

# Rites of Passage in Ismailis: A Case Study of Chatorkhand Valley

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## Abstract

The present study was conducted to highlight the rites of passage such as birth, marriage and death that influence the transition of an individual in a community. Rites of passage are the ceremonial events through which an individual move from one status to another. There are many types of celebrations in our lives but these are the rites of birth, funeral and marriage are the most important human developmental stages that we culturally celebrate. Celebrations are very distinctive and significant in every culture that reflects values that are important in a given culture. The current research explores these major rites of passage and how rituals and ceremonies help create logic that how different cultures distinctively celebrate a change in position or status in society. This study aims to describe the numerous rites of passage of the Ismaili community in the Chatorkhand Valley. The data was obtained through in-depth interviews and analyzed through qualitative thematic analysis. The purposive sampling technique had been used by the researcher. A total of 12 interviews were conducted and only female members of the community were selected. The age of the respondents was 30 – 55 from Chatorkhand Valley. The current study finds that ceremonial events are the most important elements of culture in society, creating a social network for uniting the community. It is a way to maintain social relations, strengthen social ties and hold together a society. In this social network, people developed strong relationships that ultimately lead to creating unity and solidarity in the society which is helpful in the formation of culture.

**Keywords:** Rites, Culture, Ismaili community, Village, Chatorkhand Valley, Case study <sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

Rites of passage are ceremonial events that are held all over the societies of the world that identify the passage from one religious or social status to another. Most of the important and common rites of passage are connected with the life cycle such as birth, marriage and death take changes in the social status of an individual. According to Muhammad, Askar and Jan,

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(2006) rite of passage is a celebration/ritual of the event which takes place when a person leaves one class to join another. It includes a major change of position in society.

Mohyuddin and Ambreen, (2013) state that rites of passage are divided into three different stages which consist of separation, transition and reincorporation. The preliminary phase is a separation period when an individual leaves their present status and moves to another status or position. The preliminary stage contains symbolic actions and rituals that disconnect a person from his/her earlier position in society. The birth rite is fit into this group where the child leaves safe and sound surroundings in their mother's innards is very dissimilar one in the actual world. The transition stage is a liminal stage when an individual leaves one place or state but has not yet entered the next position. The transition stage is when a person learns about a new position in life. The transition stage involves when a person engages to be married at this time, they learn about the new position they are incoming. The third stage is the reincorporation stage when the person enters with new position or status in society. The marriage rite is fit into this category when a person or an individual performed different rituals and ceremonies. When a person gets married that he/she enters a very new life or very different role.

All these rites of passage play an important role in a society or a culture. There are many types of celebrations in our lives but these are the rites of birth, funeral and marriage are the most important human development stages that we culturally celebrate. Every culture or society contains different and unique cultures and may prefer to assess these rites in very different ways. Celebrations are very distinctive and significant in every culture that reflects values that are important in a given culture. Meyers, (2016) states that rites of passage produce a change from one position to another, a person distinguish from one position way of life, enters into a transition stage and is incorporated into the society with a new position or status. These rites of passage and the actions of rituals allow a person but also the society to negotiate significant ceremonies in the life of a person, they allow and convey a renovation in the society.

### **1.1.Problem Statement**

The rites of passage are the cultural and social events that may also have a religious aspect. In various religions around the world rite of passage can conclude what your social position is in the religious society. The societal roles in the rites of passage different in power and liability as well. Societal roles play an important role in many religions and cultures. They generally include events or rituals to mark important stages in an individual's life such as marriage, birth

and death. These are extremely symbolic events that ready people of belief for new roles in their individual lives.

Nevertheless, none of the above-mentioned studies have explored the influence of these rites of passage in the transition of an individual's life cycle in Chatorkhand Valley and how these rituals are significant in the formation of culture in the Ismaili community. Thus, adding to this gap, the current study is descriptive in nature with qualitative research was conducted at Chatorkhand Valley to highlight the influence of rites of passage in the transition of an individual and how these rites play an important role in society.

## 1.2. Research Question

- How rites of passage influence the transition of an individual or group in the Ismaili community?

