', teachers' and parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

Other objectives were to:-

2. Find out if the teachers' teaching experience has an influence on their perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.
3. Investigate the difference in perception between pupils in public, private and special schools about the influence of circumcision on academic performance.
4. Investigate the perception of male and female parents concerning the influence of circumcision on academic performance.
5. Find out the difference in perception of pupils in boarding and day school concerning the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

1.4. Research questions

The main research question was:-

1. What is the pupils', teachers' and parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance?

Other questions were:-

2. Does the teaching experience have any influence on the teacher's perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance?
3. Does the type of school (boarding or day, public, private or special) have an influence on the pupils' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance? What is the importance of circumcision of boys?
4. Are there any differences between the male and female parents concerning their perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance?
5. Does circumcision have an influence on the pupils' academic performance?

1.5 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested:-

Ho1: There is no significant difference among pupils, teachers and parents in the perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

Ho2: The teachers' teaching experience has no significant influence on their perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

Ho3: The type of school does not significantly influence the pupils' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

Ho4: The parents' gender has got no significant influence on their perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

Ho5: Circumcision has no significant influence on the pupils' academic performance.

Ho6: The pupil's gender has no significant influence on his/her perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

1.6 Variables

The main independent variable was circumcision. The independent variable in this study was the perception of circumcision while the dependent variable was the pupils' academic performance.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study have shed light on the effects of circumcision practices on education and the pupils / learners as growing up individuals in the society. In the light

of these findings, teachers may be able to plan their teaching in order to complete the recommended academic work within the affected term. There is need for the establishment of guidance and counseling in the schools for the purpose of preparing pupils for the ceremonies and also rehabilitating them at the end of it when schools re-open. Through guidance, parents may be able to circumcise their sons within the month of August. With this knowledge absenteeism and premature closure may be stemmed out of schools. The cultural significance of circumcision should be explained to prevent its negative effects in order to improve the education standards and life in general.

Findings of this study may help teachers to understand the pupils' attitude towards circumcision hence plan their teaching programs. The government can use these findings to educate, sensitize and advise the affected population to adopt more amicable, academic friendly approaches to the cultural practices. It should also take advantage of this and train teachers in guidance and counseling to enable them to handle the cases in as the situation may demand.

The school program can be organized in a way to allow time for the pupils and teachers to participate in the ceremonies without affecting syllabi coverage. This is because circumcision is an important cultural activity that cannot be instantly wished away from the community in question. Academic performance is generally measured by the number of marks obtained by individual pupil in the national examination taken at the end of eight years of primary school (K.C.P.E.). The individual pupil's score

determines the district mean score and the district rank in relation to other districts. This also determines the individual pupil's possibility of continuing and progressing in higher education. Low scores are neither allocated chance to continue with secondary education nor do they get a certificate to recognize the level of education attained by someone.

Desertion of school by pupils in favor of the ceremonies clearly indicates the lack of consensus on the value of circumcision between the community and the government of the day (Njiru, 1981). The school program as scheduled by the ministry of education does not take into account the cultural practice and so it does not provide adequate time for the concerned population's children to participate in their cultural activities.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

This study was mainly concerned with the perception held about the influence of circumcision on academic performance. It did not however consider factors such as environmental, physiological, intelligence or the pupil's percentage attendance, which may also influence the learners' academic performance.

There is limited literature concerning perception of circumcision in relation to formal education among the Bukusu people of Western Kenya. Most of the information available is general referring to all African initiations and circumcision of girls as a rite of passage. The observations made are therefore restricted to circumcision among

the Bukusu and may not be wholly relevant and applicable to other communities except those with close cultural practices with the Bukusu.

1.9 Assumption of the Study

The study depended on the responses of the subjects. It was assumed that:-

1. The responses obtained were true and honest feelings and opinions of the respondents.
2. The end of term marks obtained from schools were reliable and a true reflection of the actual academic performance of the pupils.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

This research was based on Erickson's theory of Psychosocial Personality Development. Erickson assumes that at every stage in development, people go through a crisis. The crisis marks a turning point which can be coped with adaptively or maladaptively. It involves a shift in perspective, requiring a refocus of instinctual energy in accordance with the needs of each stage of the life cycle. This necessitates some changes in behavior and personality (Santrock, 2006).

The theory focuses on the social relationships that people develop with others. Circumcision as a rite of passage is a crisis, which requires a shift in interaction forms for participants. 'It is an initiation process in many tribes, which involves moving into

‘the men’s house’ and out of the parents’ house thereby bringing with it a significant change in free interaction with it a significant change in interaction with the family and in free interaction with age-mates. One may be forced to learn how to interact within a hierarchical system with definite (often severe) restrictions on his freedom to behave as he did formally’, (Chapple 1970:298). The initiation ceremonies therefore provide the means through which the young boys learn the interaction forms required in achieving adulthood.

According to Erickson’s theory, there are eight psychological stages of development, each marked by a crisis. The first stage from birth to one year (0-1 year) is marked by the crisis of helplessness or dependency. The child learns to feel comfortable and trust the parents’ care or develops deep distrust of the world that he perceives to be unsafe. Trust develops if the child is provided with consistent warmth and adequate care. However, mistrust develops if there is inconsistent care, physical or emotional abuse, isolation and deprivation of the mother’s love. Even though, some children are circumcised at this stage as a corrective measure to physical abnormality.

Between the second and third (2-3 years) years of life, the child learns a sense of competence by learning to feed himself, use the toilet and play alone. This is successful if there is help and reinforcement and leads to the development of the child’s autonomy. During this stage there is a conscious awareness of one’s sex and understanding of the sex stereotypes of the culture. For example they learn that boys get circumcised. The Bukusu child learns how to sit as a girl or a boy and this is

clearly demonstrated through role plays with other children. Repeated punishment on making attempts makes the child to feel neglected and develops shame and doubt about his abilities. The will to continue diminishes. Other people's behavior towards the child and the child's behavior towards them influence the child's personality development, cognition, language and social behavior (Ann, B & Maalim, 1998:429).

Self-initiative develops between four to five years. The child plans and carries out his plans without interference. He however develops a sense of guilt over misbehavior when he realizes that he is punished due to inability to live within the parents' expectations. Bukusu children start participating in circumcision rites at this stage through singing, dancing and accompanying those to be initiated. Some are assigned the duty of keeping the newly circumcised (*omufulu* in lubukusu dialect) company. This way they psychosocially get prepared for their turn when they are of age.

Industry or inferiority develops between the age of six and eleven years. The school and home responsibilities such as cleaning his own rooms, shoes reading, looking after cattle or goats and he also learns to take turns during groups activities. Their role plays include how to play the jingles (*chinyimba*), dance, sing and act soloist (group leader). Girls and boys take up these roles in turns and this prepares each for their roles in future. The child develops feelings of inferiority if he is shy and unable to act like his/ her peers. Such children will tend to avoid groups plays and may fear to get circumcised in future.

The sense of identity is developed between the age of twelve and eighteen years. Lack of identity may lead to feelings of confusion about one's role in life. Bukusu boys are ready for circumcision during this period of development. The person develops a mastery of social expectations of the community. For example looking after animals, learning to construct and thatch houses. They develop fantasies about what they can do and try to do it to solicit the parents' approval. The boys nurse the urge to get circumcised in order to join an age set for identity.

On circumcision, the boys gain a sense of belonging to be like their peers. Their roles as men are spelt out as heirs, warriors, providers and protectors they are introduced to the secrets of the community. They get identified as rainmakers, blacksmiths, diviners or circumcision doctors. A young boy who fears to get circumcised becomes a social misfit and is not able to enter the next stage of normal social development. He lacks identity since he does not belong to any age set. He is considered a 'child' as long as he lives. Even though, on his death he must be circumcised before the funeral and burial rites are performed. This enables him to be accepted by the spirits of his ancestor.

According to this theory a person is a young adult between eighteen and forty years of age. He is expected to develop and maintain an intimate relationship with a partner of the opposite sex. Among the Bukusu, an uncircumcised young man becomes isolated from meaningful relationships with others. He is isolated and may suffer loneliness,

which may extend into old age. It is difficult to marry from within the community. Such a man may flee to a place where his circumcision status is unknown. Young circumcised men who are identified as possessing the peculiar gift of circumcision (Makila, 1978) are trained to become circumcisers. Other cultural peculiarities/gifts are also identified and nurtured during this stage of life.

Maturity occurs between the age of forty and sixty-five years. One who has gone through the earlier stages adaptively develops concern with helping others. He leaves children, property and ideas to future generations. He is respected and looked upon for advice and leadership. Among the Bukusu, such men are made clan chiefs, community rainmakers, religious prophets or priests. This again depends on the exceptional bravery displayed during and after circumcision.

Old age is the period after 65 years of age. During this period, one enjoys his investments such as children and grandchildren. It is assumed that he understands the meaning of temporary life. A Bukusu old man is respected and provides the younger generations with myths and cultural folklore. He is perceived to have integrity and wisdom. He can be allowed to perform cultural oratory such as *khusawala kumuse*, which is a cultural send off for the departed Bukusu old man and *lufu* for a respected departed old woman of the community. An uncircumcised old man may experience despair due to isolation. He may be forcefully circumcised and made to marry a woman who has a child born out of wedlock (such a woman is referred to as *nasikoko*). Such an old man may easily be associated with communal vices such as

witchcraft, death and general failure. They become the laughing stock of the community.

