

## **African Culture and Youth Morality: A Critique of the On-Going Transitional Rites in Thulamela Municipality, South Africa**

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**Abstract :** Using a qualitative descriptive design, this study established the consequences of the on-going transitional rites on youth morality in the Thulamela Local Municipality, South Africa. The participants were sampled using a non-random sampling procedure, specifically, a purposive sampling technique and a snowball sampling technique. A semi-structured interview guide was recruited to collect data from the Indigenous Knowledge (IK) custodians, the parents of the youths and the youths until the point of saturation. The analysis was performed using a thematic content method. With the emergence of themes and sub-themes, broad categories were generated to differentiate and explain the thoughts expressed by the various respondents and the observations made in the field. The study findings suggest that the on-going transitional rites are depicted by weekend social activities with the practice of substance use and abuse among the youths at recreational spots. The transitional rites are structured under the guise of “freaks” as an evolving culture among the youths. The freaks culture is a counterculture of the usual initiation schools for transitional rites of passage which is believed to instill morality among youths. The findings comprehensively show that the on-going transitional rites influence inappropriate youth morality. This study concluded that the on-going transitional rites activities and practices evolved as a current socialization standard for quick maturity status; as a result, it will be challenging to provide a complete turnaround of this evolving culture. The study, however, recommends building on the exciting transitional rites of passage to moderate appropriate youths’ morality in Thulamela communities.

**Keywords :** morality, transitional rites, youths, behaviour

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