

Female genital cutting and gender relations in Kurya society.

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Despite international and national efforts to curb female genital cutting, the practice has been persisting among the Kurya of Tarime District, Northern Tanzania. This study intended to identify reasons for the persistence of the practice through exploration of meanings and significance attached to the practice from the Kuryan point of view. The study took into account gender and employed qualitative research approach. Findings from the study show that reasons for continual of the practice extended beyond living. Central to these is a belief based on traditional discourse that through the practice Kurya members are connected to their departed ancestral generations. The study identified contradictory understanding of meanings regarding the practice among government, different institutions that attempt to curb it, and local people involved including traditional social institutions. Lack of intervention programs that involve society members and some tendencies toward politicising the practice also play a significant role in thwarting efforts to curb the problem. The study concludes that local beliefs embedded on traditional discourse still have strong influence on fostering the practice although some elements of change are currently observed owing to counteracting discourses. The study recommends intervention programmes with in-depth knowledge of people who practice at the local context. By revealing the knowledge from the Kuryan point of view. The study will contribute in addressing the problem at the local context. The study also recommends community-wide involvement and addressing the problem jointly with the Kenyan side to where the Kurya extend.