Circumcision activities and communal expectations may have an overwhelming influence on the young boys and girls from the Bukusu community. This is true given that the ceremonies provide relaxation from the tight school programs and in a way have some influence on the academic performance.

1.11. Operational Definitions of Terms

Academic performance

Academic achievement in terms of raw scores of marks obtained in end of the term tests in different subjects and their total and average obtained and compared to the maximum possible scores of 500 marks. All schools took the same subjects and tests, which were done at the same time following a common timetable and were subjected to the same marking schemes.

Bakoki

Bukusu men who belong to the same age group. They were circumcised in the same year and share an identity title.

Bukhebi

The art of circumcision. An individual who possesses this gift behaves uniquely and he has unusually high energy that enables him to run at high speed for long distances. His instincts are sharp and can easily sense where there is a circumcision song *siiwoyayo* or ceremony. According to Makila (1978:91), a person possessed with the latent powers of circumcision doctor (Bukhebi) reacts strangely on hearing the ‘*siiwoyayo*’ chant sung.

Bukusu

A Sub-tribe of the Luhya who are a bantu-speaking group found mainly in Bungoma, Trans-Nzoia, Teso, Mt Elgon, Kakamega and Lugari district. The people are referred to as Babukusu.

Chinyimba

This refers to a set of iron-bells or jingles consisting of iron armlets worn on the wrists and the round bells are held in the palms and hit the armlets to create a rhythm.

Circumcision

Is a physical surgery that involves and removal of the prepuce (foreskin) from the penis. Socially the circumcised boys become members of age sets. Circumcision confers one with an identity, which plays an important in his personality development.

Circumcision ceremony.

Involves song and dance accompanied by the rhythmic play of jingles. Rituals of thanksgiving are performed involving slaughtering of a bullock by the initiate's maternal uncle. The climax of the celebration is characterized by the actual operation.

Culture

A system of meanings and customs, relating to things, values, attitudes, laws, protocols, beliefs, goals, morals, physical artifacts, activities and kinds of dwellings shared by some identifiable group of people and transferred from one generation of the group to the next (Ann & Maalim,1998).

Likhoni

A gift offered to the initiate by the maternal uncles in form of a young bull. The animal may be slaughtered and transported as meat or taken away alive. It may also be in form of cash money. It is a gift to usher the boy into circumcision.

Lubaka

This refers to a generation set. There are eight of them in the following order:-

Kolongolo, Kikwameti, Kananachi, Kinyikeu, Nyange, Maina, Chuma and Sawa. The self-introduction of a bukusu man reveals his age set.

Lubukusu

This is the Luhya dialect of the Bukusu people.

Nation

Is a community of people sharing the same beliefs, characteristics and who are related by blood. It consists of sub-groups or clans but are all governed by common traditions.

Omusinde

A male who is not circumcised (basinde for plural).

Perception

This refers to the interpretation, discernment or understanding of activities, which accompany the circumcision ceremonies. Scores from the questionnaires were subjected to ANOVA test.

Private school

It is a school that is run by a proprietor other than the government. Teachers in such a school are employed on private terms and pupils in such a school pay fees although they follow the same syllabi and academic curriculum with the public schools. They also sit for the same examinations and tests and are ranked alongside the public schools.

Public school

Is a government sponsored school having teachers supplied by the Ministry of Education under Teachers Service Commission. Such schools receive government funding.

Special school

Is a school offering primary school education to children with special needs, for example, the deaf and dumb, blind and the mentally handicapped.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses initiation with specific emphasis on circumcision as practiced by the Bukusu people of Western Kenya, Form, origin, functions and effects of circumcision are discussed and related to the pupils' teachers' and parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

2.1 Types (Categories) of Circumcision

Circumcision is practiced the world over by different communities for different purposes such as a religious rite such as the one performed by the Jews in observing the Judaism religion. This is for purposes of identification as a Jew or a slave of a Jewish family or as a convert to the Judaism religion (Exodus 12:48). Non religious circumcision was practiced by the Egyptians as an ancient Egyptian custom symbolizing a rebirth (Ray, G.M, 2000). This category includes circumcision as practiced by most African communities for identification and as a form of initiation especially from childhood into adulthood (Makila1978).Routine circumcision as practiced in the Western European countries and in the United States of America involves circumcision of infants. This kind of circumcision was common place between 1870 and 1920 and it was perceived to be for purposes of preventing or curing masturbation which was feared to be the foundation of several illnesses.

Routine circumcision is no longer popular and presently a very small number of children are circumcised in these countries (Romberg, R, 1985).

2.2 Initiation among the Bukusu

Circumcision is an initiation rite that marks the transition from childhood to adolescence and hence adulthood. A person undergoes initiation with the aim of enlisting his membership into a social group by taking an oath or into a religious group or set or into a community of people related by blood. Initiation ceremonies are symbolic and involve elaborate rituals with changes in interaction forms.

The Bukusu people cut off the foreskin from the male sexual organ in an operation referred to as circumcision. Women do not undergo the surgery. In this community, initiation is performed at the onset of or during puberty. At this stage the person stops being passive and becomes officially, socially and religiously recognized as an active member of his community. For instance the intention of circumcising a boy among the Kurnai people of southeast Australia is to make a momentous change in one's life whereby the past is cut off from one by a gulf he can never repass (Van Gennep, 1960).

It intends to modify the bond between the child and his mother and he becomes similar and attached hence forth to men. Van Gennep (1960) quotes Howitt's report on initiation among the Kurnai people of southeast Australia as follows:-

‘The intention of all that is done at this ceremony is to make a momentous change in the boy’s life; the past is cut from him by a gulf, which he can never re-pass. His connection with his mother as a child is broken off, and he becomes henceforth attached to the men. All the sports and interactions of his boyhood are to be abandoned with these severances of the old domestic ties between him and mother and sisters. He is to be a man, instructed in and sensible of the duties, which devolve upon him as a member of the Maring community’, (Van Gennep, 1960).

Among the Bukusu of Western Kenya, initiation of boys is marked by circumcision rites. The event is repeated at intervals of two years during the months of August. Preparation of the initiates begins several months earlier although the next group of initiates is well aware of their turn as soon as the current one is circumcised. Children grow up with a rough idea as to when they will undergo circumcision and so it does not come as a surprise. Everyone talks about it and waits for it with joy. According to Mbiti (1985), it is a communal and public affair. The community makes a great occasion out of it.

The onset of circumcision ceremonies is marked by a cultural song known as *siiwoyayo* (declaration), which is used to officially declare the initiate’s intention to undergo circumcision. The song is recorded below:

Oooh! Oooh!

Eeeeh! Eeeeh! Eeeeh! Eeeeh!

Omsinde siria mbalu oyo wabira

(There goes the fearful initiate),

Icha mumulole,

(come and see him).

Bukhasia waalila ori mayiwe ta!

(tomorrow morning, do not cry for your mother)

Omusinde siria mbalu acha ebunyolo!

(The fearful go to the uncircumcised)

Omusinde omwangafu, orao bachonga!

(a mature initiate allows complete shaping)

Embalu eyefwe ekhalakhale, orao!

(This is our culture, embrace it)

Ye Mwiwala wa Mango, orao bachonga!

(Originating from Mwiwala, Mango's residence, accept it);

Oria acha ebunyolo! Orao bachonga!

(A coward vacates the community).

The first three lines of the song are sung at the beginning to announce the intention to get circumcised. They are repeated at the maternal uncle's home where the uncle gives advice and encouragement as well as cultural swearing words. These are words and phrases which he is taught to use only when situations demand swearing. The last time the whole song is sung in the morning just before the actual operation. It marks the last occasion when it is sung for the young man. Only men perform the song. Women are forbidden and can only follow the singing group from behind. According to Makila (1978), the song *siiwoyayo* was composed after the fateful words of Mango's mother as she cautioned him about the extreme pain of circumcision. This was meant to

discourage and instill fear in him so that he could abandon the idea of getting circumcised. The aspect of pain was also highlighted by a leading medical physician, Dr. James Prescott (1997) who was quoted as saying that ‘circumcision is painful and the anesthesia is not 100% effective’. This was in a discussion of the importance of circumcision dubbed ‘a case against Circumcision’ in which Western European mothers argued against the routine circumcision of their male infants.

Every activity during this ceremony is symbolic. After the actual operation, the initiate walks backwards entering the house by the symbolizing departure from childhood. He is then subjected to seclusion for three days. Some secrets and cultural education and instruction are given during this period. The circumcisers explain the reasons for the operation. The first meal served after the actual operation is symbolically shared with the ancestral spirits of the land. The initiate is taught about the kind of perseverance expected and which he will encounter as an adult. The operator explains the myths of origin of the community as well as the origin of circumcision. All these are in a small ceremony known as “*lubiito*” (meaning admission or initiation) that symbolizes a formal entry or admission into the spirit world. Only the circumciser, his assistant and initiate’s father attend the ceremony. The surgery is painful and hence the initiate may not be able to feed immediately. This is supported by Dr. Prescott James (1997) that,

‘Circumcision is painful and the anesthesia is not 100% effective and it can even lead to death. The pain has adverse effect on the brain by altering the brain’s perception centres making circumcised boys to have a lower pain threshold than girls and uncircumcised boys. The pain can cause

deeper and more disturbing levels of neurological damage' (p37).