## 1.3. Objectives

- To find out the symbolic meaning of reciprocity in rites of passage among Ismailis
- To explore the changes of practices in rites of passage among the people of Chatorkhand Valley
- To analyze the influence of rituals in the development of culture among Ismailis

## 2. Review of Literature

### 2.1.1 Birth Rites

According to Mohyuddin and Ambreen, (2013) in Baltistan, the Keris people celebrate the birth rite according to their cultural values and norms. During the delivery, the pregnant women are not taken to the hospital except in emergency cases. At the time of birth, an experienced woman comes to help called “choo choo min mee angon” dai/midwife. In Balti choo choo means milk, min mee means to give and angon means mother. Thus, choo choo min mee angon means the mother who gives milk. If the mother of a pregnant woman is alive then the other woman does not come to help at the time of birth but if the mother is not alive then the other woman from the family or community comes to help during delivery. In Keris culture when an expert woman help at the time of birth, when she returns home after the birth of a baby the shalwar kameez/chadar or cooked/uncooked food is given to her on the behalf of the whole family. After the birth of a child, the choo choo min mee angon takes a soft cloth and ties it to the head of the baby to make it round. The Keris people burned some seeds on fire (a seed found in plane areas of Baltistan) and put them into the pot. The fragrance of the smoke is given to the

baby and the mother. The pot is rotated around both of them and the newborn baby is given to the mother for feed. After this, the baby is put into the “samboo”. This samboo is a skin of sheep having all the wool on it and keeping the baby warm. When the baby is born in the winter season the baby is put in samboo for the six months and in the summer season, the baby is put for one week only. Moreover, the birth of a child relatives, friends and neighbors come home to congratulate the parents and whole family. They also take gifts for newborn babies such as clothes, wheat, almond or coconut oil or give money to the mother. Some people carry a handkerchief called “lafis” and also a cap for the child. For the guest who comes to congratulate traditional food is cooked for them called “marzen”. The marzen is cooked in a black metallic pot, which is a little bigger than karahi called “sanjhan”. The marzen is a mixture of barley and flour. The flour is called “zan”. When the marzen is baked the desi ghee or coconut oil is mixed and put into the plate and served to the guest.

In Turkey, people also celebrate the birth rite with different customs and traditions. They believe that the birth of a child plays a vital role in society because they considered the children an important part of establishing the family bonds. After the delivery, the traditional food is served to the mother called (Lohusa Serbeti). It is a mixture of water, sugar, cloves, cinnamon and add red food color and give it right after the delivery. In Turkey culture, there are no celebrations before birth such as baby showers. When the baby is born, they celebrate with different rituals and customs according to their social rules. After the birth of a child, the mother and baby are not allowed to go outside and stay home for 20 days. After the birth of a child relatives and neighbors also visit the home to congratulate and bring food for the mother and gifts for the newborn baby. After 20 days, mother and baby visit the homes of gift-givers the people of that home also give a napkin full of sweets and an egg to the mother. In Turkish culture, they symbolize a napkin full of sweets (for a happy and kind-natured baby) and an egg symbolizes it (for good health). To complete this ritual their hosts also scrub flour on the baby’s eyebrows and also draw a line on the baby’s hair with flour for long life (Shatzman, 2017).

### 2.1.2. Marriages Rites

The Keris people celebrate the nikah ceremony in the groom’s house and all the relatives of the bride also participate in the nikah ceremony and go to the groom’s home. The nikah ceremony is held in the groom’s house and the signature of the nikahnama is always signed by the bride’s maternal uncle on the behalf of her. If the maternal uncle is not present then the brother signs for her. The bride does not sign. In the nikah ceremony, the groom’s family also

