TRADITIONAL VS. MODERNITY:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE
IMPACT OF THE COLONIAL
EDUCATION SYSTEM AMONG
MAASAI CHILDREN IN LAIBONI VILLAGE,
TANZANIA

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Abstract

This research explored the impact of the colonial education system among the Maasai children in Laiboni Village near Arusha Region, located in the Northern Zone of Tanzania. Over the colonial period in Tanzania, missionaries started a large number of formal schools, teaching Maasai children a Western curriculum including English and Maths subjects, instead of the traditional learning of how to hunt or take care of cattle. This has been known as the “Western culture invasion”, which led to the loss of Maasai’s native culture, and affected their way of life and sense of value. This thesis will examine how the Western education system has impacted on the local Maasai’s social values. In particular, the thesis will investigate how the older generation recognise the impact of Western schooling on their children, including the loss of their culture, and sense of belonging. The thesis is an exploratory study based in Laiboni Village in Tanzania.
Chapter I. Introduction

The thesis is an exploratory study focused on the Laiboni Village in Tanzania. This thesis will examine how a Western-influenced education system has impacted upon the social values of the Maasai, and the social values of one Maasai village in particular. Specifically, the thesis investigates how the older generation views the impact of Western schooling among their children, including the impact on their culture, and sense of belonging. Factors associated with educational participation/non-participation will be discussed. This introductory chapter sets the context for the thesis by providing a brief discussion about colonialism and education in Africa. The purpose and structure of this thesis will be also explained in this chapter.

1.1 Colonialism, Education, and Africa

Well into the post-colonial era, Africa was still one of the world’s poorest continents. One of the key causes of slow economic growth was thought to be a lack of access to education (Masudi, 1995). National and overseas resources were committed to various places in Africa to enhance access and the quality of education; however, these resources and policies were, and still are not sufficient to cover all areas equally. To fully analyse the development situation in Africa, we must consider the cultural, political and economic factors that shape education in the region. The impact of the colonial education system on Maasai education cannot be fully understood without examining the legacies of colonialism on African education implementation generally, and Tanzania specifically.
The colonisation of Africa has had a larger impact on African education than was the case for many other countries (Barker, Boraine & Krafchik, 1996). It is well known that from the start of the colonial period, missionaries focused their efforts on education to influence the cultural norms and attitudes of Africans as part of a ‘civilizing’ mission to spread Christian and Western values on one hand, but also to reduce the likelihood of rebellion against the political and economic domination of the Europeans. This was true also for Tanzania (Masudi, 1995). While contemporary Africa is independent in terms of politics and decision-making procedures, many of the countries are dependent on former colonisers in terms of technology, aid and economic cooperation for development. Recent developments have often tended to strengthen rather than weaken the bond between the states and former colonisers (Njoh, 2007). The restructuring and transformation of education in Africa has, in both the colonial and post-colonial periods, basically been carried out to promote cohesion in African societies based on concepts and structures that are a legacy of the colonial period (Mazonde, 2001). Therefore, endeavours to promote different concepts based on local African cultures and educational pedagogies are not a part of this structure. Nevertheless, there were indigenous educational systems that require some exploration. I will discuss in the following sections my research purpose and goals, as well as the general structure of this thesis.
1.2 Research Purpose and Goals

This thesis will examine how the education system, strongly influenced by the West, has impacted the local Maasai’s social values. There is a particular focus in the thesis on the views of the older generation view about how exposure to Western schooling has impacted the children, in terms of both cultural identity and sense of belonging. The thesis is an exploratory study focused on the Laiboni Village in Tanzania. It is important to provide insights into the attitudes towards traditional and formal education as this helps to enhance our understanding of how non-indigenous approaches to education influence the lives of indigenous populations.

Researchers have focused specifically on the Maasai group in relation to the issue of the clash between traditional lifestyles and formal education (King, 1972; Gorham, 1980; Holland, 1998). The consensus is that owing to the bias held by seniors and parents, in terms of whether or not to send their children to receive modern education, participation in formal education has grown less attractive, and girls in such communities in particular are faced with even more fierce opposition to their education. In both Kenya and Tanzania, schooling among the Maasai has not been widely embraced, particularly for females, who are educated at a low level compared with the national rate (Parsitau, 2017). This is not simply a question of access, however, many Maasai consider there to be no direct benefit accruing from formal education for the family, thus many parents work extremely hard to elude the national policy of universal primary education (Collis & Hussey, 2003). Demanding household responsibilities are carried out by Maasai girls, such as cooking, cleaning, looking after the younger siblings, carrying water and firewood, milking the cows and so on. Those responsibilities can heavily impact on their
schoolwork (Parsitau, 2017). For the Maasai, formal education and customary education contradict each other.

There is lack of research focusing on the interaction of Maasai youth with customary education. As mentioned before, the young Maasai, must contend with and adapt to an ever fast moving ‘modern’ world influenced by Eurocentric educational standards. They may become so vulnerable that the cultural identity of these young people is at stake. The school experience increases the opportunity for the young to migrate from their pastoral homelands to bigger cities as a result of job seeking. In this way, the tendency to abandon traditional life has interrupted the Maasai nomadic livelihoods through some degree of division in the community. Unless the youth intend to keep their customs alive, the cultural heritage and traditions with the embodiment of indigenous knowledge may be discontinued and even eventually lost. Therefore, the young Maasai will play an important role in exploring an appropriate way of both keeping their cultural identity and accessing modern education. The lack of traditional education based on knowledge of agriculture as well as experience in herding has led to some young Maasai gradually losing the traditional pastoral skills that they previously depended on. Teachers working at the polytechnics have asserted that the Maasai should transfer their traditional pastoral livelihood to the agriculture or agro-pastoral way of life (Booysen, 2007). This is another major problem and point of tension in modern Maasai communities. Parsitau (2017) pointed out that many interventions involving Maasai youth in formal education have not practically engaged with Maasai communities in ways that “are respectful to their culture and social norms” (p. 15).
Another tension relates to demographics. On the one hand, education leads to lower fertility of educated people who are inclined to send their children to school later; and on the other hand, education leads to higher fertility and earlier marriage age of uneducated or less educated people who may encourage their children to avoid being educated in the future (Parsitau, 2017).

The reality is that while some Maasai may be tempted to abandon traditional cultural attitudes and norms, many traditional practices have arguably persisted, even if there is division in Maasai society. Despite the fact that some evidence may suggest an increasing educational enrolment in the local area for the Maasai community (e.g. UNESCO, 2004; Bishop, 2005), some interesting trends that indicate otherwise are noteworthy. For instance, for male Maasai in Tanzania, fewer men have become well-educated over time: among men between the age of 50 and 54, the number is 11.0%, while it is 4.0% for those between the age of 25 and 29 (de Clercq, 1995). More recent research indicates that children around 13 years old have an average of 5.0 years of education, while there is an average of 7.5 years of education for children of 19 years old (Hedges, Mulder, James & Lawson, 2016). Comparing the local national enrolment level for children, there were less Maasai children attending the schools regularly. Around 32% of the Maasai children between the age of 7 and 12 attended schools in the 1990’s, while the number for the whole country at that time, especially in the suburban areas, was around 65% (de Clercq, 1995). More recent data are rarely readily available (Ansell, 2005). Similarly, statistics for Tanzania showed that the Maasai community had around 9% of its children between the age of 7 and 12 attending schools, while 47% of the local children from other communities attended schools regularly (UNDP,
There are no recent statistics regarding children aged 7 and 12, however, data (2008-2012) on primary school attendance for Tanzania as a whole is in the 80% and 90% range (UNICEF, 2015) This suggests that the Maasai community may have less access to modern educational resources, or are more actively avoiding education than before, which may have significant consequences for the development of human capital and Maasai society more generally in a context of increasing globalisation.

This thesis research can contribute to our understanding of Maasai views about customary and formal education in Tanzania; the emphasis on Maasai views about the introduction of formal education on their society can provide us with information about the efficacy of introducing Western educational or other social interventions to traditional cultures. The research will also be especially helpful in the wider context of how marginalised groups can participate in African educational systems, which are more than ever focused on introducing changes to better equip local citizens, and direct and prepare the respective countries for further growth and prosperity (Kriesberg, 2003). This is widely recognised as an important contemporary issue.

To explore how the education system has impacted the local Maasai’s social values I chose the Laiboni Village as the place to conduct my ethnographic research fieldwork.
1.3 General Structure of Thesis

This thesis contains six chapters. Following the introduction chapter, the second chapter provides a historical review of three key parts of Maasai education: Maasai geographical, socio-economic and socio-political conditions; Maasai’s customary education and culture identity; and Maasai modern education and cultural identity. The third chapter is the methodology chapter and explores methods of data collection and analysis and the strengths and weaknesses of employing an ethnographic approach to conduct the study. The fourth chapter details my experiences of life in Laiboni village and the Laiboni school, and the information I obtained from informal interviews with the interviewees. The data collected in the field contributed to understanding the changes in Maasai lives, how these changes made participants feel, and the impacts changes have had on Maasai culture. The fifth chapter, the discussion chapter, identifies, categorises, and interprets the themes identified in the study. I discuss in this chapter some of the key changes that have occurred in Maasai culture, language, traditions and value systems, and how these cultural changes relate to the transformations in the Laiboni villagers’ sense of cultural identity and belonging. In the final chapter, the thesis is concluded with a summary of the research findings and suggestions for future research.
Chapter II. Historical Overview of Maasai Education

The Maasai are one of the most widely recognisable of the tribes in Africa. Although surrounding communities are becoming more modernised, the Maasai have remained committed to a traditional lifestyle. Their education system has changed little over many centuries of existence, along with many other parts of their lifestyle. The tribe’s way of life makes for an excellent case study for scholars interested in the culture of indigenous African tribes (Barnett, n.d.). Maasai elders do provide education to their young men and women, but a formalised educational system does not exist.

The chapter begins with a discussion about pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial education in Africa more generally, before moving on to an examination of the development of education in Tanzania, including primary, secondary and higher education, and then the education in the Maasailand. This chapter will also comprehensively review three prominent aspects that shape the education of the Maasai and their cultural identity. First, the chapter explores Maasai’s colonial and post-colonial education and its impacts. Second, the chapter discusses customary education and how this is bound up with Maasai cultural identity. Third, the chapter explores how modern education has also shaped Maasai cultural identity. The chapter provides in-depth analyses of these aspects, and in particular it includes an examination of Maasai customary education as it pertains to issues of youth, matrimony, fertility, and religion, with a focus on both colonial and post-colonial educational impacts.
2.1 Education in Africa

In this section, I will explore and give some examples of traditional African educational systems, some of which remain in existence today and sit alongside national-colonial influenced systems which often in tension.

2.1.1 Customary and formal education in Africa

In the initial stage of colonial development, missionaries in Africa saw the expansion of access to education as a method to appeal to illiterate people in various localities around Africa (Bulhan, 2015). However, the missionary-promoted education system was not the only educational ‘system’ that people accessed at the time, nor necessarily even the major one. African people believed that there were educational systems in place at the time that would sufficiently equip their youth with the knowledge they needed in order to survive, therefore the earliest customary education for the Maasai is related to survival skills. While there were many diverse traditions, the major goals of African customary education (Mazonde, 2001) can be summarised as below:

1. To provide the young generation with the basic skills needed for individual survival;
2. To conserve the local culture, family, clan, and tribe traditions;
3. To help the young generation adapt to the traditional lifestyle and build their sense of belonging and responsibility to their local community; and
4. To improve understanding of the established rules, institutions, laws, language and values consistent with the local history of the community.

It is natural to think that the educational goals listed above for the African customary educational system would suit African social traditions (Rubagumya, 2004). During teaching, both formal and informal methods were employed to spread key ideas and knowledge. The teaching could occur at night when the tribe congregated around the fire to share old stories; it could be in the form of riddles for the children to extend their knowledge and key concepts about the history of the tribe (Blanche, Durrheim & Keller, 2006). Repetition helped the preservation of these key concepts and local knowledge in the community, especially when there were no formal written recordings. Knowledge about the dangers that existed in the environment, for example, insects or trees and plants, was taught by the parents through daily living. Imitation of their parents and other role models, such as their elders and the tribe leaders, and gaming was also a way to transmit important skills. For instance, the young boys, would learn how to farm and graze the cattle, and how to fight from their fathers; while the girls would learn to take care of the family through imaginary meals (Tripp, 1999). Such games have been widely discussed in the literature (for example, Martinez & Waldron, 2006, Phillips & Bhavnagri, 2002), and were believed to be one of the key methods for the transmission of cultural heritage for educational purposes.