From studies conducted at Washington University School of medicine, it has been discovered that the pain experienced during circumcision disrupts a child's behavioral development. That circumcision is followed by prolonged, unrestful non-REM (rapid-eye-movement) sleep. Feeding is disrupted and the initiate does not look directly into the care-taker's eyes (Mary Ray, 2000).

After three days, the pain has subsided and on the fourth day he is allowed to walk around and mix with others who have been circumcised the same season. He is covered with white clay to distinguish him by his appearance. His movement is however restricted and is instructed against meeting face-to face with females. The freshly circumcised boy is therefore cautioned to avoid close social interactions with girls and a woman is general except his caretaker and mother. He is assigned a helper who is a younger brother to keep him company. The younger boy's face is also painted in the same white clay. These activities are meant to instill in the boy and cultural stereotypes associated with the men and which distinguish them from the females. They begin to see girls and female teachers as being women first before they view them as teachers. Perceiving one's teacher as inferior can have an inhibiting effect on the pupil's learning and academic performance.

The young people get into direct contact with their culture, which does not have a direct relationship with the academic education system. Some may drop out due to

shortsighted interpretations of the cultural teachings; others may increase their efforts in making sure that their academic performances improve.

2.3 Origin of Male Circumcision among the Bukusu People

According to Makila (1978), the Bukusu circumcised their male offspring after long intervals of time. The practice is reported to have been adapted while they lived in Egypt before migrating southwards. It was not compulsory but for those individuals and families which found it necessary to circumcise, they invited the circumcisor to carry out the surgery. However, revival of circumcision and structured age set system among the Bukusu is traced back to a man called Mango who lived at a place known as Mwiwala. This was a village on the slopes of Mt. Masaba (Mt. Elgon). There was a python that threatened to wipe out the community's livestock and children. This caused great anxiety in the community and caused the people to start migrating to safer places. Mango swore to kill the monster. So one day he smeared himself with wet earth, armed with a sword, spear and shield and hid in the cave that was 'home' for the serpent.

Under the camouflage he patiently waited for the enemy to arrive. The serpent arrived and unsuspectingly, laid its head at the entrance in a relaxed mood. He then struck it with his sword and chopped off the head. The head, with jaws maximally wide open, hit and stuck onto the stem of a nearby tree. The tree dried up due to the poison injected into it.

Witnesses of the heroic act were women from the neighboring Barwa community, who reported the incident to their men. The Barwa men promised to honor Mango with circumcision as the gift for his heroic act if he successfully killed the serpent thus, '...if you kill that serpent we will circumcise you.....for you shall have proven yourself an indomitable warrior whose crowning achievement should be circumcision', (Makila 1978:171). Other Bukusu young men were circumcised at the same time and formed the age – set of '*bakolongolo*.' This symbolized circumcision during migration, where people would carry all their belongings (*khukolongola*) as they moved to new places.

Many young men showed the desire to get circumcised and so circumcision was organized periodically. To create order, social strata in form of age-sets were formed. An age-set comprised of men who got circumcised at the same time (Makila, 1978). The age-set as a social group had interactional characteristics that were different from those of the uncircumcised. A Bukusu man who did not undergo this rite was perceived to be immature, a coward and untrustworthy. He belonged to the childhood clubs. He was perceived to be a weakling, unreliable and could not be entrusted with leadership responsibilities. To date these perceptions are deeply entrenched in the community that families get embarrassed when their grown up sons are not circumcised.

To ensure acceptance in the spirit world, the corpse of a grown – up uncircumcised man is operated before it is buried. In this connection, old uncircumcised men are

forcefully circumcised. This is a shared attitude with other Luhya sub-tribes, which observe circumcision. Wakhisi (1994b) reported an incident in which old men from the Wanga sub-tribe of the Luhya were forcefully circumcised in order to make them “real men”.

In the traditional setting, a boy is circumcised at or just after the age of 12 years. At this age he is perceived to be mature and can understand some fairly complex issues and contribute to important discussions. He is also expected to understand moral issues and be capable of choosing between right and wrong. That the individual (boy) from the age of 12 years has the ability, to deal with many variables simultaneously and can draw valid conclusions. He is expected to be socially decisive and capable of making socially acceptable decisions, which permit him to identify with others in the community. Mbuguss (1992:14) reports the former TSC secretary the late John Kang’ali as saying that women or female teachers could not head boys-only schools or mixed secondary schools since the boys would not recognize them as being the ones in authority. The teachings given to the initiates during circumcision may make them to develop negative attitudes towards women. Such negative attitudes can lead to poor performance in subjects handled by female teachers. This would have a direct influence on the overall academic performance of the learners.

Katam (1996) quotes Njiru’s (1981) comments on what the Ameru boys are taught during circumcision that women have no mandate to rule over men. They have several shortcomings and unless they are carefully guided by elders, they can bring the

country to chaos. Such attitudes that boys are men (superior) and women have inadequacies may make the boys as well as girls to perceive their female teachers as 'women' (weak and inferior) first, before they see them as teachers in authority and with authority over them. This may lead to cases of perceived indiscipline especially among boys thereby influencing their academic performance.

According to the Bungoma DDP (2002-2008), it was estimated that well over 57% of boys enrolled in class one drop out of school before completing the primary school education while about 53% of the girls enrolled do not complete the primary school education either. Most dropouts may tend to blame their teachers for their failure to complete the primary school sessions. Such perceptions can have negative psychological impact on those affected. Where this exists, poor results / academic performance is likely to be registered by both pupils and their teachers. The positive perception of circumcision among pupils may influence their performance in schoolwork.

Circumcision is a cultural practice, which was reported to be a major development challenge as well as cross cutting issue. According to the Bungoma DDP (2002-2008), it takes place after every two years and it interferes with economic and educational activities in the District such that many man-hours are lost during organization of the event. The exercise may also disrupt education of boys and girls and that may influence their academic performance. These activities can have a direct impact on the quality of labour produced.

2.4 Functions and Importance of Circumcision

Circumcision as a form of initiation is important for its socio-educational and religious functions. It confers to the circumcised an identity. He belongs to an age-set with a specific title for the purpose of identification with the community. According to Magea (1998), the age-sets have names, which reflect the period or year of circumcision. By the identity of the age-set, a Bukusu man's age can easily be approximated. There are eight age-sets namely; *Kolongolo, Kikwameti, Kananachi, Kinyikeu, Nyange, Maina, Sawa and Chuma*. Makila (1978, p177) says that a bukusu man elaborately makes a self introduction to ensure that his age set is captured. This way he announces his circumcision status. Every age-set consists of six subgroups and lasts for a period of twelve years. The cycle is repeated after 96 years when most members of the first age set have passed on. Through the age-sets circumcision creates unity, bringing people together for social functions. The cut is a mark of identification with the community.

Age sets are also found in other circumcising Kenyan communities such as among the Kipsigis where they are known as *ipinda*. According to Mwanzi Henry (1977:108) the Kipsigis have seven,7 age sets which are very similar those of the bukusu. The Kikuyu also have stratification based on age sets through circumcision. The age sets are known as *riika* in kikuyu dialect. Among the Embu and Mbeere communities circumcision was to prove that a young man was physically strong and mentally wise enough for warriorhood (Mwaniki,1973).For this reason circumcision was performed on young men who were eighteen years or older.

Circumcision serves as a gateway to marriage. The young adult is prepared in matters of sex life, marriage, procreation and family responsibilities. This is done during the last ceremony known as *Khukhwalukha* meaning a re-birth, which is performed after complete healing. At this point they are openly drawn to the awareness that they are men who are capable of procreating. They are instructed in the manner in which they are expected to behave and handle matters pertaining to sex. They are frankly told that the community expects them to develop responsible relationships with women and eventually marry and procreate. The purpose of identification is similar to that of circumcision among the Jews who circumcised their male offspring, their slaves and converts of Judaism for identification (Exodus 12:48, Genesis 17:10-14).

Circumcision transformed the individual from childhood into adulthood and shaped his destiny. He became self conscious, learnt his duties and responsibilities and how to relate with people of different categories. Chapple (1970) supports this by saying that,

“...at transition, new interaction forms must be performed, ordinarily under supervision, with every means used to entrain and enforce correct performances of patterns. At the end, when incorporation takes place, one must begin to interact in the institutions from which one has been absent”, (p327).

Circumcision is a bridge between youth and adulthood. Youth is associated with ignorance whereas adulthood is a period of knowledge. An individual becomes socially more productive and plays a full active role in life as an integral member of the community. Circumcision exposed one's personality. His ability and potential are

revealed physically, emotionally and socially. According to Chapple (1970:318), circumcision acts as a transition from the asexual world and incorporation of the initiate into the world of active sexual activity. There is increased interaction with people of the same age-set and girls. Girls also view the young circumcised males as potential future husbands. In spite of all cultural tutorials acquired, the young circumcised males are expected to continue staying with their parents for a period of at least three years before they are allowed to marry. Casual sexual intercourse is discouraged. This allows the parents to offer guidance and teachings in family life as they prepare the young adults for future marital responsibilities.