served food for the bride's family and guests. The food they served for guests included sweet tea and "azok". Azok is a kind of paratha and it is fried in desi ghee. After tea and azok they also served rice, zan chapatti or marzan with desi ghee or almond oil. In the end, they also distribute dry apricot and walnuts among guests, these things are called "Phakhastat". After the 7 days of the nikah ceremony, the maternal uncle again goes to the groom's home to fix the date for marriage. After fixing the marriage date, both families start preparations for marriage. They start sewing the clothes and gifts. The bride's family makes clothes for the bride and the groom's family makes clothes for the groom. At the time of the marriage ceremony, some cultural practices are done by the bride's family. When the bride comes out from home for rukhsati the neighbors or relatives bring "chafay" a type of flour or "khuspay" on a plate with desi ghee on it at the door from where she has to come out. She touches the flour and says salat (praise of the Holy Prophet). Before sitting in the car the Kalash people also perform another ritual called "isman". *Isman* (a seed found in plane areas of Baltistan) the smoke of isman is rotated around her. After completing this ritual she sits in the jeep with a groom. A female lady also goes with her to the groom's house. This lady is called "mangan". Further, the other relatives also go with the bride. They perform different rituals and practices until the brides enter the groom's home, all these practices are called "seniopo". When the bride arrives at the groom's house the groom's relatives or family members also bring chafay and isaman at the door. After completing this ritual the bride and groom enter the house (Mohyuddin & Ambreen, 2013).

In Moroccan culture, the marriage ceremony starts with the sign of the wedding agreement of both couples (bride and groom). After doing the paperwork, the wali and witnesses also meet the (Imam) to finalize the marriage ceremony. The marriage contract is decided by both family members of the bride and groom. To complete the paperwork, the marriage event begins when the bride and her family members, friends and neighbors are together and ready for the marriage event. Firstly, they start the marriage ceremony with the event of "Henna". To celebrate the henna ceremony only females are present and they draw beautiful designs with mehndi on the bride's hands and feet. The other participants also have mehndi designs on their hands. They believe that henna is a lovely traditional way to the bride and the Moroccan people symbolize its loveliness and hopefulness. The henna event is held for the bride to give their best wishes and prayers for her married life. In Morocco culture, the bride is the queen of the event. A special lady is invited to choose the bridal dress, makeup, and jewelry according to the ritual.

A special lady called “neggafa”. The “neggafa” also takes with her marriage dresses for the bride and also takes a special Morocco traditional dress for the bride called “takshitas”. The groom normally wears a suit. He changes his outfit sometimes; he wears a jacket and pants called “Jabador”. In Morocco culture, they first serve their traditional food to the guests. They serve dates and almond milk with orange water, by serving the traditional food shows that the hosts are welcoming their guests and showing respect and love for them. Besides the traditional food, other food is also cooked for the guest. They also serve two types of dishes such as chicken with saffron sauce and mutton with seffa (short noodles) with meshed almonds (Mouttaki, 2022).

### 2.1.3. Funeral Rites

In Nepal, the Gurungs community have also different rituals and practices in death rites. They believe that the death rite plays an important role among Gurungs, the death rite shows harmony, collaboration and kindness. It has shaped a mutual relationship between the living and death, both are dependent on each other. In the Gurungs community death rituals shows unity and coordination through “Syaisyai” which is a social organization for uniting the Gurungs. In Gurungs there is a gift-giving process in the funeral rite, they believe that the process of giving produces a social bond between the Gurungs community. In Gurung culture, the rites of passage play an important role and they indicate their transition from one position to another. They believe that all rituals are important but among these rituals, the death rite of passage is very important and mandatory. The Gurung death rite is divided into three parts: Antesty Kirya, Bayupuja and Arghun (Pae). In the Gurung culture, they perform mourning for three days to thirteen days of their place called “Antesty Kirya”. The second death rite is “Bayupuja”, the Bayupuja ritual is complete in Mangsir Purnima (full moon). The Gurung people performed the Bayupuja ritual consistently every Purnima and they believe that if any family member becomes sick and the Gurung “Ghepren” who deal with the religious activities state that it is done by a dead person’s soul. Then the people want to do “Bayupuja” till the next death rite “Arghun” (Pae). The third rite is last but crucial and held after the death ritual at a specific time for the comfort of the dead person's family. Arghun (Pae) is held on the 45<sup>th</sup> day of the dead person and performed with religious customs and values to give salvation to the dead person’s soul. Gurungs people believe that a dead person's soul reaches heaven after the completion of Argun (Upadhyay, 2015).