Formal instruction is also present in such an educational system. Questions have been asked by researchers in the 20th century as to what methods would be used by a grandfather to show and teach his children the important details of their families, and how to act in an appropriate manner (Sobania, 2003). Similarly, Kenyatta, the
first president of Kenya (1964 – 1978), also analysed in *Facing Mount Kenya* (first published in 1938) how the Kikuyu people used the system of pronounced age-set, meaning that the residents of a similar range of birth years and with common identities and/or cultural background would learn together (Sobania, 2003; Eisenst Adt, 1954). Step by step, such an educational system prepares the young people for the life to come. This sort of approach to education also exists in East, Central and Southern Africa, notably, for example, in tribal groups such as the Sidamo (Ethiopia), the Nandi (Kenya), the Maasai (Kenya and Tanzania), the Pare and the Makonde (Tanzania) (Sobania, 2003).

There were also ceremonies and collective training opportunities for the young generation to learn about tribal mythology, unique knowledge and skills, and life wisdom (Wubs, Aaro, Flisher, Bastien, Onya, Kaaya & Mathews, 2009). Some of the younger adults benefitted from the opportunity to learn this knowledge and skills through repetition. To reinforce such knowledge and skills, sanctions were issued to the neophytes to demonstrate the power of the collective group over individuals. The important members of the society would attend such ceremonies to demonstrate the seriousness of the occasion. There would likely have been popular displays of certain rituals, constituted of oral and gestural expressions to illustrate certain experiences (Lederach, 1988). In Islamic dominated societies, there were formal systems in place to provide knowledge about important rituals in the so-called Koranic schools. They also taught religion-related rituals and knowledge; these Koranic schools can still be very common in some African countries today (Mayer, 2000). Nevertheless, these educational pedagogies would have to compete with a new form when, first, Western missionaries, and second,
colonial powers, came to Africa to spread Western culture and set up new types of institutions, including educational institutions.

2.1.2 Colonial education in Africa

During the colonial era, the education system was heavily influenced by the colonial agents who settled in the region. Thus, the education system in Africa and the Tanzania region was developed in accordance with the culture and framework of colonising states. African localities struggled to adapt to the different cultural ideologies introduced by Africa’s colonialists, and therefore developing robust and suitable educational structures became a major challenge for the African continent (Phillips & Bhavnagri, 2002).

Colonial education affected primary education to a greater degree than other education at other levels. The British colonies of West Africa (contemporary Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria), for example, always had less access to secondary education and fewer secondary schools compared to primary education (Sulaiman, 2012). The first secondary school for boys was established in Nigeria in 1878, and by 1937, only 58 schools had been given the status of secondary schools in the four British colony countries in West Africa (Mazonde, 2001). In French West Africa, the situation was not much better (Kriesberg, 2003). Even here, the colonial secondary schools did not all offer a comprehensive secondary education programme. In fact, only Makerere College in Uganda, in East Africa, offered a full secondary education programme at the time; Kenya only had only
two junior secondary schools, both of which were administered by missionary societies (Kriesberg, 2003).

By the 1950s this negligence regarding the provision of secondary education programmes on the part of colonial governments was only slightly improved upon, as can be demonstrated through the secondary schools’ enrolment figures. In 1950, the last decade before the decolonisation of Africa, the secondary schools in Africa only had an enrolment rate of 8%, considerably less than the primary school enrolment rates in some locales (Lederach, 2000). By country, these figures were: the Gold Coast (now Ghana) 2.1%, Nigeria 2.9%, Sierra Leone 8%, Uganda 3.5%, Kenya 2.1% and Tanganyika 11.8% (Miall, Ramsbotham & Woodhouse, 2000). Nonetheless, some of the territorial colonies had by this point established educational institutes based upon the English grammar school model. These institutes were excellent in terms of the curriculum and facilities offered (Miall, et. al., 2000). For example, the Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone, Achimota in the Gold Coast (Ghana), Katsina in Nigeria, King's College, Budo, in Uganda, the Alliance High School in Kenya and Munali in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) (Miall, et. al., 2000). Nevertheless, colonial era education was significantly influenced by a Eurocentric world view, and the language of instruction in schools was that of the colonial power (Magagula & Mazibuka, 2004). There were very few facilities for technical and professional education, meaning that the major focus was for cultural assimilation in the earlier colonial period, rather than on empowering Africans to take control of their own destiny.
2.1.3 Educational changes in Africa in the late colonial and post-colonial period

Formal education increasingly came to be perceived as beneficial to society, and as result African countries began to demand mass education. Attendance at schools gradually increased from the late 1930s onwards, including at secondary schools (Miall, et. al., 1998; Rahim, 2002). The establishment of self-government in some jurisdictions fortified the process. An early example was Ghana. From 1951, when Ghana succeeded in attaining internal self-rule, to 1957, the student populations in primary and secondary schools increased from 301,000 to 572,000 (Rubagumya, 2004). This was also witnessed in southern Nigeria where, in the Western region, the Action Group, after attaining power in 1951, issued a plan for universal primary education (Mazonde, 2001). Similar practices were observed in other parts of Africa, which led to a significant increase in the numbers of students engaged in education from 1963 to 1964. Educational expenditure also rapidly increased as a percentage of overall budgets (Tripp, 1999).

Qualitative changes in the education sector by the colonial governments can also be seen during this period (Bah-Diallo, 1997). Such changes can be seen in:

- Guaranteeing the provision of higher education;
- Changing the mode of education from liberal arts to scientific and technical subjects;
- Adding African content;
- Re-direction of the programmes designed for adults; and,
- The inclusion of new concepts regarding African language.
Nevertheless, despite increased access to secondary schools, there was only one major tertiary education institution in the region between the Sahara and the Kalahari as of the early 1940s. Steps were taken from this point onwards to expand access to tertiary education throughout Africa. The steps taken to develop tertiary education were connected in reaction to the desires and demands of anti-colonial movements in Africa. The elite class of Africa demanded economic progress and cultural self-determination, and in addition to secondary education, access to tertiary education was part of this desire for progress. Goals for tertiary education development included: a) the objective to cultivate local people to replace European decision-making capabilities within government institutions; b) guaranteeing the supply of the physical aspects of education, such as buildings, lecture rooms, workshops, other communications devices; and c) stimulating the beginning of a new intellectual and cultural era based on a profound exploration of spiritual aspects (Fafunwa, 1974; Akinlua, 2007). According to Amukugo (1993), in the late colonial and post-colonial period, the qualitative revolution in African education included changes made in the syllabus that weakened the dominance of arts and humanities in favour of the stronger preferences for technical education involving scientific education. In 1962, these preferences and goals were elaborated upon by different groups at the Tananarive Conference of UNESCO, which is considered a milestone in the history of the educational sector in Africa (Barker, et al., 1996). Some of the major benefits of tertiary education included the nurturing of skilled human resources, the opportunity to carry out research, and contributions to the cultural and rational life of society (Nye, 2005). According to Wolff (2000), tertiary education has flourished and expanded in Africa since the end of the colonial era.
Overall, educational development in Africa during the late colonial and post-colonial era had some notable attributes that differentiated it from educational development in the earlier colonial period, and are of importance in understanding societal changes in late- and post-colonial African nations. Educational development was comprised of the following three major dynamics (Woolman, 2001): a) significantly greater development of education at all levels; b) facilitating greater technical and professional instruction; and c) more interest in connecting the curricula with indigenous local cultures in Africa. Africa experienced vast social changes as a result of the first two dynamics, and the result was the transformation of African colonies into modern semi-industrial societies just as these colonies were to gain independence. With the expansion and development of a formal, money-based economic system, African societies underwent social divisions during this period, one result being the emplacement of local non-European elites in authoritative positions (Rahim, 2002). Many of these post-colonial elites were actually educated within the colonial school system. For example, it is well-known that most of the Tanzanian leaders who came into power after independence received a missionary education (Magagula & Mazibuka, 2004).

These elites, seizing upon the development of an anti-colonial movement facilitated by partnerships with activist lawyers and economic transformation in Africa, wanted to overthrow imperial control over local administrative matters and claim their political, legal and civil rights and (Terretta, 2017). Supported by African societies, these post-colonial elites influenced the colonial elites to demand a larger share of political power, before ultimately usurping this power for themselves in the post-colonial era. During this movement, the post-colonial elites
came to understand the significance of mobilising the public to their side and against the colonial powers (Irobi, 2005), and recognised that education can be an efficient tool for effectively communicating with the masses. Thus, while the first two dynamics, education at all levels and educational and professional instruction, helped transform African societies economically and industrially, the third dynamic, connecting curricula with indigenous African culture, was interlinked with the pressure imposed on authorities by local elites of the region, who would later use local cultural symbolism as a way to legitimise their power in post-colonial Africa. Furthermore, education was also considered as a tool to facilitate economic development and cultural self-assertion (Kenneh, 1998).

As for the state of African educational success in 2015, many African countries were committed to working towards the development goal of achieving universal primary education (The Africa-America Institute, 2015). This development got a boost with the launch of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in 2000, a set of determined development targets to reduce extreme poverty worldwide by 2015. According to the 2015 ‘State of Education in Africa Report 2015’, published by the Africa-America Institute (AAI), the African region has experienced a significant increase in the number of students enrolled in primary schools. Between 1990 and 2012, primary school enrolment across Africa increased from 62 million to 149 million (AAI, 2015).

The educational system across Africa has undergone significant change over time. This is to be understood in the context of an increasingly global society where there are increasing trade flows and interactions between the African countries and
the external world. The next section narrows down the focus to Tanzania, where the Maasai village that is the focus of this thesis is located.

2.2 Education in Tanzania

The patterns of education described above can also be seen in Tanzania. The early missionaries who came to Tanzania were more focused on primary school education in this case (Weaver, 2011). Primary education activities, influenced by missionary education, and under the control of the national government of the time, competed with indigenous societies to instil values (Salia-Bao, 1991). Similarly, in the late colonial and post-colonial periods, the goal of education in Tanzania was gradually changed due to the awakening of national consciousness. Two purposes have been frequently cited for the expansion of primary education: it serves to make the local people literate and numerate in order to handle the problems faced at home; and, primary education can also serve as a basis for additional education programs (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). In this section, the Tanzania’s history of education in colonial and post-colonial periods will be discussed, followed by the impact of the colonial education system on primary, secondary and higher education.

2.2.1 Education in Colonial and Post-Colonial Tanzania

Although missionaries were self-serving in their promotion of education in Tanzania and were involved in many indiscretions (Ayot, 1976), the institutionalisation of formal schooling through missionary activities had some
value as Tanzania became independent (Kotowicz, 2013). It is generally believed by scholars that most of the Tanzanian leaders who came into power after independence had received a missionary education at some time in the past (Kotowicz, 2013). In this case, a missionary education fostered political elites who fought for Tanzanian national autonomy and independence. Missionaries also helped foster the transition of local languages into writing scripts and brought new knowledge to the local people (Woodberry, 2004). For instance, Rev. Krafpf translated the New Testament and other books into Kiswahili (Kotowicz, 2013). By bringing Western education to parts of Tanzania, churches and missionaries unconsciously participated in developing Tanzanian global awareness and a commitment to humanitarian causes (Mazrui, 1978; Cimpric, 2010).

According to Lawuo (1978), from the second half of the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century, during the age of imperialism after the breakdown of the Concert of Powers (Europe) system, political and economic changes took place in Europe and North America which led to even greater numbers of missionaries leaving Europe to promote Christian activities in the form of religious preaching in Africa (Lawuo, 1978). Missionaries and explorers in particular played a role in sparking foreign public interest in Africa and assisting the imperial scramble for Africa. Such persons included David Livingstone, the Scottish missionary, and the businessman and southern Africa politician, Cecil Rhodes. Rhodes became the Prime minister of Cape Colony (1890-1896), and wanted British control over South Africa (Bivona, 2015). He had made a fortune from African diamond mines and established the South African Company (Bivona, 2015). Livingstone explored Africa during 1841-1873 while he lived in central Africa (Mackenzie, 2013). He
named Lake Victoria after the British queen, converted many Africans to Christianity, and wrote books on Africa which piqued foreign interest (Mackenzie, 2013). Livingstone was in particular aware of the linkage between colonial influence, missionaries and education. As Lawuo (1975) recorded, missionary Dr David Livingstone sent by the London mission society (L.M.S.) once declared in public:

> I understand that it would cost the missionaries very much to act as teachers, nevertheless it is urgent to take this step in order to consolidate their efforts and aim at the formation of a coloured clergy of teachers and catechists. In my opinion to abandon the school is to destroy the importance of mission. (p.46)

Western formal education was introduced to Tanzania in about 1868 by missionaries, long before the formal establishment of the Colonial Government Administration (Kusimba, 2004). Since then, missionaries have been involved in the development of education, culture, health, the economy, and politics in Tanzania. Missionaries knew that school education was the backbone of missionary activities and was the main tool employed to conquer and pacify new areas ahead of the formal administration taking over. Like elsewhere, education was seen as potentially useful in terms of changing the culture, beliefs and value systems of the Maasai, so an acceptable and helpful system that served European interests and conformed to societal norms needed to be put in place (Lawuo, 1975; Welborn, Ponka & Rebuck, 1965).