Through the bloodshed the young is symbolically bound with his ancestors. It also gives hope that the tribe will grow and not die out. At the time of the operation, the initiate is smeared with clay symbolizing death and admission into the spirit world of the community's ancestors. This is known as *khukhwingila* meaning admission or incorporation. When the initiates are recuperation they stay painted with white clay to appear different from the ordinary. They are assumed to be living as spirits. They do not converse with the ordinary people in the usual way and cannot exchange common greetings with them too. Their food is specially prepared and plates and other utensils are not shared.

It is during the transition period that the initiates are taught the myths of origins of their 'nation' (through Sela and Mwambu). They are taught religious knowledge and the belief in *Wele* (God in the lubukusu dialect), the spirits and dead ancestors of the

community. They learn to pray to God and are taught about the existing magical peculiarities and gifts (*kimisambwa*) of the community. Such include circumcision (*bukhebi*), prophesy (*bung'osi*), blacksmithing (*bubasi*), rainmaking (*bukimba*), medicine and sorcery (*bulakusi*) among others. As Makila (1978) puts it, every clan of the bukusu has got one or more peculiarities.

By the end of the ceremonies and rites, the young people gained confidence that they belonged to in the community. Circumcision is compulsory for communities which embrace it. According to (Chapple 1970:318), deviations from the general communal expectations were asynchronous and induced emotional stress. Fretting, mishandling a ritual object or any form of disparity automatically caused a disturbance and emotional stress. Successful circumcision was a sign of future success.

Circumcision of boys also has a function of hygiene and medication. With foreskin removed, the odor due to smegma is not experienced. It is also believed that it reduces chances of sexually transmitted infections. This is because the precipuce (foreskin) when left keeps germs, which if there were no pocket would not have a chance to penetrate. Circumcision is also a corrective measure for children born with defective penises that cannot pass urine due to tight precipuce.

It is a strongly held belief that children born by uncircumcised men are unclean. This is a strong motivating factor for circumcision of boys in the Bukusu community. In this connection, the rites are carefully performed to ensure that there are no deviations

from the norms. This is supported by Chapple's (1970) argument concerning interactions during initiation as follows:-

‘The interactions are made up of and structured by the cultural dimensions. What has to be done, what object has to be used, what movements and words expressed, the sequence and actions of the participants, all proved the constraints, the limits and boundaries for the interactions which must be carefully observed’,(p.136).

This belief makes performance of the circumcision rites obligatory for Bukusu boys. Before the start of the operations, all knives are collected and cleaned; the circumcisers leave their homes and abstain from sexual activities. Different knives are used for adults and destroyed so that the evil spirit that delayed the adult's early circumcision does not pass to the younger generation. A circumciser does not attend funerals during the circumcision period so that the young boys he operates on survive and do not die. All these were instituted to protect the community's generations against evil.

The above belief of abnormality is very similar to the rationale behind the routine circumcision of children in Western European countries for the purpose of preventative or as a cure for masturbation. Masturbation was feared to be the cause/foundation of such conditions and illnesses as blindness, mental illness, epilepsy, sexually transmitted diseases, alcoholism, paralysis, weakening memory and even listlessness. The masturbation hysteria was so unsettling to the medical practitioners that one wished to ‘...tie, chain or infibulate sexually active children...to

adorn them with grotesque appliances, encase them in plaster, leather or rubber, to frighten or even castrate them,' (Romberg, 1985). Medical physicians believed that circumcision would cure the masturbation hysteria. Dr.E.J Spratling was quoted by Bigelow, J. (2000) that in 1895 he promoted the surgery by saying, '....it is undoubtedly the physician's closest friend and ally...'.Hence in order to be normal, the boys had to be circumcised a few days after birth. The wave for circumcision in the Europe was high in the 19th century but is dying with increasing scientific studies and campaigns against circumcision.

In spite of the keen observations and rules governing interactions during circumcisions, present day school academic programs do not recognize or appreciate their significance. The school programs are conducted continuously irrespective of the season. Boys and girls prematurely drop out of school, marry and own property thereby abandoning the academic programs. During the season of circumcision pupils abandon school programs and actively engage in circumcision ceremonies. With the teachers also only partially present, the academic performance of the pupils is likely to be affected. High dropout rates were reported by the Bungoma DDP (2002-2008). The average years of attendance for primary school is 6 for girls and 6 for boys meaning that most pupils drop out as they near the end of primary education. This happens when they actively get involved in circumcision and their academic performance gets to be affected.

2.5 Effects of Circumcision

Circumcision beliefs and practices have various health, psychological, educational as well as socio-economic effects on the boys, girls and the family at large. Socially the boys interpret circumcision as a license to increased interaction with girls. Only a handful of them continue with education at primary school level and even fewer complete their education up to the university level. As a result more than half of the pupils enrolled do not complete primary school education. Bungoma DDP (2002-2008) reports that more boys drop out and attribute this partly to circumcision among other cultural activities.

Activities involving circumcision are not incorporated into the school's curricula. For instance, preparations commence early forcing school children to temporarily stay away from school until the end of the ceremonies. Traditionally, the initiates are supposed to stay in isolation away from girls until they heal. This is not possible presently since they have to be in school where the population is mixed. They have to take part in the learning process and compete favorably with those who have not undergone the circumcision rites. They have more workload to cover and less time left for revision.

Cultural education can be misinterpreted by the initiates so as to affect their general discipline. For instance teachings such as those introducing sex education (*kumwikule kukwoo kumwikale kwabane*) meaning that the open or free door belongs to you but the closed one belongs to the owner. That the young men are free to seduce girls, who

are not married but should avoid the married women, can be misused leading to sexual promiscuity. As Mbiti (1969: 43) writes, “the boys have learned the mysteries of man-woman relationship. They are culturally allowed to shed blood for their people and are allowed to plant their biological seed so that the next generation can begin to arrive”. This can create confusion in the boys and tend to lose their concentration in academic work which may be affected.

Some of those initiated report back to school late due to delayed healing. Some girls who were charged with responsibilities as caretakers are also forced to delay in reporting. They may perform poorly in examinations and continuous assessment tests (CAT) due to exhaustion and lack of revision. In addition, studies have shown that the pain of circumcision may adversely harm the developing brain by altering the brain's perception centres. It disrupts the young boys' behavioral development and normal sleep is interrupted (Paul M Fleiss, MD, MPH, 1997). There is a clash of interest between the traditional cultural demands and the important socio-economic program of education. With such confusion many boys and girls may drop of school prematurely.

An uncircumcised man is referred to as '*omusinde*' a term derogatively used to belittle a grown-up man who has not undergone the rite. He is generally despised by all and sundry. Marriage for him is unlikely and if he does, his wife may be used to lure him into getting cut. Such men may end up psychologically traumatized and one

may develop psychological disorders due to rejection and lack of identity with the community.

According to Mbiti (1969), circumcision as a rite of passage is deeply sacred and determines the survival of the 'nation' in question. It is the solemn dramatization of the Bukusu man's conquest over death and disintegration. The circumcised boys may go back to school with unresolved stress. They may get even more stress on the realization that some of what they have been taught to embrace clashes with the school expectations. With this kind of stress, their academic performance is likely to drop. They may then be forced to repeat same class for another year of schooling.

Time and again there are reports of miscalculated operations that turn fatal causing excessive bleeding and even death. A good example was in the reports made by Wakhisi (1994a) about boys who died after the ritual due to excessive bleeding. This happened in a village called Milo in Webuye division of Bungoma district. Boys are exposed to other health risks such as the contraction of the killer disease HIV/AIDS in the event of sharing an unsterilized knife.

Levels of poverty are high and quite evident. The DDP also elaborately discussed the poverty among the resident population of the District thus; "there are high levels of poverty due to among other factors, inhibitive cultural practices", (DDP, 2002-2008: 22). For instance, out of the 143, 489 residents of Webuye division, it was estimated that well over 61,120 were poor and living below the poverty line and earning less

than one dollar per day. This represented 41.6% of the population living below the poverty line, quite close to the national level of poverty estimated at 46%. One cause of such poverty is highlighted in the DDP as inhibitive cultural practices, which include circumcision and its accompanying rituals.

There is a shift of the learners' attention right from the onset of the ceremonies. The sound of jingles (*Chinyimba*) and circumcision songs send pupils into a frenzied mood. Their minds are carried away from the classroom and general school activities, running off in the direction of the jingles. These activities may negatively affect the focus of otherwise good pupils by diverting their attention from school routine. Schools have to close earlier than the Ministry of Education term dates. Any delay in closing leaves the teachers with empty classrooms and nobody to teach. This may lead to delays in syllabi coverage which may have a direct negative impact on the pupils' performance in CATs and examinations.

Pupils may perceive circumcision ceremonies as a welcome activity for relaxation and leisure that is not related to schoolwork. Thus they like and welcome it as an easy escape from the school demands. When the initiates delay in healing they may perform poorly or end up dropping out of school. The lost school hours may cause the pupils to feel overloaded and such feelings can influence their academic performance. Some pupils may drop out of school but those who remain may work harder to improve their academic performance with the goal of attaining high grades required for higher education.

2.6 Conclusions

Circumcision as a rite of passage is a useful way of ensuring social development, which presently does not coincide with the physiological puberty since the boys are initiated at a younger age. The ceremonies involve many psychological experiences for the young boys and girls. These experiences are likely to have an influence on the pupils' academic performance. There is the cultural education through which the initiates are taught and encouraged to show respect for elders and legitimate authority, traditional beliefs, ritual practices and close family bonds (Birch & Maalim, p. 424). They are taught about ancestral lineage and encouraged to build on the strong ancestral beliefs and values and discard the weaknesses. This leaves the young people with a new regard towards life and this is likely to influence their academic performance.