Mohyuddin and Ambreen, (2013) state that in Keris when a death takes place in the Keris community first the neighbors send messages to the relatives about the death. Then the relatives go to the death home and inform all the family members about the death. When the community people and other relative hears about the death they start coming home to the dead person. After the death of a person, “Quran-Khawni” starts instantly in the home of a dead person. People who participate in the funeral ceremony read one or two suparas of the Holy Quran for the eternal peace of the dead person's soul. The people who come to see the dead body give some money to the eldest member of the family. People also bring white chadars/clothes put on the dead body as a kafan. In Keris culture, where the death takes place in the first three days all the relatives and close neighbors bring tea or something to eat because in the death house cooking food is prohibited for the three days. Only close neighbors and relatives bring food to the dead person's family. The bath is given to the dead body, only that person gives him/her bath whose name is written in his/her will. When a male person dies and no name is stated in the will, then molvi sahib comes from the mosque to help by giving a bath to the dead body. After completing the bath ritual the dead body is covered by “kafan”. In the Keris community, on which the bath is given the “phatta” a four-sided piece of wood and the “charpai” a bedframe or just like a box which is used to take the dead body to the graveyard both are taken from the mosque. But in Keris “charpai” is just like a wooden stair and the dead body is tied to it with help of a cord. To complete these rituals, the people who are present in the home see the face of the dead body, after showing the face of the dead body the body is taken to the graveyard by several people, which include the males only and the females stay at home. This group of people who take the dead body to the graveyard is called “janaza” or funeral parade. After Namaz-e-Janaza two or more people put the dead body into the grave and after putting the body in the grave his face is taken out of the *kafan* and turned towards “*Kaba*”. At the time of burial, all the male members of the community come to the graveyard to pray for the dead person. In the end, all the people who participate in the Namaz-e-Janaza recite the surah Fatiha and come back home. The close relatives and close neighbors come back to the home of the dead person and the rest of the people go to their homes after attending the Namaz-e-Janaza. The third day after the death is called “khanmo”. On this day people come for the recitation of the Holy Quran in the afternoon. After the recitation of the Holy Quran, the food is served to the participants. On the third day, the food is cooked in the home of the dead person. Rice and meat are served to the guest. The meat of beef is not cooked at that time there is always cooked mutton or

chicken for the guests. The deceased family takes all the expenses and responsibilities of this event.

Thus, there was a need to explore and analyze the rites of passage such as birth, marriage and death which play an important role in a community. And how these rites of passage influence the transition of an individual or group in society. Thus, the present study explores the uniqueness of rites related to various dimensions among Ismailis. The primary focus of this study is on exploring the role of rites of passage among the people of Chatorkhand Valley and how they celebrate these human developmental stages according to their religious and cultural norms and values. For this purpose, a qualitative study was conducted that explored the ceremonial events of the Ismaili community and find out the influence of different rituals on the development of culture among Ismailis.

## 2.2.Theoretical Framework

Marriage, birth and death are the most important human development celebrations. These rites of passage show the social network support system between people in a society. People together and celebrate these events culturally where social roles are performed by different relatives and outsiders. The rites of passage are shared events that can be held to change the status of an individual. Rites of passage and the actions of rituals allow a person but also the society to negotiate significant ceremonies in the life of a person, they allow and convey a renovation in the society. A theory of structural functionalism suggests that every relation, social role, values, cultural norms and practices mutually establishes a society and all are very important to combining people in a society. The structural-functionalism also says that society is a structure of mutually supporting. The parts of the society perform different functions of the social system. An essential consent on values or value system holds society together. Society is a network whose parts work to support unity and solidity. The rites of passage also hold community solidity differently through certifying the social and standard values indicate and therefore permitted as an element of the events and by encouraging social harmony through combined acts and shared values and norms. Thus, functionalism theory guides us to understand the phenomena of the society that the different parts of the society fulfill different needs and functions and it is a system of interdependent parts. The society is a structure of shared values, symbols, events/celebrations, customs, rituals and cultural rules where people together and perform their social roles to maintain the stability in a society.