In 1885, five different missionary societies operated schools in the territories: the University mission for central Africa (U.M.C.A.), Church Missionary Societies (C.M.S.), White fathers (W.F.), Holy Ghost Fathers (H.G.F.), and the London Mission Society (L.M.S.) (Lawuo, 1978). Each mission was running its own school
for the purpose of facilitating engagement with Christian spiritual practice (Chidester, Mitchell, Phiri & Omar, 1994). This religious principle was prominent in teaching, and generally conducted in the language of the colonial power. Agricultural training in fields such as carpentry, in accord with local living conditions was either inadequate or missing. In order to plant Western cultural values into the heart of the local people, the initial focus of missionaries was on diversifying the range of elementary subjects taught to students, based on the differing academic level of the pupils. Education in the territories, therefore, included academic-orientated courses, technical-orientated courses and agricultural-orientated courses (Chidester et. al., 1994). The brightest students were assigned to learn reading, writing, and mathematics, as well as chemistry, geography, geometry, Greek and trigonometry; less academically capable students were allocated to learn the techniques of trade, crafts, metal work, carpentry, and caving. Other students were trained to be labourers for the construction of the mission station (Chidester et. al., 1994).

In the colonial era in Tanzania, secondary education was ignored to a great extent, and this can be demonstrated by the fact that in 1952 there was not much difference between the enrolment rates of secondary and primary schools (Mazonde, 2001). The enrolment rate of secondary schools was 2.1% lower than that of primary schools. While Mazonde (2001) notes that in the post-colonial era in Africa there was extensive expansion of national education at all levels, including provision for technological and specialised guidance, the influence of colonial education on the Tanzanian national education system can be seen in that
primary schools are still a top preference when it comes to the education sector (Morrison, 1976; Bonini, 2006).

Tanzania was established as the United Republic of Tanzania in 1964, and Dr. Julius Nyerere was declared the first Prime Minister, and later, the first President of Tanzania. Tanzanian leaders have been well aware of the significance of education in building an ideal society and social structure for the citizens of the country (Buchert, 1994; Tshabangu & Msafiri, 2013). There was an educational revolution in 1967 that focused on secondary or higher school curriculum and gradually grew into a strong movement in the Tanzania regions. It aimed to demolish the colonial impact on the design of school courses, although the changes were not immediate (Galtung, 1996). The development and arrangement of a suitable curriculum, as well as necessary resources and books, took more time (Barrett, 2006). Another project that was put on the agenda was the training of the teachers, to meet national, local and individual needs.

The Tanzanian government emphasised the importance of schooling for the country’s development, and the school curriculum was publicly announced as a nation-building tool (Miguel, 2004). Political education aimed at building the Tanzanian national identity in line with pan-Africanism, the socialist political philosophy adopted by Mwalimu Nyerere, and the principles proposed in the Arusha Declaration, were also introduced to the school curriculum (Christie, 1997). Programmes in free primary education, secondary education and higher education enabled the government to make considerable progress in making the colonial education system one that better reflected local values (Christie, 1997). This
included some degree of support for Maasai customary education and cultural identity (discussed below).

According to a survey conducted by the United Nations in 1980 (UNESCO, 1983), around 3,361,228 students were enrolled in primary schools in 1980 and around 67,396 students were in secondary schools (UNESCO, 1983). This number of enrolments in secondary education almost tripled a decade later. For example, primary school student enrolment was almost 3.3 million, secondary school enrolment was 167,150. In 1996, the situation improved even further with almost 3.9 million primary school students enrolled, an additional 211,664 students for secondary school enrolment (United Republic of Tanzania, 2010). The number has been rising continuously since (United Nations, 2012). However, despite the efforts made by the government to engage students and encourage them to go to school, there are still issues faced by the governors. These include motivating the grazing ethnic groups to send their children to enrol in formal education, especially in rural areas where it does not meet the infrastructure standard, for example, physical structures such as roads, electricity and water; rural services including socio-economic status.

Therefore, formal education has greatly impacted education, migration patterns, traditional life and indigenous beliefs in every district of Tanzania. After the establishment of the United Republic of Tanzania, and subsequent “urbanisation”, “westernisation” (Linden, 1991, p.2) and settlement that went along with expanding national education coverage, various problems arose. Increased education access and urbanisation have not necessarily been a panacea for Tanzanians as a whole, for minority ethnic groups, or for those rural Tanzanians
that chose to migrate from rural areas to cities. Macro-level societal problems that persist or have worsened in Tanzania include population increases and overcrowding, internal displacement of migrants, poverty, disaffection from land and resources, famine, and a lack of local involvement in political problem solving (Wangwe & Rweyemamu, 2001; O’Loghlen, 2015).

In addition, Mwamfupe (1998) indicated that numerous issues have affected the education system in a direct or indirect way, and possessed the ability to cause social clashes in Tanzanian schools. Problems like “dating violence” and difficulties in student affairs, and HIV/AIDS concerns, are also faced by Tanzanian citizens and students (Wubs, et. al., 2009, p.75; Mayer & Boness, 2011). In addition, other factors impacting educational activities are health issues and the shortage of qualified teachers (Wubs, et. al., 2009; Mayer & Boness, 2011; Saga, 2014), along with language differences (Rubagumaya, 2004), administrative issues and insufficient educational resources (Mayer, Boness & Kussaga, 2010; Matete, 2016). The government and local leaders noticed that a lack of respect paid to the traditional culture has also been an outcome for children attending formal education. Language is another significant issue where there is some conflict within the educational sector, specifically between the use of English and Kiswahili (UNICEF, 2016). Many citizens believe that in order to have a better social, political or economic position, they need to have a better command of English (Telli, 2014).

Besides changes in their traditional life and values presented in the previous chapter, the emergence and practice of European missionaries since the eighteenth century has also clearly exerted a great influence on the development of the
education system in Tanzania. The next section of this chapter explores the impact of colonial education on current primary, secondary and higher education in Tanzania. It also discusses how Maasai inside Tanzania have been influenced by, and have reacted to, both colonial education institutions as well as those established by the post-colonial Tanzanian state.

2.2.2 Impact of the Colonial Education System

The impact of the colonial education system on the Maasai cannot be fully understood unless considered in the context of Tanzanian education. Since colonial times, missionaries have focused their efforts on education for the purpose of largely controlling the ideology of the Tanzanian people from the early years of life in order to reduce the likelihood of rebellion against the political and economic domination of the Europeans (Masudi, 1995). The missionaries were more focused on the education of primary aged students in this case. According to Masudi’s (1995) investigation, in Tanga, which is a quiet city compared to Arusha, there were over one thousand bush schools and primary schools with a total enrolment of 150,000 pupils by 1914 (after Tanga had experienced twenty-one years of colonial primary school education). This indicates how much the colonial education system had become part of the Tanga people. Arusha’s experience of colonial education is much the same as the Tanga. The following sections explore the impacts of the colonial education systems particular on the primary, secondary and higher education in Tanzania.
2.2.2.1 Primary Education

Under the control of the present Tanzanian government, primary school education activities, with missionary educational influences, were in competition with the values of indigenous societies. As was the case with primary education in Africa generally, Tanzanian people had indigenous education systems that respected indigenous values and culture. Customary education, as proposed by Mazonde (2001) has three aims: firstly, to “preserve the cultural heritage for the family, the clan and the tribe” (p. 15); secondly, to teach the new generation to adapt themselves to and have control over the local physical environment; and thirdly, to transmit the institutions, laws, language and values of the community (Mazonde, 2001). These objectives are relevant to the local Tanzanian context as well as being applicable to the rest of Africa. Although the customary education system was mostly informal and without the standardised system, the local people had organised their own education structure, taking into account their own perspectives on methods of delivery and education content. There are a number of examples where customary education included the local populations’ traditions and beliefs. An example of customary education existed in the south of Africa with the Ganda people where the appropriate manners and genealogical positions of different clansmen were valued (Mair, 1965), and this traditional knowledge was imparted based on the age-set system (Kenyatta, 1953). In other examples, initiation ceremonies or rites from status to status were highlighted by the Maasai group in Tanzania and Kenya and many other societies of the African continent, namely, Sidamo (Ethiopia), the Nandi (Kenya) and the Pare and the Makonde (Tanzania) (Masudi, 1995).
Insights about the colonial-influenced educational situation in Tanzania can be acquired by the following example of a timetable from Bagamoyo primary school in Tanzania. Recorded by Lawuo (1975), the schedule was arranged as detailed in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Academic group</th>
<th>For Industrial group</th>
<th>For Agricultural labour group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 hour - academic activities</td>
<td>1 hour - academic work</td>
<td>1 hour - writing, reading and arithmetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 minutes - religious study</td>
<td>30 minutes - religious study</td>
<td>1 hour - religious study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of the day - shamba (garden) work</td>
<td>10 hours - practical training</td>
<td>9.5 hours - manual work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2.2 School timetable in Bagamoyo primary school, Tanzania)

Missionaries arbitrarily utilised the syllabuses to teach what they intended to. Large numbers of students in Tanzanian primary schools were taught in foreign languages (such as English) during the colonial period (Masudi, 1995). In 1967, Kiswahili (Swahili) was declared to be the national and official language after independence, and was thereafter taught in primary schools (Tibategeza, 2010). Most of the missionaries selected to use their own vernaculars (such as English) as the medium of instruction, and very few missionaries used Swahili (Lawuo, 1975). This situation has remained the case throughout most of Africa today. Using the students’ second language for school instruction is problematic because student learning may be hampered by a lack of understanding of the language of instruction. Training local teachers to learn the foreign language is also challenging.
Additionally, the use of the foreign language may cause language barriers and delay student’s learning, this may present as an obstacle for progressing to higher levels of education. Linguistic competence was one of the main requirements for students wishing to continue their formal education in the colonial era, and students could not continue their formal education at the higher level if they failed the language examination.

Primary schools in the Arusha area, which was colonised by Britain, established a curriculum that was very similar to British elementary schools. However, in 1957, it was discovered that besides learning the foreign language, primary children in “one small tribal area were spending most of their first two years learning their local language”, regardless of the lack of reading materials in their own language (Dodd, 1968, p. 76). Most of the indigenous languages in Tanzania had not formed their own written system, literary resources or referenced grammar (Barrett, 2006). Therefore, although the idea of educating children in their own dialect was seriously taken into account, it could not be achieved, because without one standard language system the opportunity to facilitate communication was limited, and it could be even more difficult to maintain the stability of larger administrative institutions.

In the late colonial and post-colonial period, the goal of education in Tanzania was gradually changed due to the awakening of national consciousness (Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991). In the year’s immediately preceding political independence in 1961, the Tanzanian education system was no longer focused on the interests of the colonists, but on the development of the country (Mazonde, 2001).
With the national education policy aimed at facilitating the formal and de facto independence of Tanzania, the original school curriculum came to be seen as unpopular and burdensome for both students and teachers. However, because it was impossible to totally abandon the educational system instituted by the colonists, the Tanzanian government adapted the education system, for example, to make it serve a society based on agriculture (Mazonde, 2001; Hamilton, Mahera, Mateng’e, & Machumu, 2010). Parts of the curriculum were difficult to deliver in primary education. The mathematics curriculum in some of the primary schools is one example. Mmari (1978) stated that the mathematics curriculum was “abstract, irrelevant, selective and elitist” (p. 105) and governed by structures such as the Cambridge International Examination Certificates in the UK. The nature of the mathematics curriculum in primary schools could be viewed as a deliberate strategy of acculturation where the intention was to inspire students to attend western universities and convince them of the superiority of Western knowledge over indigenous knowledge. However, the same education system could be a source of trouble for colonialists. Watson (1982), commenting on Tanzanian education policy at the turn of the century, argued that the system was impractical and often served to make the people litigious, to inspire distaste for manual and technical work and to create a class of literary malcontents, useless to their communities and a source of trouble to the Empire. (p. 52)

Many teachers noticed that mathematics and some of the science subjects taught in Tanzanian primary schools could easily have made connections with the environment and indigenous culture, but they were not able to do so due to their
limited technical knowledge of applying theoretical education concepts to the field (Watson, 1982). Additionally, the students were taught by the teachers at school in the form of westernised classes where the focus was on theoretical learning as opposed to providing solutions to practical problems as was the case with customary education (Bude, 1983). Since experienced teachers were also not familiar with new instruction concepts, and while the young teachers were losing their enthusiasm due to what they saw as rigid, conservative work, the former evaluation system of examinations remained in the preeminent position as the arbiter of colonial standards (Bude, 1983).