Circumcision ensures continuity of the Bukusu nation even though with risks in health, economy and education. These rites could be more beneficial to the community if the school system would prevent the loss of time while the ceremonies are in progress. Pupils enjoy the activities and take them as a welcome escape through which they can exercise.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

An outlined of the research design and methodology is discussed under the following sub-headings described of the study area, the population and sample, sampling techniques and procedures, research instruments, research design and variables. Also discussed are data collection and data analysis.

3.1 The study area

Bungoma district lies between latitudes $0^{\circ}25.3'$ and $0^{\circ}53.2'$ north and longitudes $34^{\circ}21.4'$ and $35^{\circ}04'$ east Webuye division is one of the six administrative divisions in Bungoma district of Western province of Kenya. It is sub-divided into three education zones namely Bokoli, Central and Milo. The division also covers Webuye constituency, which is divided into six wards. (See Appendix VI)

The research was carried out in Webuye division of Bungoma district of Western province. There are two all weather roads that traverse the division. The international Great North Road connects Webuye town to Eldoret and Bungoma towns. The other road links Webuye to Kitale in Trans-Nzoia District. This also links the division to Kapenguria in West Pokot district and to Lodwar in Turkana. Others are mainly murrum roads with the bicycle taxi (known as *bodaboda* in the local language) being the main form of transport.

The division has an estimated population of 143,489 with a rate of increase of 4.3%. Out of these 67,947 were males and 75,542 females. The division covers an approximate area of 269.1 square kilometers. It is predominantly inhabited by the Bukusu sub tribe of the Luhya. The division is at an average altitude of 2,700 metres above sea level. It has a small portion of ungazetted forest at Webuye hills covering approximately 400Ha. It is approximately 500 kilometers to the West of Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya (Bungoma DDP, 2002-2008).

The region is basically an agricultural zone with maize as the subsistence staple food crop and sugarcane as the main cash crop. There is only one factory, the pan-African paper mills at Webuye on the banks of river Nzoia. This is the main source of employment for the local people who provide low-cadre, unskilled or semi skilled labor. The population is generally rural with little economic activity except for the subsistence farming. Houses are generally of low class temporary and grass thatched mud and semi-permanent iron sheet roofed houses. Poverty levels are high and according to the District development plan for 2002-2008 it is estimated that out of the 143,489 residents, 61,120 are poor

Most of the primary schools in the rural areas have mud structures for classrooms. There are sixty-one full schools all offering the 8.4.4 system of education. Two of these are public boarding schools, six are privately owned and two offer special

education for the deaf and the mentally handicapped. Fifty one are public day and co-educational schools.

The divisional education offices are situated at the town council offices in Webuye town, which is also the administrative headquarters for the division. Food scarcity is a major problem coupled with the economic unproductiveness of the region. Levels of school dropouts are high with generally low enrolments in class eight. Few candidates are registered for the KCPE examinations which serve as an entry examination to secondary school. This is attributed to poor performance in class tests, pregnancy and early marriage for girls and lack of examination registration fees among others. Even with the free primary education there are cases of school dropouts due to factors to factors originating from cultural activities which include circumcision.

This area was selected to represent the Luhya people of Western Kenya who unwaveringly adhere to and practice circumcision as a rite of passage. The Bukusu, especially in this formed a good representative sample bearing in mind that they are close neighbors and relatives of the late leader of the '*Dini ya Musambwa*' movement. The late Elijah Masinde hailed from Kamukuywa area of Bungoma (See Appendix VI) and had a strong following among the Bukusu people. This African religious movement strongly advocated for the traditional ways of life, circumcision being among them (Wiper A, 1971). A sample from Webuye division was used to represent the community, which mainly resides in Bungoma district. The district is too large and

it would have been uneconomical, expensive and tiresome to cover all the residents of the district.

3.2 Population of Study

The target population comprised of all pupils (std1-8), parents and Webuye division. The accessible population comprised of standard eight pupils, parents and teachers representatives. These were selected because they are the main stakeholders in education as well as the main participants in the circumcision ceremonies. There were 148,840 pupils, 1800 parents and 915 teachers in the primary schools in Webuye division.

Pupils from the region attend primary schools in the division and they form the group to be circumcised .The others form escort groups. Parents prepare their sons for the rite while teachers are both teachers as well as parents. All are involved and their actions can have direct influence on the academic performance of pupils.

3.3 The Sample

The sample consisted of pupils, teachers and parents. In order to obtain the pupils views class eight pupils were selected to form the accessible pupil population of 2440 in the 61 primary schools and 20% of this was selected forming 488 pupils sample. A total of 30 parents and 30 teachers were selected so that the sample comprised of 15 female teachers, 15male teachers, 15 female parents and 15 male parents. Class eight

was picked on because academic performance is most clearly displayed when the pupils sit for the national examination (K.C.P.E). This provides an opportunity to compare academic performances for pupils from different regions and backgrounds.

There were sixty-one primary schools, with a population of 2440 pupils in standard eight. There were two (2) special schools, six private primary schools and fifty-three public and co-educational day schools. Some of these are in the urban centre of Webuye while the rest are in the rural areas.

3.4. Sampling Technique

Stratified sampling was employed to ensure that all the school categories were represented. In total eighteen (18) primary schools were selected representing twenty nine and a half percent (29.5%) of the number of primary schools in the Division. Two (2) of these were boarding schools, two (2) were private schools, two (2) special schools. Twelve primary schools were selected as public mixed day schools.

Ary (1972) was of the opinion that in social studies, a sample of between ten and thirty percent (10-30%) of the population is an approximate representative for the study. Thus having twenty percent (20%) of the pupils from 29.51% of the schools was an adequate representative sample of the division's schools. Twenty percent (20%) of the pupil population was selected by stratified sampling to form a sample of four hundred and eighty-eight (488) pupils. This consisted of both boys and girls in the proportions

in which they occurred in the population so that there were 210 girls and 278 boys in the sample.

Thirty teachers were purposively selected as the head teacher and standard eight-class teacher. Parents were also purposively selected as members of the school committee. Folded pieces of paper were used to select the schools while the class lists and registers were used to select pupils. Systematic sampling was employed to select pupils at regular intervals of every after three names in the list.

5.3 Research Design

The study used an ex-post-facto research design. According to Kerlinger (1973), this is a systematic empirical enquiry in which the researcher does not have direct control of the independent variables but can only make deductions from facts such as the outcomes of the pupils' academic performance. It is also important to note that the youngsters actively take part in the circumcision ceremonies and the boys undergo the actual surgery. Therefore inferences about variables are made without direct interventions from concomitant variations of independent and dependent variables. Ex-post-facto research purports to discover the causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The variable circumcision was used to determine the perception of its influence on the dependent variable education and academic performance. The research also sought to establish the parents' and teachers' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

3.6 Instrumentation and Pilot Study

Three instruments were developed to measure the perception of pupils, teachers and parents on the influence of circumcision on academic performance. Kerlinger (1973) points out that an instrument is considered valid if the content selected and included in the questionnaire is relevant to the variables being investigated.

A scoring scheme was developed on a three-point Likert scale as follows:-

True	3points
Undecided	2points
Untrue	1point

For pupils negative perception was taken for in the range $x < 46.7$, neutral perception $46.7 < x \leq 65.4$ positive perception $65.4 < x \leq 84$ for teachers and parents the scores were grouped as follows in order to rate degree of perception negative perception $x \leq 40$, neutral perception $40 < x \leq 56$ while positive was for score failing in the bracket $56 < x \leq 72$ (x represents the score attained).

3.6.1 Validity of the Research Instruments

Content validity was established by use of professionals in Educational Psychology. The instruments prepared by the researcher were assessed by the University Supervisors and lecturers from the department of Educational Psychology who established that the items represented the concepts under study. As supported by Kasomo (2007), the instrument is valid if it contains adequate traits expected to measure the domain under study.

3.6.2 Pilot Study and Reliability of the Research Instruments

To determine the reliability of the instruments prepared, the test-retest method was employed whereby the researcher carried out a pilot study in two selected schools from the region so that these schools were not included in the sampled ones. From the results obtained the reliability indices were calculated using the Spearman-Brown formula and obtained as follows: - pupils' questionnaire had a reliability index of 0.82, parents' 0.78 while the teachers' had 0.91. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) a reliability co-efficient of 0.80 and above is an indicator that the data obtained is highly reliable and hence the instrument is reliable. These indices were found to be acceptable and the instruments were adopted as reliable.

3.7 Data Collection

Permission to carry out research was obtained from the National Council for Science and Technology. The data was obtained in form of responses to the items in the questionnaires. The respondents were instructed not to write their names for purposes of confidentiality and anonymity.

The instrument was administered to the sample on the dates that were agreed upon by the researcher and head teachers of the sampled schools at the times agreed upon with the head teachers of the sampled schools. The interviews were scheduled outside the teaching timetable to avoid loss of formal lessons. End of term marks were extracted

from the control mark-books from each of the selected schools. The marks were used in raw form since all schools administered the same tests, which were marked using the same marking schemes.