### 3. Research Methodology

The current study was a qualitative study with descriptive nature. According to Neumann, (2014) descriptive research provides a detailed, highly and accurate picture of the specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship. The present study was also a new step to show and unfold this research problem because it is not much explored. Moreover, the current research is purely qualitative so the qualitative research approach is adopted. Therefore, the researcher has used descriptive methodology for the feasibility and nature of the research topic. Therefore, the reason for choosing this approach is to get a well-developed idea about the social phenomenon and describe the events and activities in a social setting. This method type allowed the researcher to record and describes in detail the Ismaili's birth, marriage and death rites and the different forms of cultural and religious practices involved in these rites. The study was conducted at Chatorkhand Valley with the female elder members of the community, who were of the same faith and common practices within the Ismaili community. Purposive sampling technique was used to locate the information. The data was gathered through in-depth interviews with the help of open-ended questions. The field data was analyzed using Thematic Analysis Technique (TAT). Themes were generated from field data with the help of extensive literature review. New themes were also extracted from the primary data making a contribution to existing secondary data.

### 4. Results and Discussion

Results of the current study highlight the role of rites of passage (such as birth, marriage and funeral) in the life of an individual and how these rites influence the transition of an individual or group in society. Different responses were recorded during the field data that will be discussed in this section.

#### 4.1.1. Birth Ceremony

While evaluating the perception of birth ceremony, a respondent replied,

*“As other rites are important in a community or an individual’s life, the birth rite also plays an important role in any society or community. She also said that if we live in a society or a community, we should celebrate every event together. Celebrating together will make our social relationship stronger and bring peace in a society and also increases mutual love between family, friends, relatives and neighbors.”*

Another respondent said that, *“Celebrating the birth ceremony is a traditional ritual that is a part of our culture. And this tradition is a ritual made by our ancestors which is still going on.”*

As addressed by Saeed, (2015) the African culture the birth rite, which is an important in the developmental process of an individual in society. This rite was set by the forefather of the African community to maintain the connection between the individual to the society. The African people together and celebrate the occasion of birth ceremony as set by their social rules and traditions. Every part of these rite is a major element and plays an important role in African culture.

A respondent said, *“We celebrate the birth of a child according to our norms and values. After the birth of a child the relatives, friends and neighbors come home to congratulate. They also bring gifts for the baby and the mother.”*

A respondent said, *“In earlier times people celebrate much the birth of a boy as compared to the birth of a girl. At the birth of a boy, there is always held a big event and two or three goats and sheep were slaughtered and all the relatives, friends and neighbors were invited home. At that time, the father of a newborn baby boy fire three times towards the sky to express or show his happiness. Now people also celebrate and held an event for the birth of a girl and also invite relatives, friends and neighbors were invited at home. She also said that in our society people still perform the old custom that there is still a tradition when a baby boy is born the father fires three times towards the sky.”*

In Chitral, the Kalash community has different rites of passage for the events of child birth, marriage and death. Kalash people celebrate the birth rite differently, they celebrate the birth of a boy and girl with different rituals and practices. When a baby boy takes place the Kalash people distribute sweets among people to share their happiness and aerial firing towards the sky to show their happiness and excitement. At the birth of a boy, special traditional food is cooked and served among the guests called “Gurala”. Gurala is a mixture of different local ingredients such as bean, maize, wheat, desi ghee and peanuts. The Kalash people do not celebrate the birth of a girl same as they celebrate the birth of a boy. They celebrate in a simple way when the girl takes place and not many guests are invited at home. They cook a simple traditional dish on the birth of a baby girl called “mol” (Muhammad, Askar & Jan, 2006).

We can see that how the birth of a child is an important occasion, not only for a family but for society as well. The birth celebration is one of the most exciting ceremonial events when the whole family conducts an event to welcome the newborn baby and invite relatives, friends and community people. This ritual is not only a celebration of a newborn baby but can also provide a way for people to set their connection to society, tradition and culture. This may lead to solidarity and unity in society among people and also maintain social relations between relatives, friends and neighbors.

In Turkey, people also celebrate the birth rite with different customs and traditions. They believe that the birth of a child plays a vital role in society because they considered the children an important part of establishing the family (Shatzman, 2017).