It is necessary to point out, however, that the adaptation of theory into practice did make some progress in some areas. In some projects, educationalists who dealt with curricular and organisational aspects of primary education were encouraged to find a symbiosis between western and traditional education, taking into account the local socio-economic conditions and the needs of the local population (Bude, 1983). At the same time, this attempt was supported by influential community members in the hope of eliminating western education and preserving their own traditions. They believed that it was possible for the students to deal with inevitable social changes if the new form of education was established (Claker, 1937). The research experiment was first initiated in Malangali of Tanzania with a detailed report compiled by Clarke (1937) in which the failure of western-type education was determined to be due to its lack of adaptation to the local conditions. Accordingly, an alternate methodology of integrating tribal organisation into schooling was tried. Modelled on tribal communities, the school curriculum comprised of tribal traditions, for example, clothes making, buildings and furniture,
were taught by the tribal elders, and gave more attention to local agricultural and pastoral interests (Sinclair, 1976). The new approach in Malangali was the first trial where the community would share educational responsibility for young people and children, while still using elements of Western education as a new way to solve the difficulties in the community. Unfortunately, the project never proceeded beyond the experimental period because of the loss of official support, and thus was not brought into common use for other cultural groups (Lewis, 1954).

The Maasai group was a typical example of a group intentionally withdrawing from the modern school system. According to the research, the rate of school attendance continued to be low for some time. For example, King (1972) estimated that 5% of Maasai boys and less than 2.5% of Maasai girls were allowed to attend schools; this situation did not change until the late-1990s (Lembikas, et al, 1996).

The research did not only collect data on school enrolment and attendance, but also on attitudes towards education. King (1972) found that the reasons for the low attendance rate may have been due to the pastoral responsibility held by the children, the cost of education, poor recognition of schooling, and the legacy of negative historical experiences in the colonial era. King (1972) also mentioned that the reason girls were not educated was that the majority of Maasai families feared that the girls would become “too independent to obey the choice of the family for her matrimony” (p. 337). The development and popularisation of primary school education in Maasai groups, has been complicated (as also discussed above). Therefore, the current education system is the result of persistent hard work by the Maasai people.
2.2.2.2 Secondary and Higher Education

Since colonial times, primary education has been viewed as the end of schooling for most children rather than as a step towards secondary education. Before Julius Nyerere became the first president of Tanzania in 1954, the enrolment rate for secondary school was 2.1% lower than primary school enrolment. This was recognised as being the result of the general neglect of secondary education during the colonial period (Mazonde, 2001). Since then, although the government has put effort into developing the education system, the increase in the enrolment rate for secondary education has still been minimal. For example, the gross enrolment ratio was 5% of school age children eligible in 1995 and 5.8% in 2001, with only a 0.8 percentage point increase from 1995 to 2001 (in 2013 was 33%) (Sifuna, 2007; The World Bank, 2014). Moreover, the existing examination content in some of Tanzania’s secondary schools imitates the versions in Britain. The use of content similar to the UK system has been permitted by the authorities who were initially responsible for the overall education system. The similar content has also been treated as a way to support the work of voluntary agencies that have existed since the colonial times (Puja, 2007). For example, the first group of national secondary schools that was established was modelled after British public schools. An implied class distinction arose as language was used to decide whether or not the students could be further educated. Notably, the staff in secondary schools consisted of European teachers, and English was the only language used to teach (Puja, 2007).

In the context of ever expanding globalisation, there is a widespread voice advocating need for the comprehensive reform of the Tanzanian education system, and the requirements for higher education remain desperate (Cross, Khossa,
Persson & Sesabo, 2015). As Hughes and Mwiria (1990) have proposed, the greater the diversity within a nation, the more potential for diversity in higher education institutions. Recommendations from critics in the World Bank have focused on the fact that universities play an important role in education, as they are important to economic development and political stability (Hughes & Mwiria, 1990; Van De Bor & Shute, 1991; Kruss, McGrath, Petersen & Gastrow, 2015).

The Maasai of Tanzania did not truly embrace Western culture and did not fully commit to Western education. They insisted on continuing to engage with their traditional customs and beliefs (Hodgson, 2011). Njoh (2007) has stated that a Europe-centred culture of capitalist ideology conflicted with the local culture and traditions, and the indigenous tribes resisted the transformation from traditional existence to the principle of Protestant work ethics. This resistance may account for why the Maasai have fallen behind many other ethnic groups in Tanzania, in education areas such as in school enrolment and school attendance (Talle, 1999; May & Ikayo, 2007). However, after the twentieth century, with the support of the United Nations, non-government organisations and other institutions all around the world, Tanzania received a substantial amount of funds which accelerated the development of Maasai’s education, including the development of policies that enhanced access to secondary and higher education. Scholarships have become available based on the needs of the students and the criteria decided according to family incomes of those families who have lower combined annual incomes; and, loans for school fees can be subsidised by the government.
2.3 Education in Maasai

Globalisation has also impacted on the Maasai and this along with their traditional cultural values will determine the Maasai response to the modern education system. The challenges the Maasai are facing are not only a question of choice, but of their existing poverty, “cultural” pressure and future development (Haasnoot, 2010). First, a brief background on the Maasai’s geographical, social location, socio-political conditions inside Tanzania is essential, along with an introduction to Laiboni Village, which is the research focus of this thesis. Second, the impacts of colonial and post-colonial education on Maasai’s customary education and cultural identity will be discussed, including the impacts on Maasai’s matrimony, fertility and religion.

2.3.1 The Maasai within Tanzania: Education and Colonial Legacy

Since colonial times, the four administrative districts of Maasailand have been split between two countries: Narok and Kajiado belonged to Kenya, while Monduli and Kiteto were in Tanzania. Laiboni Village is located in the Monduli district, in the Arusha Region (see figure 1) of Tanzania inhabited by the Maasai. The area is inhabited by the Maasai who distinguish themselves through the preservation of their traditional living style. Rather than concrete buildings, the Maasai live in bomas with livestock pens and manyattas (several homes), which are built on the base of a mixture of mud and animal dung and covered with tree branches. They seldom kill their animals for food except on ceremonial occasions for someone
highly-honoured or for marriage, but they milk them for daily drinking because of the shortage of water.

An initiative to decrease the transport links between preferred and ignored areas of the state was carried out by the government in the mid-1970s, but was not as successful as expected (Buchert, 1994). Since then, a socio-political system based on a model of socialism has been adopted in the form of “villagisation” (Barker, Boraine & Krafcik, 1996, p. 83). In order to diminish rural poverty, the government allocated subsidies to incentivise agricultural expansion to encourage specialisation in large-scale commercial cultivation, and to create a free education system; even the pastoralist tribes in remote areas were expected to conform to the policies (Börjeson, Hodgson & Yanda, 2008). These various attempts at shaping the rural regions in Tanzania have had an impact. Based on documented satellite images of the Maasai areas, from the 1970s to the 2000s, large areas of pastoral
lands and dry-land woods were abruptly transformed into a landscape suitable for agricultural production.

In Africa, the Maasai tribe are a relatively well-known tribe. Although the tribe is surrounded by communities that have adopted and welcomed the modern way of living, many Maasai have managed to preserve their culture and traditions (Elness-Hanson, 2006). In terms of educational development and opportunities, changes and transformations have been observed in this regard. Every man and woman have certain obligations in the tribe and they were taught by their elders.

Due to the increasing use of traditional Maasai lands for conventional agricultural production, livestock keeping became a secondary activity for many Maasai (Massoi, 2015). In this context, the Maasai began to seek to diversify their economy, particularly through development in such areas as cultural tourism (Ondicho, 2017). This economic diversification also resulted in men seeking jobs as wage labourers or night guards, the commercialisation of indigenous ethnomedical knowledge in the town, and the production and selling of beadwork created by the village women. As the government took away more and more land, the Maasai were forced to navigate the changing boundary of farms, hunting reserves and settlements (Johannes, 2002). Within the developing context of Tanzania, Maasai teenagers became aware of the importance of education and knowledge for raising their chances of surviving in an environment where they were exposed to the forces of globalisation.

Generally though, the Maasai, are currently perceived to be poor, uneducated and thus “backward” in comparison with much of mainstream Tanzanian society.
The village is going through changes as they face a fast-moving world, and issues such as whether they should integrate with the “modern” society, which might involve increased detachment from their traditional cultural identity, has become a salient issue for the residents of Laiboni.

2.3.2 Maasai Colonial and Post-colonial Education

After World War One, the territory came under British mandate and many missionaries involved in education faced changes. Tanzania was under the direct control of the German government from 1891 until 1918 when Germany lost the war and the British government took over authority from Germany (Local Histories, 2016). The British administration had to keep the harmony not only between the missions and the local people but also between the missionaries themselves (Lawuo, 1978). The British administration emphasised that the education provided to the Maasai would be geared to the Maasai rural environment, and that the elementary education conducted by the Western missionaries should be geared to assist progression to secondary education and technical training. Moreover, the local people of Tanzania were required by the colonial government to register at schools, so that the official school syllabuses could be standardised, and then inspected by the supervisors. The scale of education was expected to be expanded with the grants-in-aid received from the government during this period (Dodd, 1968; Otiende, 2012).

The Maasai education system was developed during the colonial period but was, more or less, alienated from this period. For example, even if the administration
intended to involve some children in schooling, Maasai daily herding activities had already made involvement in schooling difficult for some school-age boys (Bonini, 1995). Because the Maasai were semi-nomadic for much of the time, warriors had to migrate with their herds to faraway pastures in accordance with seasonal changes (Bonini, 1995). Moreover, it was common for the Maasai children to leave their parents and live with close friends or relatives. The Maasai were quite mobile and unrestricted, and children could move far away from their home, seldom or never coming back (Bonini, 1995). From this perspective, the pastoral Maasai can be regarded as being distanced from colonialist education or at least, lightly affected by it.

However, it would be misleading to assume that the number of Maasai attending formal education has decreased since colonial times. Of interest is that they were the first people in Tanzanian history to build a school on a community basis (Ole Kantai, 2004). After the conclusion of World War One, the Maasai constructed the Government Maasai School in Narok in 1939 (although this school was moved twice afterwards). The funds to develop the school were raised by selling livestock (Ole Kantai, 1992). At that time, men of the older generation devoted themselves to education, and they walked a long distance to school on a daily basis (Ole Kantai, 1992). Although there were very few schools in Maasailand during colonial times, they did exist, as did others across the whole African continent. It has been argued that the schools were mainly controlled by the European missionaries and tailored to maintain their domination (Ole Kantai, 1992). The colonial education system attempted to indoctrinate Maasai children in
Western ‘civilized’ values, but many Maasai families succeeded in avoiding this, due to their life-style as pastoralists on the plains.

The changes to Maasai education during the late colonial and post-colonial period cannot be accurately understood without considering changes that were occurring across Tanzania. After the Arusha Conference in 1969, where the policy of socialism was implemented by the Tanzanian government, school education was considered as the main force for the development of politics and the economy (Kaplan, 1978). As a result, education policy was devised to reflect the ideals of social commitment and self-reliance (Kaplan, 1978). Before the policy of “Education for Self-Reliance” established in 1976, education based on the agricultural economy was geared to serve the needs of the Maasai and preserve their identity. The revolution in education commenced from rejecting the use of text books and subjects that were adopted during the colonial period. However, the model of the national education system is still based on the British educational system, including a seven-year primary education system, and the six-year secondary education system (Barrett, 2006).

2.3.3 The Maasai’s Customary Education and Cultural Identity

After the introduction of Western schooling, the indigenous education system was ‘marginalised’ (Agrawal, 1995). The preeminent status of the Western knowledge system in colonised societies has always resulted in the negligence or degradation of local knowledge, the situation is a little more favourable for the Maasai (Grenier, 1998; Obiora & Emeka, 2015). Lalonde (1993), whose study focused on the
relationship between African indigenous knowledge and sustainable development, argued that many of the elites already noticed that the reason for the undervaluation and ignorance of traditional knowledge was to cater to the political or economic practices and policies that were saturated in past colonial doctrines. The use of a contemporary participatory approach to studying the indigenous knowledge system has highlighted the importance of transmitting local tradition as opposed to the disposal of tradition, which had occurred in the past (Sillitoe, Dixon & Barr, 2005).

Education as a medium of preserving and circulating culture is expressed in two ways: education as a formal medium performs a function of educating, civilising and humanising for wider public interaction; the informal medium functions to transmit the norms for social activities in more intimate contexts (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995). The access to formal schooling provided the young Maasai with the opportunity to be educated and civilised within the context of expanding globalisation. Most of the Maasai were pastoralists living on rough pastures who were facing major changes in their traditional lifestyle. As a result, Maasai culture underwent variations as a result of the formal education system (Okiya, 2016). Due to their marginalisation, the Maasai group built their own selfhood and distinctiveness and sought to preserve these unique features. Therefore, the Maasai group was keeping their cultural identity by maintaining their pastoral life and being resistant to formal education (Gimbo, Mujawamariya & Saunders, 2015). The Maasai’s attitudes towards schooling are inconsistent with other tribes in Tanzania, which closely relate with their socio-economic situation, particularly in terms of the involvement of the Maasai’s pastoral lifestyle (Nyanjom,
Within the development discourse, Western education with its hegemony in Tanzania has greatly influenced the Maasai traditions.