3.8 Data Analysis

Statistical methods were used to analyze the data collected. End-of-term mean scores were used in their raw form. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for the between- group differences and their significance. The ANOVA is one of the most suitable techniques for testing significant differences of different groups. It works on the assumptions that

1. The population data from which sample were drawn was normally distributed;
2. The variables within groups (samples) were homogenous;
3. The measures within each group must represent random samples (Popham, 1961).

The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Percentages, means and standard deviations were calculated and discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

The data collected was organized, analyzed and interpretations made based on the hypotheses of the research. Each hypothesis was tested using the ANOVA, at a 0.05 alpha level of significance, for between group differences and their significance. The results obtained were recorded in the ANOVA source tables for each hypothesis and discussed in terms of themes based on the objectives of the study. Means of the different groups were also calculated and discussed.

4.1. Sample Demographics

The main objective of the study was to investigate the perception of the pupils, the teachers and the parents of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. To achieve this, a number of null hypotheses were set based on the objectives of the study. Questionnaires were prepared to assist the researcher in obtaining responses from pupils, teachers and parents.

The sample consisted of 488 pupils (210 girls and 278 boys), 30 parents (15 female and 15 male parents) and 30 teachers (15 female and 15 male teachers) drawn for m

the 18 sampled schools from Webuye division of Bungoma district. Out of the 488 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the pupils, 16 (6 girls and 10 boys) were excluded from the analysis due to errors made by respondents. This left the researcher with 472 properly completed copies of the pupils' questionnaire that were scored and the scores used to test the research hypotheses. All the 30 copies of the teachers' questionnaire and 30 for parents were correctly completed hence none was destroyed.

4.2 Pupils', Teachers' and Parents' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance

Each hypothesis was subjected to the analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test for between group differences and their significance. The results obtained were recorded in the ANOVA source tables for each hypothesis and discussed in terms of themes based on themes based on the objectives of the study.

The study sought to examine the pupils', teachers' and parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. This was achieved by testing the null hypothesis H_{01} which stated that, "*there is no significant difference in the pupils' teachers' and parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance*". The table 4.1 shows the results of the ANOVA test significance level of $\alpha=0.05$.

Table 4.1 ANOVA Source Table for Pupils Teachers and Parents Perception of the

Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean sum of squares	F observed	F critical
Between	2	817.36	408.68	6.98	3.02
Within	530	31022.43	58.53		
Total	532	31839.79			

Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$.

From the results of the mean scores, there is a significant difference between the pupils', teachers' and parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. Although all groups of pupils, parents and teachers displayed a neutral perception concerning the influence of circumcision on academic performance, the teachers had the lowest score and pupils had the highest mean score (see table 4.2). The teachers had a general opinion that circumcision had no significant influence on academic performance of the pupils but that performance may be more dependent on the other factors such as individual's IQ, attitude, availability of resources and school attendance other than circumcision. Since the calculated value of F was greater than the critical value of F, the null hypothesis was rejected. It was concluded that there is a significant difference between the pupils', teachers' and parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. The null hypothesis was rejected

Table 4.2: The Mean Scores for Perceptions of Pupils, Teachers and Parents on the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance.

Group	Mean score
Pupils	51.25
Teachers	48.43
Parents	50.4

From the mean values, pupils and parents had higher scores leaning towards the positive perception that circumcision may have some influence on academic performance. Teachers tended towards negative perception that circumcision has no influence on academic performance. The parents and pupils closer to positive perception is supported by the actual performance which was found to improve after the ceremonies. It also implies that the pupils and parents perceive circumcision more positively than the teachers.

4.3 Teachers' Teaching Experience and their Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance

The study further shows sought to investigate the influence of teachers teaching experience on their perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. As a result the hypothesis H_{02} which stated that “*the teachers' teaching experience has no significant influence on their perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance,*” was subjected to the ANOVA test. The teaching experience was divided into two groups, one comprising teachers whose stay in the current stations is less than five years and the other comprising those who have stayed for more than five years in their teaching stations in the study area. The table 4.3 shows the ANOVA source table for the teaching experience and its influence on the perception of teachers.

Table 4.3 Anova Source Table for the Teaching Experience and its Influence on the Teachers' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance

Source of variations	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean sum of squares	F observed	F Critical
Within	1	223.65	223.65	12.23	4.60
Between	28	511.94	18.28		
Total	29	735.59			

Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

The null hypothesis stated that, “the teaching experience has no significant influence on the teacher’s perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance”. The newer teachers with experience of less than five years scored an average of 50.82 while the older teachers scored an average of 45.31 out of possible 72 points on the teachers and parents scoring scheme. This implies that the newer teachers have a perception that circumcision may have an influence on academic performance.

Syllabus coverage may be affected since some teachers may be participants in circumcision ceremonies. For instance some teachers may be circumcisers while others may be parents and guardians to the initiates. During circumcision ceremonies, these teachers may experience difficulties in carrying out their teaching duties since the powerful spirit of circumcision and parental responsibilities involuntarily overcome them. Their classes lag behind and the second term’s work is carried forward into third term. This increases the next term’s workload for both teachers and pupils. In spite of this, results of the research show that academic performance improved after circumcision.

This improvement may have been due to increased effort by teachers and pupils to complete the work stipulated for the academic year. Extra effort and time can lead to the improvement since the pupils are relaxed and focused on their academic performance and there is no more distraction from circumcision anxiety. Attendance for both pupils and teachers drops as evidence in two of the sampled schools.

According to the teachers, negative peer influence is always rife during circumcision ceremonies. These affect academic life of especially girls who get sexually involved with men and drop out of school due to pregnancy. For instance in one of the schools the class started with 43 pupils in January. The number dropped to 37 during the preparations and actual circumcision period. In third term only forty reported back. Out of the three who dropped out 2 were reported to be girls who got pregnant, and one was a boy whose whereabouts could not be explained. In another schools the class started with 33 but dropped to 22 during circumcision period and later 29 after ceremonies. Those out were said to be 3 boys and 1 girl who got married. Psirmoi (2013) reports of a similar case of 17 underage girls from a primary school dropping out of school after being confirmed pregnant. This happened in the neighboring district of Mt.Elgon. The teachers on being interviewed confirmed that such pregnancies are a commonplace occurrence.

4.4 Type of School and Pupils' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision of Circumcision on Academic Performance

The study also sought to find out if the type of school could determine the pupils' perception on the influence of circumcision on academic performance. This was done by testing the null hypothesis Ho3 which stated that, "*the type of school does not significantly influence the pupils' perception of the influence the pupils perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance*". To test the hypothesis five groups of the schools were used as boarding, day, public, private and special schools.

The ANOVA test was used to test the significance level at $\alpha=0.05$ for the boarding and day schools and the results are as presented in the table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 ANOVA Source Table for the Type of School and Pupils' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance for Boarding and Day

Schools

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean sum of square	F observed	F critical
Between	1	233.9	233.9	3.75	3.86
Within	438	27303.36	62.34		
Total	439	27,537.26			

Significant at $\alpha=0.05$.

The results show that the observed value of F is lower than the critical value of F. Pupils in boarding schools scored higher (50.4) as compared to their day school counterparts who scored an average of 48.8 on the pupils' scale. This implied that pupils in boarding schools have a perception that circumcision may have a significant influence on the academic performance whereas their counterparts in day schools perceive circumcision as having no significant influence on academic performance. This variation may be due to the fact that it provides a perceived escape from confinement and gives the boarders freedom to indulge in socialization with the outside world. They get a welcome break from the daily school routine. This to some

extent may explain why pupils in boarding schools sneak out to follow the escort groups chanting circumcision songs. The null hypothesis was accepted and the researcher concluded that the type of school has a significant influence on the pupils' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

Results of the ANOVA test on the pupils in public, private and special schools are presented in table 4.5

Table 4.5 ANOVA Source Table for Type of School and Pupils' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance for Public, Private and Special Schools.

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean sum of squares	F observed	F critical
Between	2	761.36	380.68	6.69	3.02
Within	470	2670.13	56.82		
Total	472				

Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Since the calculated value of F is greater than the critical value the hypothesis was rejected. The typed of school has a significant influence on the pupils' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. Pupils in private schools were positive about the influence of circumcision on academic performance having a mean score of 66.3 while those in special schools were neutral with a mean score of 58.4.

Pupils in public schools were neutral with a mean 61.8. The type of school determines the pupils' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

4.5 Parents' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic

Performance

The study sought to investigate if there was a significant difference in the male and female parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

This was done by testing the hypothesis Ho4 which stated that, "*the parents' gender has got no significant influence on the perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance*". The hypothesis was tested using the ANOVA at significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$ and the results presented as in the ANOVA source table 4.6

Table 4.6 ANOVA Source Table for Parents' Perceptions of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance

Source of variations	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean sum of squares	F observed	F critical
Within	965.86	28	25.42	4.02	4.60
Between	102.24	1	102.24		
Total	1068.1	29			

Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

Since the calculated value of F is less than the theoretical value of F, the null hypothesis was accepted implying that there is no significant difference in the male and female parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

4.6 Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Pupils' Academic Performance Before and After Circumcision

The study sought to investigate if circumcision had a significant influence on the pupils' academic performance. It tried to find out if there was a difference in the pupils' academic performance before and after the ceremonies. To achieve this, hypothesis Ho5 which stated that "*circumcision has no significant influence on the pupils' academic performance*" was tested. In order to test this hypothesis, the termly mean scores for the sampled schools were subjected to the ANOVA and the results are as shown in the table 4.7

Table 4.7 ANOVA Source Table for Pupils' Academic Performance before and after Circumcision Ceremonies (Cignificant at $\alpha=0.05$)

Source of variation	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean sum of squares	F observed	F critical
Between	2	539.3	269.65	0.14	3.74
Within	36	69464.3	1929.56		
Total	38	70003.6			

Since the calculated value of F was less than the critical value the hypothesis was accepted as true that circumcision has got no significant influence on the pupils' academic performance.