#### 4.1.2. Marriage Ceremony

One of my respondents said that, *“Marriage celebrations play an important role in a society in which we celebrate according to our cultural and religious norms and values. In our society we also celebrate marriage events together, it strengthens our social ties. People believe that this event is one of the most important ceremonial events in an individual’s life where all the relatives, friends and neighbors celebrate together and share their happiness. She also said that celebrating a different type of events together in a community marks unity and solidarity between people. At that time if there is any bitterness in the family or between relatives, everyone forgets all the bitterness and celebrates this happy day together.”*

One of the respondents said, *“In a society, social roles are performed by different relatives, friends and neighbors at ceremonial events. The marriage ceremony is one of the important events where we share our values, practices and traditions and celebrate with different people in a community. It helps us to maintain our social relationships and bring solidarity to a society. It strengthens our bonds with family, relatives and friends.”*

In Ghana, the Akans people believe that the marriage ceremony is not only between two partners but also between their families. Marriage is a way of combining two families and its existence is confirmed by both families. They believe that marriage across different societies and areas brings people together in a society and it marks unity and peace in a community. The marriage ceremony also helps to maintain the culture of the people in society (Saeed, 2015).

One of the respondents said, *“In our community When a boy wants to marry someone then he must first send a marriage proposal to the girl’s home. The father or the elder member of the*

*family always goes to the girl's home to talk about the marriage proposal. After that, the girl's family takes some time to discuss with other family members about the marriage proposal. When the girl and her family accept the marriage proposal then they send a message to the boy's family. The father of the boy and some other elder family members again come to the girl's home to fix the marriage. She also said that when the marriage date is fixed first the Nikah ceremony is held at "Jammah Khana" where the Ismaili people go to pray. First, the groom and the whole guest go to the "Jammah Khana" and the bride also comes there with family members and some close relatives. The "Mukhi" who is the guardian and leads the religious activities conducts the nikah ceremony of bride and groom. To complete the nikah ceremony the bride and groom together and all the guests go to the bride's home."*

In Keris mostly the parents decide on marriage and select a girl for their son and the father has the highest authority in a family to select a girl for his son. After selecting the girl, the maternal uncle of the boy goes to the girl's home to talk about the marriage proposal. If the parents of the girl say yes on the behalf of their daughter for marriage, then they first give sweets to eat and served food and fruits to the maternal uncle. The Keris people celebrate the nikah ceremony in the groom's house and all the relatives of the bride also participate in the nikah ceremony and go to the groom's home. After the 7 days of the nikah ceremony, the maternal uncle again goes to the groom's home to fix the date for marriage. After fixing the marriage date, both families start preparations for marriage (Mohyuddin & Ambreen, 2013).

Moreover, the marriage rite is an important social transition for an individual where a person enters in a new social status with different roles in society. This new status plays an important role in an individual's life and also in a community. A marriage ceremony is one of the important events where different people share their values, practices and traditions. It helps to maintain social relationships and bring solidarity to a society. Marriage rituals contain symbolic rites and are celebrated by cultural and religious rules and instruction.

#### **4.1.3. Funeral ceremony**

One of the respondents said, *"Death is an unavoidable occasion that we all are gone through in our lives. Cultures around the world have established their norms and rituals to celebrate and deal with the reality of death. Death is a cultural and religious obligatory ceremony."*

Another respondent said that, *Death ritual play an important role in every culture around the world where mourning rites and rituals are meant to bring people together to take the hands*

*of those mourning the loss and lead them away from loneliness. These social roles bring the individual and the network of social relations binding together in a society or community.*

Furthermore, the death ceremony is where a group of a community together and celebrates an individual's identity after death and performed all funeral rituals and practices of a deceased person with her/his family which shows how other people help the deceased family at hard times and help them cope with this mourning situation.

In Nepal, the Gurungs community believes that all rituals are important but among these rituals, the death rite of passage is very important and mandatory. They believe that the death rite plays an important role among Gurungs, the death rite shows harmony, collaboration and kindness. It has shaped a mutual relationship between the living and death, both are dependent on each other. In the Gurungs community death rituals shows unity and coordination among people (Upadhyay, 2015).