### 2.3.4 Maasai Customary Education and Gender

Because of the intimate relationship with the land and animals as well as the high rate of child mortality (according to the *Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2015*, the rate was 14 child deaths per 1,000 in 2014), most early customary education for the Maasai is related to survival skills. These factors assumed gender differences in the training of children at a very early age. For instance, boys and girls were expected to play different roles in family settings: boys engaged in pasturing, defending and hunting, while girls engaged in house-keeping, cooking and child-rearing. However, boys and girls were identically trained by their mothers, and they helped their mothers to take care of the livestock as soon as they were able to help at a very young age. Yet girls remained at home while boys began to learn to become warriors as the children got older (Archambault, 2017).

Before the Maasai boys joined the warrior group, uncircumcised boys focused on the animal husbandry skills taught by their fathers or older brothers. A substantial amount of knowledge concerning the environment, the main pastoral techniques and the animals was expected to be assimilated before the Maasai boys, once older, became qualified shepherds. In order to familiarise themselves with the grazing environment, to be able to identify signs of animal diseases, and to learn to be alert to all possible dangers, the boys needed to stay with the herds throughout the day. Skilled shepherds were able to identify their own herds according to their

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physical characteristics (Arhem, 1985). Thereafter, the step forward into ‘warriorhood’ (for young men from the age of 14) was viewed as a long process towards adult maturity. They were educated and monitored by the senior elders who were considered to be symbolic warrior fathers (Arhem, 1985). Although the warriors were required to pasture the herds, their education was different than it had previously been, as they began to learn how to defend the community. Most of the knowledge about warrior activities, such as cattle raiding, beast hunting, meat feasts and dancing and singing skills, were conveyed by the older warriors or elders. Moreover, social norms, the ceremony for each age system and the standards of mastering the community were taught during this phase (Arhem, 1985).

For the Maasai, formal education and customary education are contradictory forms of instruction. Competing with pasturing, the formal education system rigidly requires daily participation. Moreover, school-aged children, from six to twelve years old, who sit in the classroom, are deprived of pastoral learning and practicing this in the natural environment. This deprivation changes their knowledge bank of the survival skills mentioned earlier (Bonini, 2006). Moreover, customarily, education for girls, boys and warriors differs because of the division of labour, pastoral activities and social practices. However, in the school environment, the same instruction on curriculum-based theories was given to all pupils in a single classroom (Bonini, 2006). Although boys who lived close to home continued to herd on weekends and during holidays, they were not capable of being good shepherds. McCabe (2003) offers one explanation based on the words of a Maasai mother who has four children, two of whom were attending school. The mother claimed that her school son, who was receiving a formal education, could
not acquire all the knowledge and experiences compared to the child who herded animals every day. She explained that when that particular son was herding, his mind was busy with the simultaneous focus on the knowledge he learned from school and the duties required of shepherding.

The education in schools has emphasised agricultural theoretical knowledge more than herding experiences. As a result, the Maasai’s traditional pastoral capability that they previously depended on could be progressively lost. In addition, the evaluation criteria of school education are alienated from pastoral education. According to field investigation records from Bonini (2006), all the schools in Maasailand that he visited judged the students according to the standards of their academic performances or educational initiatives and also factored in their obedience to their teachers and school rules. However, in the context of pasture, evaluations should focus on students’ practical shepherding abilities and their ability to master the wild plains. Indeed, the requirement of student obedience exists in both forms of education, to the teachers and school rules or to the community elders, but this requirement was initiated for different concerns.

Contrary to the Maasai boys, customary education for the Maasai girls was confined within the boma (the Maasai huts). In the past, most of the education the Maasai girls received was from their mothers, older sisters or other women in the Maasai village, and it focused on their future roles as wives and mothers (Bonini, 2006). During the day, the Maasai girls assisted with the daily activities and took care of the young children; in the evening, they helped with the milking of the herds (Bonini, 2006). Another possible way for the girls to acquire knowledge was by association with the Maasai warriors. From the social activities like the meat feasts
for various celebrations, girls learned to toss and dance, and they might also leave home to live in the bushes with the warriors for a period or several weeks to gain knowledge about nature (Bonini, 2006). Nowadays, the situation has changed. While the Maasai boys are still responsible for grazing animals, the Maasai girls can also take the animals out to the pasture as well if the males in their family are going to school or working outside of the village.

Puberty rites for Maasai girls is important. Education for the girls ended with the puberty rite where circumcision was conducted, traditionally at the age of fourteen or fifteen. The former puberty rite required a six-week confinement in which girls were intensively trained by the senior women of the Maasai community or in the Maasai village. The subjects taught ranged from physiology to the rights and obligations of women to the whole Maasai community (Kipuri, 1990). This education is conveyed in the oath articulated in a puberty ceremony, as recorded by Elizabeth Colson (1870) in Mazonde’s (2001) article:

Now you are grown, we want you to stop using obscenity, and abusing people. From now on you must be reminded, further, that as married women they must work hard, keep their homes clean, their husbands well looked after and their fields in order. (p. 5)

Over the past few years, gestures, words, singing and dancing have increasingly been used by the Maasai women in place of these rites of passage into adult life. However, these new ways are not uniformly accepted by the Maasai (Kieller, 2011).
2.3.5 Maasai - Matrimony and Education

As the educational infiltration of Western philosophy is rooted in the culture of colonialism, the strengths and traditions of the Maasai culture, originally preserved and transmitted through customary education, has been “harassed” by the colonial education system. As stated earlier, one approach to defining culture is as relating to: 1) the life of the people involved as a whole; 2) the social legacy the individual acquires from group; 3) a way of thinking, feeling, and believing; 4) an abstraction from behaviour; 5) a theory on the part of the anthropologist about the way in which a group of people in fact behave; 6) a storehouse of pooled learning; 7) social learned behaviour; 8) a set of techniques for adjusting both to the external environment and to other men; and 9) communication (Kashima, 2000; Li & Karakowsky, 2001). As Eliot (2010) suggested,

the culture of the individual is dependent upon the culture of a group or class, and that the culture of the group or class is dependent upon the culture of the whole society to which that group or class belongs. (p. 4)

Friedman (1998) notes that culture is manifested through dress, religion, food, communication, music, and comprises a plurality that individuals can ‘pick and mix’ from and with which their identity is modified in line with the developing world. In most cases, the person that has limited or no genuine choices is obviously forced or unconsciously assimilated to modify his/her identity. One of the representations of identity is a new concept under modern schooling known as “educated person”, and this new concept inevitably challenges previous popular cultures (Levinson, Foley & Holland, 1996, p. 16). Once educated, people begin to actively question, or are passively affected by, the traditions that have been kept
from generation to generation, the changes of the marriage age and the acceptance of polygyny will be discussed here.

Many individual reports and studies present stories of girls refusing and running away from forced child marriage in order to continue with their formal education (Archambault, 2011; Temba, Warioba & Msabila, 2010; Ngoitiko, 2008). Coast (2006) conducted demographic research on the influence of education on entry into marriage among the Maasai, and focused on the young Maasai women due to the low literacy rate among the older Maasai women. The younger women who attended formal education tended to get married later than those women who did not attend formal education; whereas the older they are, the less difference educational status made. Women who completed primary school education had a lower likelihood of entering into marriage earlier compared with those who had no primary school education. Basu (1999) assumed that, “while there is something special about the educated woman, there is nothing special about the educated man” (p. 269). Also in an example in the article written by Gimbo, Mujawamariya and Saunders (2015), a mother from a village, Mswakini Juu, explained, “Maasai values cows a lot. Marriage of girls brings cows, sending children to school may cost cows” (p. 15).

Although Lesthaeghe, Meekers and Kaufmann (1989) have already written a lot about the effect of female education on polygyny back in the 1980s, which was a long-existing convention among the patriarchal Maasai society, but the male as the centre of this system still seems to be more rational. Coast (2005) conducted a series of field studies and data analysis of the relationship between male education and polygyny, the effect of education on male entry into polygyny, and the impact
of education on the prevalence and intensity of polygyny. According to Coast’s study results, for all men, regardless of the status of education, the proportion of acceptance of polygyny grows with the duration of the marriage. Furthermore, the report showed that men who have received at least three years of education had a relatively lower prevalence of polygyny than men who did not (Coast, 2001; Coast, 2006). Another distinct phenomenon is among those who had the minimum qualification of primary school graduation. No matter how long the duration of the marriage was, these primary school graduates were never married to more than two women. This insight is also reflected in one of my examples covered in the fieldwork chapter.

Reasons for the distinct differences in attitudes towards polygyny held by the better-educated Maasai men on entering into marriage can be generally speculated about with reference to the real cases recorded by Coast (2005). The previously mentioned example was a boy who attended primary school but was absent from the training to become a warrior because of the requirement of daily attendance at the school. The young Maasai boys may be absence for a short time from school, as it is more important for them to meet the condition to be a real warrior. They are strangers to the customary warrior community where the traditional habits, skills, customs, and values are taught and emphasised (Coast, 2005). The possible reason for the low proportion of both educated women and men early into the marriage is that the schooling system enables them to reduce the paternal influences from their family and society. Another factor that should be considered is that men and women who have been well-educated are more likely to encourage their children to be formally educated in the future. Acquiring more wives to the Maasai means
having more children, which may reduce the chance of sending all the children to school, which would be a problem if that is what they desire. Given all these factors, the lower prevalence of early marriage and polygyny is easily understood. In a study conducted by Keiper and Rugira (2013), young interviewees of the academically successful pastoralists recognised that education provided a safety net and protected them from threats of the traditional way of life, for example, long hours of herding while courageously facing and surviving the elements and wild animals, and female circumcision (Gimbo, et. al., 2015). These same young interviewees wished to help their people by “using their education to bring changes to their childhood communities” (Gimbo, et. al., 2015, p.14).

Many parents in rural areas are nervous and worried about whether their children will succeed in schools; as Sawamura and Sifuna (2008) explained, the children are also nervous and worried about meeting the expectations of coming back and helping their childhood communities:

For children in rural Kenya, education functions as a tool to exit traditional society… All wish to go to university; such aspirations for higher education support the expansion of primary education. Although few children wish to stay in the rural community and work for them, most children dream of working in the modern sectors of urban cities. Girls, in particular, often have a definite wish to exit traditional society. (p. 115)

2.3.6 Maasai - Fertility and Education

As discussed in the previous section, because of the later entry into marriage and a lower prevalence of polygyny among the educated young Maasai, women with higher education have lower fertility than those with lower or no education.
Scholars have suggested the reasons for the education-fertility relationship are abundant (such as Coast, 2006; Lesorogol, 2008; Ferre, 2009), and these reasons could include: 1) later age at female marriage and first childbearing; 2) preference of using contraceptives for the purpose of pursuing higher education; 3) improvement of female domestic autonomy and social status; 4) less desire to enlarge family size; 5) higher cost of time and money for child-bearing; and 6) contribution to lower fertility and infant mortality and potential improvements to the health of the whole family (Cleland & Kaufmann, 1998). Bledsoe, Casterline, Johnson-Kuhn and Haaga (1999) have also well-summarised the reasons: “aside from a woman’s age and marital status, educational attainment is probably the variable most frequently included in fertility analyses in developing countries” (p. 3).

Although Tanzania has seen significant increases in school enrolment rates over the years (from 5% of school enrolment rates in 1995 to 33% in 2013), poverty still is an overwhelming issue, and access to quality education is one of the challenges, especially in the rural areas. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2009) stated that, in the poorest households, the chances for children to attend secondary schools were low, and higher education is “primarily an urban service” (p. 104). Holland (1998) has proposed that Maasai “educational participation is positively correlated with wealth” (p. 273). With the continuous increase of education cost based on the Tanzania national Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which are the economic policies that the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have promoted for developing countries since the early 1980s by providing loans to developing countries that are experiencing economic
crisis. School education serves wealthy families. Nevertheless, the Maasai generally do not believe that education will bring immediate benefits to them. Besides the obstacles from the family, the conditions of education in Tanzania for the Maasai cannot be ignored.

The fact is that whether in Kenya or Tanzania, popularisation of schooling among the Maasai is very difficult, particularly for female education, which remains at a low level in comparison with the national rate. However, considering the direct benefit brought to the family, many parents think hard about removing their children from the universal primary education policy. As a result, the action of removing their children from the policy can lead to lower fertility of educated people, and are less likely to send their own children to school in the future compared to the educated people with higher fertility. In this way, their customs and traditions can be well kept, but they will definitely be behind the rest of the world in education and work productivity.