The difference in academic performance of pupils before and after circumcision ceremonies was not found to be significant. This is evident from the year's average of 230.8 marks in first term, 235.9 in second term and 239.9 in third term. Even though the overall (grand average) mean score for the year was 235.6 which is slightly below the proposed national mean score of 250 marks that a candidate needs to attain to merit for a certificate of examination. Reports from teachers say that academic performance is usually higher during circumcision years as compared to the year when there are no such ceremonies.

The nature of participation in the ceremonies implies that pupils like circumcision ceremonies and this may have some influence on their academic performance. From the results there is a positive trend in the academic performance. Pupils seem to work harder in order to improve and merit for the next class. They also work to cover for the lost time.

4.7 The Influence of Pupils' Gender on the Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance

The study sought to examine the influence of gender on the pupils' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. To achieve this, hypothesis Ho₆ was tested. It stated that, "the pupil's gender has no significant influence on his/her perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance". The table 4.8 shows the results of the ANOVA tests at significance level of $\alpha=0.05$.

Table 4.8 ANOVA Source Table for Gender of Pupils on the Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance

Source of variations	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	measures of squares	F observed	F critical
Within	1	1028.60	1028.60	17.15	3.88
Between	471	28256.55	59.99		
Total	472	29285.15			

Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

There is a significant difference in perception between girls and boys on the influence of circumcision on academic performance. The pupil's sex has an influence on his/her perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. This is evident in the mean scores in which girls scored a mean of 55.78 with boys scoring a mean of 49.8 out of possible 84 points. Out of the 204 girls from the sample 179 scored

between 46 and 65 points. This gives 87.75% of the girls having a neutral perception of circumcision activities. This means that girls greatly take part without giving much thought as to how circumcision may affect their academic performance. In comparison, 231 out of 268 boys scored above 65 points accounting for 86.19% of the boys who were interviewed. Boys have a high positive regard for circumcision activities. They consider circumcision to have influence on their academic performance. They tend to work harder after the ceremonies as shown by the number of those qualifying to joint national secondary schools.

4.8 Summary of Results

From the statistical results of the study, the following conclusions were drawn;

- i. There is a significant different in pupils' teachers' and parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. On average pupils, parents and teachers have a neutral perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance. The pupils have the highest liking for circumcision while teachers have the lowest liking for circumcision (table 4.1).
- ii. The type of school has a significant influence on the pupils' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance (table 4.5). Pupils in boarding school perceived circumcision to influence the academic performance while those in day schools were of a negative opinion. Pupils in private schools were positive about the influence of circumcision on academic performance, those in public schools and special schools were neutral.

- iii. There was no significant difference between the male and female parents concerning the influence of circumcision on academic performance (table 4.6). They support circumcision activities and also generally agree that those activities may have an influence on the pupils' academic performance. Female parents had a higher support (54.2) for the circumcision activities.
- iv. The teaching experience has no significant influence on the teacher's perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance (table 4.3).
- v. The pupil's gender has an influence on his or her perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance (table 4.8). Girls were neutral about the influence of circumcision on academic performance. Boys believe that circumcision can influence academic performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The discussion in this chapter focuses on the on the summary of the study findings, conclusions and recommendation.

5.1 Summary

The major concern of this study was to find out the perception of pupils, teachers and parents about the influence of circumcision on academic performance. It sought to investigate the effects of the cultural teachings offered during circumcision on the academic, moral and social dimension of the pupils. Further, the study sought to find out if the teachers' teaching experience and the type of school (boarding, day, public, private or special school) have an influence on their perceptions concerning the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

Data analysis and interpretation of responses from the standard eight pupils, their teachers and parents showed that there was a significant difference in the perceptions of pupils, teachers and parents about circumcision. Teachers scored an average of 48.43 out of 72; parents scored 50.4 out of 72 while pupils scored 51.25 out of 84(Table 4.2). The teachers and parents have a neutral perception concerning circumcision on academic performance. From these results circumcision has no significant influence on academic performance.

Parents seemed to put more weight on the importance of circumcision when that time comes and this has a great influence on their children who succumb to the pressure. According to the research results, performance improves after circumcision ceremonies this contrary to the fear expressed by the Bungoma DDP (2002-2008) that circumcision hinders pupils' academic progress.

There was no significant difference in the male and female parents' perception of the circumcision on performance (Table 4.6). According to both sexes circumcision is an activity that does not interfere with the pupils' academic work since it takes place outside school learning program.

Overall academic performance of pupils was not found to have statistically significant variations before and after the ceremonies. From the findings circumcision positively influences academic performance. The pupils expressed a neutral perception that circumcision has no significant influence on their academic performance (Table 4.7).

The teachers' teaching experience was statically tested and it showed that the teaching experience influences the teacher's perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance (Table 4.3). Teachers with a teaching experience below five years showed a neutral perception about the influence of circumcision on academic performance. This could owe to their newness plus limited experience in interactions with pupils in the region. Teachers who have served longer in their stations have a different perception. From analysis of their responses, it is clear that circumcision does not have a significant influence on academic performance.

This is because even during circumcision years many pupils have performed well in the national KCPE examination and joined national schools. For example in 1998 Webuye division was position three out of six with an average score of 395 marks out of a possible 700 marks. In the year 2004, a total of 40 pupils (23 boys, 17 girls) from the district joined national schools from the district (Bungoma District KCPE analysis, 2000). The perception of pupils in boarding and day schools in the region was not found to be significantly different.

Generally, the data suggests that there are varied perceptions about the influence of circumcision on academic performance. There is a significant difference in perception between girls and boys on the influence on the perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance (Table4.8). From analysis of responses girls scored 55.78 and boys 49.80 out of 84 on the pupils' scale respectively. In response to the question "Does circumcision affect your academic performance in any way?" 179 out of 204 (87.75%) girls responded 'Yes' and 203 out of 268 boys (75%) responded "Yes". This implies that overall, pupils have a positive perception that circumcision has influence on academic performance.

In order to guide the researcher, a number of research questions were formulated. The following are the research questions that the study attempted to answer:

1. What is the pupils', teachers' and parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance?

From the study it was found that the teachers were neutral about the influence of circumcision on academic performance (Table4.1). Even though they expressed the

feelings that elaborate circumcision activities may have an influence on academic performance. Parents were of the neutral opinion. Pupils tended to have more of the parents' perception that circumcision has no problem except when there is excessive participation. For pupils it is a welcome break from the daily school routine. The readily participate since it is part of the general activities that define their community and it is occasional.

2. Does the teaching experience have any influence on the teachers' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance?

The study results show that the teaching experience has a significant influence on the teachers' perception of the influence of circumcision and academic performance (Table 4.3). Teachers who were older in the profession expressed a feeling that circumcision has no significant influence and attributed poor performance to other factors. This is because more than a half of those who attempt the KCPE examination during circumcision years have been found to pass even after having gone through circumcision rituals.

3. Does the type of school (boarding or day, public, private or special) have an influence on the pupils' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance?

From the findings of the study pupils in boarding and day schools showed a significant difference in their perceptions. Pupils in private schools seemed to express the feeling that circumcision activities have no influence their academic performance. Reports from teachers in special schools indicated that circumcision has no influence on the

pupils' academic performance. The pupils seem to be aware of the societal expectations and enquired from their teachers about the happenings in their neighborhood since they are confined in their schools. They always reported whenever they were circumcised and seemed to like it.

4. Are there any differences between the male and female parents concerning their perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance?

There was no significant difference in the male and female parents' perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance (Table4.6). According to both sexes circumcision is an activity that does not interfere with the pupils' academic work since it takes place outside school learning program. Twenty three out of thirty parents in the sample responded as 'True' to the item, 'Schools should close early to give ample time to the youths to participate in circumcision ceremonies.' This would possibly allow those circumcised to heal and reduce absenteeism stemming from the ceremonies.

5. Does circumcision have an influence on the pupils' academic performance?

Academic performance of pupils was not found to have statistically significant variations before and after the ceremonies (section 4.7). From the findings circumcision positively influences academic performance. The pupils expressed a positive perception that circumcision has a significant influence on their academic performance. In response to the item, 'I do not get time to revise my schoolwork and this makes me to perform poorly after circumcision ceremonies', 203 pupils responded as 'True'. This represents 43% of the sampled pupils expressing the feeling that their

academic performance is influenced by circumcision. This may imply that the majority of the pupils perceive circumcision as having no significant influence on academic performance.