One of the respondents said, *“In our community when a person dies and the family members don't know about the death then some elderly relatives and close neighbors with “Khalifah” of that society go to the deceased house to inform the family. After that, the community people start coming to the house where the death takes place. After the death of a person, “Quran-Khawni’ starts instantly in the home of a dead person. The people who come to pray at the deceased house always take something with them as food, biscuits, milk, fruits or take other basic needs and some people also give money to the elder person of the family. The people who come to the deceased house also read the “Holy Quran” for the eternal peace of the dead person. In the deceased house, the food is not cooked for three days, at that time the close relatives and close neighbors cooked food at their homes and take it with them to the deceased family members for three days. After three days the food is cooked at the deceased house.”*

Mohyuddin and Ambreen, (2013) state that in Keris, when a death takes place in the Keris community first the neighbors send messages to the relatives about the death. Then the relatives go to the death home and inform all the family members about the death. When the community people and other relative hears about the death they start coming home to the dead person. After the death of a person, “Quran-Khawni’ starts instantly in the home of the dead person. People who participate in the funeral ceremony read one or two suparas of the Holy Quran for the eternal peace of the dead person's soul. The people who come to see the dead body give some money to the eldest member of the family. People also bring white chadars/clothes put

on the dead body as a kafan. In Keris culture, where the death takes place in the first three days all the relatives and close neighbors bring tea or something to eat because in the death house cooking food is prohibited for the three days. Only close neighbors and relatives bring food to the dead person's family.

Thus, the rites of passage such as birth, marriage and death provide a way to connect with people and society and always connect the ritualized norms, values and practices which are set by the forefathers and passed from one generation to the next in society.

#### 4.2. Conclusion

The present study concludes that rites of passage are the rituals in which one or more person of the community is ritually changed from one type of social member into another. There are many types of celebrations in our lives but these are the rites of birth, funeral and marriage are the most important human development stages that we culturally celebrate. All these rites of passage play an important role in a society or a culture. These rites of passage and the actions of rituals allow a person but also the society to negotiate significant ceremonies in the life of a person, they allow and convey a renovation in the society. A birth rite is an important event in any society or community and every individual had gone through this rite at a point in their lives. The birth of a child is often a complex of distinct rituals that prescribe different behaviors on the part of the mother, the father, other relatives, and other members of society concerning the newborn. They conduct different occasions and celebrate by performing different rituals and practices for welcoming the newborn baby. A marriage ceremony is one of the most important rites of passage in society and is common across different cultures around the world. Marriage ceremonies are formed by the cultural and religious beliefs and practices in different societies in the world. Marriage celebrations, where all the relatives, friends and neighbors celebrate together and share their happiness. It is a way to maintain social relationships and strengthens our bonds with family, relatives and friends and community people in a society. As all rituals are important but among these rituals, the death rite of passage is very important and mandatory in a society. Death is a cultural and religious obligatory ceremony and a ritual in every culture around the world where mourning rites and rituals are meant to bring people together to take the hands of those mourning the loss and lead them away from loneliness. These social roles bring the individual and the network of social relations binding together in a society or community. This phenomenon can be observed in people during ceremonial events. In a society where people share norms, values, customs and practices and celebrate different

ceremonial events according to cultural and religious rules and norms. Relatives, friends and community people also come together and participate to perform different roles during the ceremonial event which may lead to a strong relationship among people and create unity in a society.

### 5. Recommendations

This research has significantly contributed to the literature and fulfills the major research gap. Furthermore, this research has provided more guidelines to other researchers and based on these guidelines, they can be able to conduct new studies or may enhance the previous studies by modifying the frameworks. This research opens new dimensions for future researchers. First, future research can be conducted in another community except for Ismaili where the age limit or criteria of respondents could be altered. Second comparable research can be conducted in other areas of Pakistan or Gilgit Baltistan to conduct more realistic and globally generalized able research. Third, the number of respondents should be increased, so that value of the study can be improved. Finally, the sampling techniques or methodology of research can be modified for further research.

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