2.3.7 Maasai - Religion and Education

Christianity was introduced to Tanzania (named as Tanganyika prior to the establishment of the United Republic) in the 1870s, eight centuries after Islam, and enlarged the scale of preaching by setting up schools in different parts of the country (Chidester, et. al., 1994). As Mushi (2009) notes, the motives for establishing the schools were obvious: to reproduce the Christian religious culture and Western economic relations as well as to pacify and control the natives. After the 1870s, colonial schooling had imposed different value systems, languages, and
religions in the various regions of Tanzania. Although there is no exact historical record, it is generally believed that the Christian influence extended to the Arusha Region during the same time period. However, the introduction of civilised and Christianised education to the Maasai provoked great suspicion about Western values that competed with the traditional Maasai beliefs (Mushi, 2009).

Beth Elness-Hanson (2006), who taught in a Maasai secondary school, described the variations in the Maasai belief system. Traditionally, the Maasai believed in Engai, the creator of all things, insisting that their pastoralist way of life was the apex of Engai’s creation; and if any other way of life existed, it would be regarded as an insult to Engai. Direct prayer to Engai in gatherings were popular in the old days but has since become less central to the daily life and activities of many Maasai (Elness-Hanson, 2006).

Since Tanzania’s independence, the 120 ethnic groups within Tanzania have generally coexisted peacefully. Diversity includes differences not only in “visible characteristics such as race, gender and ethnicity, but also in invisible aspects, such as religion, professional background and sexual preference” (Francesco & Gold, 2005, p. 69). Considering the policy of accommodation and tolerance, Tanzania is recognised as a ‘success story’ of having “forged a national identity” amongst diversity (Tripp, 1999, p. 10). However, as a product of colonialism, religion is “proving to be quite another matter” (Wijsen & Mfumbusa, 2004, p. 89). There are three major religions in Tanzania: indigenous, Christian, and Islamic. Jews, Buddhists, and Hindus are in the minority amongst Tanzanian religious traditions (Wijsen & Mfumbusa, 2004). Charles Ngowi (2011), in his online article, Life in
Arusha, Tanzania — Land of the Maasai, described the current status of the various religions in the Arusha region:

Arusha has many churches, and religious activities are vibrant and alive in the town. People like to go to open-air gospel crusades and the presence of the Christian community is widely felt in Arusha […] The presence of Islam is seen in town and coexists with Christianity in peace but not friendliness. (p. 2)

Through his description, it is easily noticed that many of the Maasai people in Arusha are Christians, but Muslims are also existent. The Joshua Project (2016), run by the Frontier Ventures in the U.S., stated that 35% of the Maasai in Arusha are Christians. Thus, the religious conflict between Christianity and Islam has emerged as a major issue in spite of the governmental policy of religious tolerance and state secularism. Such diversity, if not well-managed may lead to cross-cultural conflict (Church, 1995), which has frequently happened within the schools. Mayer and Boness (2004) described an incident where a male Christian teacher in a Maasai secondary school explained his views on religious conflict, in relation to religious attire and school dress:

The Muslim female students demand covering their heads with a piece of cloth called ‘Hijab’ as part of their religious practice. But we do have school regulations that these students should look like the others and […] this school regulations require all students to be equal and dress up in the same uniform […] There are these customs and fashion styles in schools nowadays which,[…] reflect Tanzanian cultures…and most of the youth is influenced by Western fashion styles and as a result they…you know, they, they tend to change their appearance in schools, as, as, as students. And the way they put on their uniforms [exclamation!] (p. 286).

In reference to the utterance from the local teacher, it is noticeable that there are difficulties in integrating religion, culture, and ethnicity. Many schools are
confronted with diverse cultures and religions. Religion, acting as a display of one’s cultural identity, helps people to define “who they are, where they come from, where they are now, where they will be tomorrow, and how they will get there”, and culture is the embodiment of one’s life and national identity (Magagula & Mazibuko, 2004, p. 158). While education may combine identity and religion together as an attempt to increase appreciation and a better understanding of the differences for both cultural and religious, it may also induce disputation and conflicts among cultural and religious.

2.4 Education Development in Maasai, Tanzania

Leaders of Tanzania widely believe that education is an important way of creating a new social model and an ideal-type of Tanzanian citizen, and of giving high priority to education (Buchert, 1994; Tanzania Ministry of Finance, 2015). In the mid-1970s, the Tanzanian government created a policy in an attempt to reduce the gap between the neglected and favoured regions; however, the results seemed to not be so favourable. For instance, in the Maasailand, education levels remained far behind other areas (Buchert, 1994). In general, the situation has been improving. At the beginning of the 1990s, an estimated 33% of Maasai children were receiving primary education, whereas the national average at that time was twice as high (Bendera, 1999; Bonini, 2006). Around 40% of these Maasai pupils were girls, which is close to the national rate (Bendera, 1999). However, it is quite normal that some pupils drop out of schooling before they have finished the primary stage and return to their ‘traditional’ family Maasai activities (Galukande, Kamara, Ndabwire,
Very few get the opportunity to further their education in secondary or higher education institutions or to go to universities.

The Maasai attitudes towards schooling are changing as a result of various pressures to provide children with education (Sutton, 2000; Weinstein, 2011), growing recognition of the necessity of education, and the shifts in the socio-economic structure. Now, it is common that most Maasai children seek to reconcile school with customary education (Sutton, 2000). An example of this is a Maasai family in Engaruka (a Maasai village) in the following situation: a father of five children sent one daughter and one son to school. He explained that he would not have sent his daughter to school if he had more school-age sons, but it was compulsory that every family send two children. Sending his daughters to school did not offer any benefits to his family, considering that each girl would follow the husband to his boma once they got married. In the same situation, he preferred his sons to be educated, while the girls remained at home (Sutton, 2000). It is easy to perceive inequality in the attitudes towards the education of Maasai boys and girls respectively. The fact is that educational decisions are made according to gender and previous experiences with schooling in most families. The opportunity and choice for secondary and higher education are quite limited, and the low rate for passing the primary school’s final examination prevents them from being further educated.

Maasai parents expect their children to return home after completing primary school and to go back to the traditional way of life (Gimbo, Mujawamariya & Saunders, 2015). Many parents often fear that their children may not return to the Maasai if they pursue education after primary schooling. Specifically, older parents
believe that formal education is an intrusion into traditional Maasai lifestyle and livelihood, with the consequence that boys may not know how to herd animals and girls may not know how to help in the household. Some elders even perceive that school education is useless (Groop, 2006). What the school provides is often opposed to the Maasai way of thinking and living; thus, school became a source of fear to the Maasai (Fairhorns, 2005). Fairhorns (2005) wrote about the impact of formal education on the student learning about traditional culture. She grew up as a Canadian Indian on a reservation. She disputed that it was only after she experienced many years of schooling that she discovered the education she received never addressed the cultural heritage of her “people”. Later, she concluded:

Education is much more than learning how to cope in a white world. Education is about acknowledging identity, cultural and traditional history, without this, one is not truly educated. (p. 43)

From this point of view, preserving traditional knowledge in the form of schooling should be deemed valuable for maintaining and enhancing cultural identity (Fairhorns, 2005; Harvey, 2013).

As an ethnic group, educated Maasai have already realised that they are caught in a real dilemma: whether to hold on to their culture or urge all children to be educated in line with on-going globalisation. By reconciling traditional values with modern ones, Maasai children have been working to carve out an appropriate position for their cultural identity and for self-development (Talle, 1998).
2.5 Conclusion

The formal schooling system, particularly primary school education, was set up and subsequently developed by missionaries and the colonial government for religious conversion, political manipulation, economic exploitation, and cultural assimilation. As a result, such education has exerted a powerful impact on traditional life and indigenous beliefs within every district in Tanzania. The Arusha region was primarily the focus of this chapter. After the establishment of the United Republic of Tanzania in 1961, the government and local leaders noticed that urbanisation and Westernisation caused a decrease in the attention and devotion paid to traditional culture, which may result in the Maasai youth losing their culture identity (Kotowicz, 2013). Policies and activities, such as popularisation of primary school education based on the local conditions and curriculum reform, have become part of the process to reclaim culture with a greater focus on authenticating local traditions.

However, the young Maasai, enveloped by an increasingly fast moving ‘modern’ world filled with Western ethnocentric attitudes, may become so vulnerable that their cultural identity is at stake (Hodgson, 2004). The school experience increases the possibility for youth to migrate from the pastoral land to bigger cities to seek jobs. In this way, the tendency to abandon traditional life has interrupted the Maasai’s nomadic livelihoods. Linden (1991) has proposed that, unless the youth intend to keep the customs alive, the cultural heritage and the tradition of indigenous knowledge may be discontinued and eventually lost (Hodgson, 2004). Therefore, the Maasai youth will play an important role in the maintenance of Maasai cultural identity and the continuation of access, for the
Maasai, to the modern platforms of education such as diverse learning technologies. It is suggested that the dilemma they are facing, whether to follow their forefathers’ footsteps or to follow the footsteps of global cultural homogeneity, can be solved if they try to reconstruct their cultural identity by creating a modern concept of “Maasainess”. Ultimately, this concept of “Maasainess” will be to work to preserve their unique ethnicity and the dynamic integration of different cultures (FitzGerald, 2008).
Chapter III. Ethnographic Approach – The Methodology

I stayed in the Kilimanjaro region in Tanzania for three months from November 2011 to early February 2012; I almost had chosen to move to Tanzania to live for a year or two because of the attachment I felt with the place and people. This was my second trip back to Tanzania since my last stay, and I had a clear aim and purpose, which was to examine how the Western education system had impacted on the local Maasai’s social values. In particular, I aimed to investigate how the older generation viewed the impact of Western schooling among their children, including the impact on Maasai culture, and on Maasai sense of belonging. The thesis is therefore an exploratory study, and was based in Laiboni Village in Tanzania.

To complete my fieldwork for my thesis, I needed to select a Maasai primary school because the target group was Maasai school children. To make my selection, I needed to consider the limitations of my time frame, and I believed it was better to go through a non-government organisation to organise the fieldwork (NGO). The reasons for choosing an NGO included: 1) personal safety and security; 2) health assurances (for example, food and water safety, secure medical attendance); 3) better knowledge of the region and its situation; and 4) on-going Maasai education related programmes/projects. I chose an organisation, Art in Tanzania, as my contact point for this study. I will explain in this chapter the reason why I chose an ethnographic methodology and how I conducted my fieldwork.
3.1 Background to the Study

My first experience in Tanzania, in late 2011, involved working in a small pre-school to help the orphans from the local community to get into the primary school; everything the children were learning in the classes reminded me of my own pre-school and primary education. The curriculum was similar and included subjects such as Maths, English, and Sciences. During my trip, I visited a Maasai village; it shocked me to see that only a few children were going to school, and others stayed home doing housework or walking the cattle. I could not understand why schooling was not important for them. This attracted my attention and I wondered if maybe the curriculum taught in the school was not related to Maasai culture, or perhaps the Maasai people thought Western education interfered with Maasai cultural values, or perhaps there were other underlying reasons. I could not stop thinking about the Maasai children, the children who could not make choices for themselves as to whether or not to attend school; I wondered how non-attendance at school would impact on their future? What if the children attended school; would they stay the “Maasai way” as they would without any formal education? With all these questions in my mind, I decided to go ahead with my area of interest – to explore how Westernised education impacts on the Maasai culture. I decided, therefore, to not only return to Tanzania, but to a Maasai village. I returned with a considerable enthusiasm to find out the answers to my questions.

My interest in the Maasai culture had become stronger. As noted earlier, I was searching for a non-government organisation (NGO) who had on-going Maasai education related programmes/projects; this not only could save me time, but would also allow the opportunity for me to have a more comprehensive
understanding of the Maasai, the village, and their cultural changes. I also preferred to participate with an NGO that had been operating for more than five years, with the idea that a more established NGO would have relatively stable operational structures and programmes compared with other newly registered NGOs. Therefore, before my departure, I attempted to contact a number of NGOs in Tanzania, mainly in the Kilimanjaro region, who were involved in Maasai education related projects with Maasai villages. Only a few NGOs replied to my request, and I decided to choose Art in Tanzania. Art in Tanzania is registered in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zanzibar, and Finland. It started in 2001 providing support to local artists, who were unable to develop their talent due to limited resources. Later, Art in Tanzania started developing programmes that attracted volunteers from all around the world.

It was not easy for me to find a Maasai primary school that was willing to participate in the study. Also, for safety and security purposes, I was not prepared to live in a Maasai village without any form of outside support, such as safe food, safe water supplies and a translator. Art in Tanzania provided me with a perfect opportunity with its Maasai education project where they have helped build a school inside Laiboni Village; later the school was taken over by the Tanzania government, however, Art in Tanzania still remained a part of the Laiboni School development. They continued to work very closely with the village, including finding volunteers, participating in research, and helping with the funding (for example, finishing building the school and study related resources). I was pleased that I would be conducting my fieldwork in Laiboni Village.
Art in Tanzania is one of the fewer NGOs in Tanzania that operates locally and who also meets all of the above conditions, and most importantly, the staff members were very pleasant about supporting the fieldwork for my study. Laiboni Village was a village known at that time for accepting help and support from NGOs and international volunteers. The leader of the village, Mr. L., had been in the village for more than 85 years, and was very open to expressing his observations and thoughts; I believed that, because of his experiences and observations over those years, he could provide me with a wider view of how the Maasai people have changed gradually over time. This was another reason why I chose Laiboni village.