5.2 Conclusion

From analysis of research findings circumcision has no significant influence on academic performance. However, the performance of pupils improved after circumcision (Section 4.7). Circumcision is one of the most practiced rites observed by both the learned and the illiterate. Pupils, teachers and parents seem to wait for it with anxiety. It should be improved upon to accommodate all participants in order to enhance its positive influence on education. Children grow up knowing that at one point circumcision will take place and they will be directly involved. Secondly it is an activity that comes periodically, once in two years. It is therefore not a surprise event, but one that is expected. After the ceremonies academic performance improves may be due to reduced anxiety and undivided focus on academic activities.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Circumcision as a cultural rite of passage has its pros and cons. There was a positive increase in academic performance after the ceremonies. In order to incorporate it amicably into the education curriculum, there is need for another study of the activities and based on the findings, the population concerned educated to realize its influence on academic performance of pupils.

2. Measures need to be put in place within and without the district to improve the positive impact of circumcision on the pupils' academic performance. Such may include:
 - (i) Training teachers, community elders in purposive guidance and counseling in order to encourage non-inhibiting activities during the ceremonies.
 - (ii) Allow more time for the pupils, teachers and parents to take part in the ceremonies. This could reduce the exodus experienced at the onset of circumcision ceremonies.
 - (iii) Less workload may be allocated for the second term of the year to enable teachers to complete the syllabi and give examination on time.
3. Public lectures need to be organized to teach parents on the importance of circumcision and good academic performance. The lecturers need to focus on the original intention and purpose of circumcision and co-relate to the present times when economic stability is directly linked to academic performance.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

In order to fully establish the people's perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance, the following suggestions are made:-

1. This study could be replicated to find out more causes of the high poverty levels and high school dropout rates as discussed by the Bungoma DDP (2002-2008).

2. Carry out research to establish the existing state and conditions prevailing in the schools during the circumcision ceremonies. This could be done with a broader spectrum of participants.
3. A research could be carried out to compare the academic performance of pupils in this region to that of pupils in non-circumcising regions.

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Indicated by use of a tick (✓) your responses as shown in the example below:

Example

During circumcision ceremonies, I have no time to revise my school work.

True ()

not decided ()

untrue ()

1. During circumcision ceremonies I learn cultural literature, which helps me to improve my academic performance.

True ()

not decided ()

untrue ()

2. I meet many friends during circumcision ceremonies

True ()

not decided ()

untrue ()

3. I get to know many of my relatives through circumcision ceremonies

True ()

not decided ()

untrue ()

4. Circumcised people perform better academically than those who are uncircumcised.

True ()

not decided ()

untrue ()

5. The school head boy must be someone circumcised.

True ()

not decided ()

untrue ()

6. I am scared of the language used during circumcision ceremonies.

True ()

not decided

untrue ()

7. I enjoy singing circumcision songs.

23. Uncircumcised men cannot make good leaders.

True ()

Not decided ()

untrue ()

24. A circumcised person is superior to his female siblings irrespective of his age.

True ()

Not decided ()

untrue ()

25. Traditional circumcisers are better than medical doctors at performing surgery

True ()

Not decided ()

untrue ()

26. Traditional circumcisers have magical powers from God.

True ()

Not decided ()

untrue ()

27. Circumcision negatively affects the academic performance.

True ()

Not decided ()

untrue ()

28. My sons will have to undergo circumcision.

True ()

Not decided ()

untrue ()

**APPENDIX II: Teachers' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on
Academic Performance.**

The research seeks to investigate the perception of teachers about the influence of circumcision on academic performance.

Instructions

You are requested to complete the following questionnaire by providing responses to the items by indicating your responses in the space provided by either ticking () or writing down the explanation.

Please do not write your name on this paper.

Section A: Bio Data

For how long have you been teaching at this station?years

Indicate the type of your school by ticking the correct category from the list below:

1. i. public boarding () ii. Public day () iii. Private () iv. Special ()

2. i. Boys only () ii. Girls only () iii. Co-educational ()

SECTION B: Teacher's perception of the influence of circumcision on academic performance

In this section put a tick () against your response. Give a written statement where you are requested.

1. How is the performance of your pupils when circumcision ceremonies are approaching?

High () Average () low ()

2. In your opinion, do your pupils like circumcision ceremonies?

High () Average () low ()

Give an explanation for your response above

3. How is the performance of your pupils after circumcision ceremonies?

High () Average () low ()

Comment.....

4. Is your work as a teacher affected in any way by the circumcision ceremonies?

Yes () Sometime () Not at all ()

Give reasons for your response

5. Do your pupils continue with education after the ceremonies?

Yes () Some () No ()

6. Explain your responses in 5 above

7. In class eight (8), girls seem to like the company of circumcised boys. Is this a true observation?

Yes () Sometime () No ()

8. Should boys get preferential treatment from parents after circumcision?

Yes () sometime () No ()

9. There is no need for circumcised pupils to continue with education. They should marry and start their own families.

Yes () sometime () No ()

10. What are some of the effects of circumcision on the girls? List them.

.....

11. Does the boy's attitude towards education get influenced in any way by circumcision?

Yes () sometime () No ()

12. Do you punish those pupils who actively participate in circumcision dance and songs?

Yes () sometime () No ()

Explain by giving reasons for your response

13. Schools should close early in order to allow pupils ample time to fully participate in circumcision ceremonies.

Yes () sometime () No ()

14. Parents should be encouraged to have their sons circumcised by traditional circumcisors as opposed to medical doctors.

Yes () sometime () No ()

15. Once circumcised, a man becomes superior to his female siblings irrespective of his age.

Yes () sometime () No ()

Give reasons

16. Uncircumcised people do not make good leaders. They cannot even be good school prefects.

Yes () sometime () No ()

17. Traditional circumcisers (*bakhebi*) have magical powers from *wele khakaba* (God the creator).

Yes () Not sure () No ()

18. A son inherits property from his parents even if he is not circumcised

Yes () Not sure () No ()

19. In school circumcised pupils must be exempted from manual duties and any form of corporal punishment.

Yes () Not sure () No ()

20. Children whose fathers are uncircumcised are poor academic performers.

Yes () Not sure () No ()

21. Pupils dislike uncircumcised teachers.

Yes () Not sure () No ()

22. Pupils should be allowed to participate in circumcision ceremonies since they learn oral literature that enhances their academic performance.

Yes () Not always () No ()

23. Is there any counseling offered to the pupils concerning circumcision?

Yes () sometime () No ()

Why?

24. What are some of the dangers that your pupils are exposed to during the circumcision ceremonies?

List

25. In your opinion, does circumcision have any influence on academic performance of your pupils?

Yes () sometime () No ()

Give reasons

26. Should circumcision be encouraged or discouraged? Give reasons.

Encouraged () Discouraged () Undecided ()

**APPENDIX III: Parents' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on
Academic Performance.**

This study seeks to find the perception of parents on the influence of circumcision on the pupils' academic performance. Do not write your name on this script.

SECTION A: Demographic Data

1. Indicate by filling in the black space or ticking (\surd) the correct choice. Only one response is accepted.

Sex Female () Male ()

1. Indicate the type of school your child attends

a) Boys only () Girls only () Mixed ()

b) Boarding () Day ()

c) Private () Public () Special ()

**SECTION B: Parent's Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic
Performance**

You are provided with three choices for each item. Select only one and show by use of a tick (\surd) against the one selected.

1. Circumcision ceremonies are time wasting for school children.

Yes () Not decided () Untrue ()

2. Children meet their relatives during the circumcision ceremonies and this is good for their social development.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

3. A boy's circumcision brings joy and respect to his family.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

4. When my son gets circumcised, I rest assured that his academic performance will improve.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

5. Uncircumcised men cannot make respectable husbands.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

6. School should close early to give ample time to the youths to participate in circumcision ceremonies.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

7. I enjoy the circumcision songs and dance.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

8. Traditional circumcisers are better than medical doctors at performing the surgery.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

9. There is no need to continue with education after circumcision.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

10. Parents should be encouraged to have their sons circumcised in hospital.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

11. People whose children are circumcised in hospital are mean and cowardly.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

12. A young man should marry and raise children as he is circumcised.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

13. Uncircumcised boys are poor performers in school.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

14. Abnormal children are born of uncircumcised fathers.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

15. Girls perform poorly in school because they are not circumcised.

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

Explain.....

16. After circumcision the boy's attitude towards education changes

True ()

Not decided ()

Untrue ()

Explain

17. Once circumcised a person becomes superior to his female siblings irrespective of age True () Not decided () Untrue ()

18. Circumcised young men should not be encouraged to do household chores

True () Not decided () Untrue ()

19. Children should be able to perform well academically with or without circumcision ceremonies.

True () Not decided () Untrue ()

20. In your opinion, does circumcision have any influence on the pupils' academic performances?

True () Not decided () Untrue ()

21. Do you think children like circumcision ceremony? Why?

True () Not decided () Untrue ()

22. Should circumcision ceremonies be abolished?

True () Not decided () Untrue ()

23. Do you offer any advice to your children in connection with circumcision? Specify

.....

24. Are there any dangers associated with circumcision ceremonies? Specify.

Appendix I: Introductory Letter

Appendix II: Informed Consent Request

Appendix III: The pupils' perception of the influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance

Appendix IV: Teachers' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic Performance

**Appendix V: Parents' Perception of the Influence of Circumcision on Academic
Performance**

Appendix VI: Map of Study Area

Appendix VII: Research Permit