I was in frequent email contact with Art in Tanzania before my departure to Tanzania; I had explained the purpose of my research and the organisation was happy to support me by providing accommodation, food, water and transport which I agreed to pay for, as well as providing support for my chosen site of study, the Laiboni Village. The local school had provided me with opportunities to talk with the village leader, parents and the teacher, who helped me to complete both field observation and informal interviews.

3.2 Qualitative Research Method – Ethnography

Due to the limitations of time and the research target size, I limited my study to one Maasai village, therefore the general Maasai community may not be fully represented in this thesis. In this section of the thesis, I review how ethnographic methodology underpins the thesis research process. The advantages and
disadvantages of my research will also be reviewed in this section. The limitations will be also discussed later in this chapter.

Qualitative research, can be described as “an effective model that occurs in a natural setting that enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from being highly involved in the actual experiences” (Williams, 2007, p.67). Furthermore, qualitative research involves the investigation of a social phenomenon from the participants’ points of view (Williams, 2007). Ethnographic researchers do not apply the results of their studies of one particular culture to other cultures (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) describe ethnography as:

… referring primarily to a particular method or set of methods. In its most characteristic form it involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research. (p. 1)

Using an ethnographic research method, this study is grounded in anthropological theory and supported by my observations, and unstructured questions asked in informal settings (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). Staying in Laiboni village would provide me with some understanding of the everyday life of the village and would provide some context to the research topic.

The choice of an ethnographic methodology suited my area of social science research particularly. Ethnographic research methods are noted as useful in relation to educational settings in the UK as a way of informing educational policy (Delamont, 2002). Ethnographic methodology became significantly popular in the academic field in the 1980s and is recognised as a useful tool for conducting
research related activities in cultural and natural settings (Ejomabo, 2015). As cited by Robson (2002), an ethnographic study “typically tries to answer questions about specific groups of people, or about specific aspects of the life of a particular group” (p. 89). While comparing both traditional education and the current educational systems by using this method, it can be initiated with the discussions on the impacts of the colonial education system among the Maasai boys and girls, as well as their families.

Two questions are central to this research project:

- How has the Western education system impacted on the local Maasai’s social values?

- What have the older generation recognised as the impact of Western schooling among their children?

Ethnography is the study of cultures, by means of observing, reading and interpreting them. Zemliansky (2008) describes the work of ethnographic researchers as work in the field, and the activities they conduct are often called fieldwork; this matches the purpose and the requirements of my research. There are two basic characteristics of ethnography: firstly, the observation that takes place occurs in a naturalistic setting; and, secondly, the researcher tries to interpret the situation from the perspective of the participants (Nurani, 2008). Ethnography is concerned with what people are, and how they interact, and ethnography tries to reveal the underlying factors of a culture (Wiersma, 1986). The ethnographic research in this thesis is underpinned by cultural studies. It examines how structures passed along have shaped people’s lives (Angrosino, 2007). The researchers are
expected to be “self-reflexive” is an important feature of cultural studies, this means that they are more concerned with who they are (within age, gender, ethnicity, race, social class, and so on) as “determinants of how they see culture and society as they are with the artifacts of culture and society” in itself. (Angrosino, 2007, p. 12).

Ethnography has been referred to as “a curious blending of methodological techniques” (Denzin, 1978, p. 183). Data information can be obtained in many ways for the ethnographer; in terms of this thesis, fieldwork was my main method of data collection. Liamputtong & Ezzy (2005) have described fieldwork as the core part of any ethnographic study. According to Marvasti (2004), fieldwork provides “a more meaningful and contextually sensitive understanding of human relationships” (p. 41). The aim of ethnographic research is to develop a detailed and credible picture of the culture that he or she is studying (Zemliansky, 2008), where the results of the study may inform other research, however, the content of the study will not be directly applicable to other studies, for example, the settings and characteristics may be different from other studies.

3.3 Culture and Ethnography

As stated earlier ethnography is the study of culture, therefore it is important to have an understanding of the term “culture”. The word “culture” can be very difficult to define. One approach has been to define culture as relating to the following: 1) the life of the people involved as a whole; 2) the social legacy the individual acquires from his group; 3) a way of thinking, feeling, and believing; 4)
an abstraction from behaviour; 5) a theory on the part of the anthropologist about the way in which a group of people in fact behave; 6) a storehouse of pooled learning; 7) social learned behaviour; 8) a set of techniques for adjusting both to the external environment and to other men; 9) communication (Kashima, 2000; Li & Karakowsky, 2001). Culture embraces a wide variety of objects, both tangible and intangible. It is the “total way of life” of a group of people and refers to “storehouses of pooled learning” (Kluckhohn, 1985, p. 166). Eliot (2010) suggested that,

the culture of the individual is dependent upon the culture of a group or class, and that the culture of the group or class is dependent upon the culture of the whole society to which that group or class belongs. (p. 4)

Culture may also be formed by repetitive patterns that are noticeable, explained and studied.

The ethnographic method of research can be thought of as a way of finding, observing, and interpreting such patterns. Cultures can also be influenced by common habits, customs, traditions, histories, and geographies. In relation to this thesis, the Maasai culture has been passed on from generation to generation through repetitive patterning of behaviour and beliefs. Furthermore, the Maasai have also had to cope with the introduction of a new education culture underpinned by Westernised ideas, views and curriculum. The new culture may well have impacted on Maasai children’s under formed Maasai self-identity.
3.4 Ethics Application

Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) mentioned that a simple completion of the tasks required by “procedural ethics does not address the more general issue of considering the political and social consequences of the research for the participants” (p. 42). Punch (1986) has also suggested that politics, moral issues, and ethics infuse the research process in a way that procedural ethics can never address. Ethics and political aspects are very important for qualitative research, and they must be addressed procedurally.

An ethics application was submitted to the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committees; ethics approval was provided in July 2012. I was very aware of the language difficulties and cultural differences, and of not being too enquiring or offensive during my fieldwork. I therefore asked for language translation assistance from the Art in Tanzania staff members and they were agreeable and pleased to provide help. The information letter and consent form for informal interview participation was given to the selected participants before the interviews. The consent forms were signed at the start of the informal interviews. If participants were no longer willing to take part or wished to withdraw during the process, they were informed they may do so. All information that participants provided was confidential and names are not included in this thesis or in any other way. I had verbal permission from the chief to allow me to take photos in and around the village, and verbal permission from the parents to take photos of them and their children, as well as to include the selected photos in my thesis. The chief was pleased to have a joint photo with me after the interview to be included in my thesis, as was the local school teacher. The information in regard to the participants’
identities has been removed. The data will be kept for a period of five years following the publication of the thesis, after which the data will be deleted. The data has been securely stored in a password protected hard drive and kept in a locked cabinet in the home office to which only I have access.

Even though power imbalances could be minimised in qualitative research, the power relations in different stages of qualitative research still exist (Kendall & Halliday, 2014). There is a possibility the researcher could be perceived as the owner of expert knowledge (Sivell, Prout, Hopewell-Kelly, Baillie, Byrne, Edwards, Harrop, Noble, Sampson & Nelson, 2015). According to Sivel, et. al. (2015) “the information the participants share may be influenced by a power imbalance due to a variety of factors including gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity and professional background and importantly, interview location” (p. 3). In my thesis, the participants were interviewed informally in their own home environment in an attempt to balance the power between myself and the participants. This also helped me, the researcher, feel more connected with the participants in their environment, and perhaps the participants may feel less restricted and able to be more themselves in their own home environment.

3.5 Participant Recruitment

The research plan was originally designed to include four sets of participants. These included: 1) the local schoolmaster and one of their teachers – it seemed important to be able to capture the different perspectives from within the school. However, at the time of my fieldwork, Tanzania was in the process of a population
census and all the public schools were closed for two months and so I was only able to interview one teacher; 2) the parents of the students – parents are a major influence in a child’s life and I wanted to hear from the parents whether they had noticed any differences for their child or children before and after receiving formal school education. I also wanted to understand their views about how formal school education might have impacted on Maasai culture; 3) the chief of the Laiboni Village – the chief determined which activities occurred in the village. I wanted to hear his views about changes that had impacted the village, his views about sending the children to schools, as well as his thoughts about the maintenance of traditional Maasai culture; and finally, 4) the staff member from Art in Tanzania – as the direct observer and one of the implementers of this organisation’s project work in villages, I wanted to hear about the changes he had seen, and his point of view about the Maasai culture and the current education programmes.

3.6 Data Collection

Data collection is the first step in ethnographic research, and is followed by data analysis. Through interview and observation, data collection can be carried out. Observation in ethnography is an inclusive and on-going process. Recording all relevant information must be done by the researcher at all times during the observation process. In this thesis, for example, I stayed in the Laiboni Village and the Laiboni School for one week to observe their daily activities. The primary objective of observation is to capture the perspective of the participants being
observed (Nurani, 2008). There are two types of observation: participant observation and non-participant observation (Woods, 1986; Burns, 1994).

3.6.1 Data Collection – Participant Observation

Participant observation requires the researcher to take part in the daily activities of the individual being observed (Bryman, 2012). During the process of observation, it is important to take field notes, either at that particular moment or as soon as possible after the observations. When undertaking observation, the researcher may make use of a video or tape recorder. The essential purpose of participant observation is to enter the experiences of others within a group or institution, and to experience how the group or institution processes their views and opinions (Woods, 1986). Becoming subjective can be challenging for both the researcher and participants. To resolve the problem, Bryman (2012) suggested that the researchers can combine personal involvement and a measure of objectivity. Also, instead of studying the participants and their behaviours, it is better to support the value of the members, and encourage them to express their true feelings. The disadvantage, however, could be that participant observation demands of the observer, large amounts of energy and time. Participant observation also requires researchers to regularly meet the participants at a prearranged time and for a longer period of time than the time available during the fieldwork for this thesis. I only stayed one week in Laiboni Village for a range of reasons, however, it is important to state that it is generally considered that the longer the period of observation the better (Reh & Temel, 2014). Another challenge can be that the participants are aware that they are under observation, and they may, as a result, display different
behaviours, which will impact on the results of the research. A longer observation period may enable the researcher to observe more natural or normalised behaviour as participants become more used to being observed (Holliday, 2007).

Non-participant observation requires the researcher to watch and record the event without being present (Nurani, 2008). According to Burns (1994), non-participant observation exists when the interaction is via cameras or recorders. With this observation type, the observer uses less time and energy than in participant observation. Additionally, the limitation of the interactions between the observer and the participants through the use of tape recorder or video may help researcher objectivity towards the situation and environment. The disadvantage of this type of observation can be that the researchers do not satisfy their own contributions towards the participants, and cannot properly integrate and view the heart of the participants group (Creswell, 2007). Additionally, non-participant observation may present challenges as the researcher is not involved in the group’s life.

As participant observation is undertaken, the researcher must record the information in the form of field notes at the same time. Wiersma (1986) and Nurani (2008) suggested that the content of field notes must identify when, where, and under what conditions the record is made. Writing field notes whilst with the participants may have an effect on the results as participants may feel observed and thus their behaviours may change. Thus, when the situation is not conducive for researchers to take notes, they must rely on their memory (Nurani, 2008).
During my fieldwork, I had taken several photographs to help me to remember the ongoing changes in the village. I could not undertake the observations of classroom activities in the Laiboni School because the school was closed, therefore I organised my own tutorial groups for the children under the supervision and support of the Art in Tanzania staff member. The groups were available every afternoon of the week and open to all children in the village. Thus, I did not have enough time to take field notes at the time, as well as take field notes for my observation of the village residents’ lives. Instead, I took several photographs of what I believed would be useful to help me with my observations and data collection. Banks (2001) emphasised the subjectivity of photographs because of the photos that the photographer selects of certain subjects, the backgrounds and activities which are included in the images, and because there may be other content that the photographer excludes. For this thesis, many visual components have are subjective as only some of the images have been chosen to reinforce the narrative in the thesis.

3.6.2 Data Collection - Interviewing

Interviewing is another method of data collection that might be conducted casually or formally. Informal interviews could occur at any time with the participants, and may provide a better understanding of the present situation (Nurani, 2008). I used informal interviews in my fieldwork for this thesis.

Several informal interviews were conducted for this thesis. Informal interviews are a method where the form of questioning can be changed or adapted to meet the
participant’s comprehension, understanding or belief (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). Unlike structured interviews, informal interviews are not structured in terms of the wording of the questions, instead, informal interviews support listening to each participant, and how they respond and react to the questions, in a more relaxed and casual environmental setting. Punch (1998) described informal interviews as a way to understand the complex behaviour of people without invading their space (Trueman, 2015). More importantly, informal interviews could lead to new and vital insights of the problem. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) suggested that informal interviews rely “…entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in a natural interaction, typically one that occurs as part of ongoing participant observation fieldwork” (p. 239). However, informal interviews can also have some disadvantages; for example, an informal interview processes cannot avoid the bias of the interviewer. The interviewer could also disturb the participant’s responses to some extent, for example, the greater the status difference between the interviewer and the respondent, the less likely respondents are to express their true feelings (Creswell, 2007). The positionings of the interviewees and the researcher also have long been theorised in the social sciences’ research particularly in terms of the perspectives of insider-outsiders (Milligan, 2014).

The fieldwork for this thesis involved one week in a Maasai village to explore local perceptions of the possible Maasai culture change through the current formal education system from a range of participants. I was unable to speak the local language, and I was the only person with a different skin colour; while I was an outsider entering the field I was also in the rare position of developing intimate knowledge and relationships in the community.
The interview questions were different according to the roles of the participant. Through the informal interview process I was able to develop a more in-depth understanding of how the Western education system had impacted on the local Maasai’s social values. Interviewing the chief and parents provided me with different insights from an insiders’ perspective, particularly in relation to how the older generation recognised the impact of Western schooling on the village children, including the loss of their culture, and sense of belonging.

The unstructured questions were designed and asked based on participants’ personal experiences and opinions on the traditional and the current educational system of their children, as well as their own life experiences in relation to the education system. The site for each interview was chosen by the participant. I wanted to make sure that the interview occurred in a place where the participant felt comfortable and safe. Each of the informal interviews took approximately 30 – 40 minutes, which the participants were comfortable with. The interviews were recorded electronically.

### 3.6.3 Data Collection - Field Observation

As discussed earlier in the chapter, I decided to take photographs of the Laiboni village residents’ living environment as well as the school environment during my stay in the Laiboni Village. This was my way of collecting evidence of my observations. The circumstances at the time of my visit were rather tricky. As mentioned before, the school was closed for a population census, and I was unable to observe the class, which was unexpected. Because I was assigned as a volunteer
with Art in Tanzania, it was one of my responsibilities to teach the children, therefore, I organised small tutorial groups in two different time frames, morning and afternoon. I provided two lessons in English and Maths in each the two-hour of the tutorials. Children were welcome to join and learn with fun activities rather than structured classes. This allowed me the time to observe and interact with the children in a non-disturbing way. However, no interviews were conducted and photographs were taken with the consent of both the child, and the parents. Observation notes, therefore, were not taken on the spot, but I had captured moments in the photographs.

I had also been observing and taking photos of the village life of the Laiboni residents, including their living environment, and their daily activities. This visual evidence showed both the changes occurring in the village and the traditional way of living for the Maasai, in Laiboni village. Photographs can be seen as a real-life reflection and can also reveal real people, for example, their living status. The photographs helped me to form a larger picture of the Maasai’s living environment and any Western cultural impacts.

3.6.4 Data Collection - Other Sources

Background reading gave historical insight into both the country of Tanzania and the culture of the Maasai (FitzGerald, 2008). Banks (2001) suggested that photographs say very little without prior knowledge of the context in which the images are taken. Therefore, putting my fieldwork into context alongside published materials as well as opinions from other sources is relevant. I had gathered
academic readings from books and journal articles in areas such as Maasai history and educational changes.

Materials such as research papers, conference papers and reports from both government organisations and NGOs were also considered and used as valuable resources which I could access online, for example, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank. These resources provide information on the development, political and social activities in Tanzania and other African countries, as well as for the Maasai. The library at the University of Canterbury was also one of my resource providers. A full historical review of Maasai, colonial education and other related aspects is provided in the next chapter of this thesis.

3.7 Data Analysis

Analysis of data involves “explicit interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 4). The form of verbal descriptions and explanations are mainly taken as the result of this analysis (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). According to Reeves, Kuper and Hodges (2008), analysis of ethnographic data tends to be undertaken in an “inductive thematic manner”. This means the data are examined to identify and to categorise themes and key issues that “emerge” from the data (p. 512). By using this inductive process, ethnographic researchers produce tentative theoretical explanations from their observed work through a careful analysis of the data (Reeves, et. al., 2008).
Following the conclusion of my fieldwork, the field notes, interview transcripts, photos and memos were examined and classified. After classifying, comparing and categorising the raw data constantly, I began to detect some key items, themes and patterns. Over the course of my data analysis, I was mindful of allowing the themes to appear naturally from the data, and to interpret their significance as objectively as possible.

3.8 Truthfulness and Credibility

My stay in the Laiboni village was only one week, this limited me from gathering more information; there was much more to be asked and observed. Using an ethnographic approach allowed me to develop understandings of some of the challenges that Maasai children and families are facing. The random selection of three parents out of many other parents in the village was a small number and may not be representative. During my process of data collection, I participated as a volunteer for Art in Tanzania. Interacting with children aged between seven to sixteen years old was a core part of my role. During this time, some of the children expressed contrary opinions from their parents and elders about their schooling experience. This thesis aimed to establish the views of the teacher, the parents, the village chief and one NGO staff member about Maasai education, not the views of children. Therefore, I was very aware of not becoming too emotionally attached, in order to remain objective as much as possible and to avoid researcher bias. It was important to me to not involve the children’s views in the informal interviews. To remain emotionally detached was also vital to me during the primary data
collection process; emotional attachment can affect researcher on deciding how to frame questions or how to make observations, and use of the intuition and judgment as a basis (Cozby & Bates, 2012).

I had ideas of what I wanted to achieve for this thesis and I was very open minded with the research, and I did not want the process to be forceful which can make the participants uncomfortable. The primary data collected for this thesis included informal interviews and photographic components. To ensure that my subjectivity as a researcher did not impact the reliability of the research, self-reflectivity has been emphasised. I have read published material during the research process, and engaged many opinions from others which may have impacted my analysis of the data.

I was aware and do acknowledge that meanings can be misunderstood, especially when there are language barriers (Delamont, 2002), therefore a longer period of fieldwork can be very helpful. In addition, further investigation is warranted that includes the views of young Maasai, which I could not explore in this thesis.


Dependability in qualitative research relates to the extent that researchers can ensure their results are dependable. When the research has been carried out in a way that is sensitive to the principles of qualitative research, the research is considered dependable. Tolley, Ulin, Mack, Robinson and Succop (2016) identify
a series of questions that researchers might ask to further their considerations about the dependability of their research. These questions can be answered by my research process and thus the research is dependable. The questions include:

- Is the purpose of the research clearly connected through the research questions (see Appendix for the lists of research questions)?
- Are there similarities that exist across the various sources of data?
- Do researchers use similar protocols for data collection?

Confirmability relates to the accuracy of the data (Tobin & Begley, 2004). It refers to “the researcher’s ability to demonstrate that the data represents the participants’ responses and not the researcher’s biases or viewpoints” (Cope, 2014, p. 89; Polit & Beck, 2012; Tobin & Begley, 2004). In this thesis, I have provided rich quotes from the participants in the fieldwork chapter, as is common in reporting qualitative research (Cope, 2014). By doing so, confirmability can be exhibited. Under study.

The using of triangulation involves multiple data sources in an investigation to demonstrate understanding (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Triangulation also has two main purposes, to “confirm” data, and to ensure data are “complete” (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013, p. 13; Casey & Murphy 2009). The confirmation is “the process of comparing data gathered from multiple sources to explore the extent to which findings can be verified” (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013, p. 13). The confidence of the findings’ credibility could be increased, if data gathered through different methods are found to be consistent (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013). This refers to Lincoln and Guba (1994)’s fifth criteria, authenticity. Authenticity is found in the ability and extent to which the researcher expresses the
feelings and emotions of the participant’s experiences in a faithful manner (Cope, 2014; Polit & Beck, 2012). Authenticity also deals with generalisation. Because ethnographic research relies on the context, it is vital to specify the conditions of the setting, thus it is recognisable for the comparison of the collected data. If a phenomenon is likely to be consistent across a number of studies, then the “generalisability” is increased, while if there is contradiction in the phenomenon across studies then generalisability is compromised (Nurani, 2008).

For the purposes of consistency checking, apart from using community observation, I chose to interview the mothers in the village, as the children would spend most of their time with their mothers. Mothers also play a sensitive role and are able to notice changes in their children as mothers are influential to their children especially to the daughters (Parsitau, 2017). Consistency checking can also be done through reviewing research and documentation from other resources.

3.9 Limitations

I was only able to stay one week in Laiboni village and this time frame is one of the limitations of this research – a longer stay and further observations may provide more data. Another limitation of the research is that I was unauthorised to interview the children in the village. The thesis does focus on the Maasai children and the impact of colonial education systems on them, but the views collected are from adults. Further research involving the Maasai village children would be useful.

The participants might present different behaviours during the observation and interviews, or might tell the researcher what they think the researcher would like
to hear. This can be a limitation of ethnographic research (Nurani, 2008). However, this limitation usually occurs at the beginning stage of the research. To try to avoid this happening the informal interviews only took part after I had spent a few days in the village so that participants could feel more at ease with me.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a description of the background to the study, and has explored the relevance of the chosen method of ethnography for this research topic. The chapter acknowledged the importance of the bond between the study of a natural cultural environment and the ethnographic method.

Despite the limitations of ethnographic research approach, there are benefits of this method for research in naturalistic settings such as the class room, and in research language learning processes such that might occur in particular speech communities (Nurani, 2008). The next chapter will record my fieldwork in the Laiboni village, it discusses in details of what I have seen, how I felt in the village and what I have experienced in the village.
Chapter IV. Fieldwork at Laiboni Primary School

The fieldwork component of the research provided me with a picture of the Laiboni Village residents’ daily life and activities, and their cultural beliefs. I was able to interact with the local residents and, most importantly, to observe their strongly culture-focused lifestyle, which gave me the chance to reflect upon my thesis questions. Hobbs (2001) argued that fieldwork can be considered to be an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of a culture, and if implemented effectively, it may allow a window into usually hidden social worlds. Hobbs (2001) further stated that,

the evolution of fieldwork from an archaeological enterprise linked closely to the rigours of colonial rule, into an interpretive device where the fieldworker is an essential component in the action has been a richly productive process for the social sciences. (p. 121)

In this chapter, I have recorded what I saw, heard, felt, experienced and learnt in the Laiboni Village and the Laiboni School. I have provided detail of the information that I obtained from informal interviews with the teacher, village leader, randomly selected children’s parents and the ‘Art in Tanzania’ (AIT) staff member. All the data collected helped me to understand how the education system had impacted participants’ lives, how they felt about those impacts, and how they viewed the impacts in relation to Maasai cultural evolution and change. I had taken some photographs from my field visit to support the data collected.

Laiboni Village is located between Karatu and Arusha town, on the way to the famous Serengeti National Park. The AIT staff member and I carried one week of food supplies and drinking water and arrived in the village by bus in the late afternoon. The teacher from the Laiboni School greeted me and the AIT staff came
along with me. We quickly cooked something to eat before dark, and unpacked our luggage in the Laiboni School. The day after the arrival, I had a tour with the teacher and the AIT staff member in the Laiboni village. As an “outsider”, I attracted many village residents who came out of their huts and stared at me, some of them even decided to follow me. Children ran towards me, touching my arm skin and my hand, and then ran away. People were friendly but also tried to talk me into giving them money or anything valuable, which caused me some discomfort. This also interfered with the process of my interviews later on. When interviewing certain interviewees, some of the parents would not cooperate and requested money, while some others seemed to think that I would write something bad about the village. Fortunately the problems were solved with the help of the AIT staff and the teacher who communicated in the local language the purpose of my visit and assured them that my visits would do no harm.

4.1 The Laiboni Village

The first impression I got as soon as I walked into the village was the small huts and the smell of cow dung, as well as the amount (see photo 4.1). Cow dung was everywhere in the village, and this lead to my second impression, flies. Flies are seen as a sign of wealth in Maasai villages, because the greater the number of flies, the greater the amount of cow dung and this means more cows. I was told not to kill any flies, but to chase them away from me, from my face and my eyes. Children’s faces were covered with flies, as well as their eyes. Both adults and children were constantly waving to chase the flies away from their face and eyes. I
found it unsettling to see the flies trying to get into children’s eyes, especially during the children’s eating times. The flies tended to get into their mouths and the children needed to constantly spit them out. With the consent of the parents, I took the photo below to show an example of the children with the flies (photo 4.2).

4.1: Small Maasai huts and the ground covered by cow dung (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
Laiboni village is considered a wealthy Maasai village in comparison with other local Maasai villages due to the possession of numerous cattle. Maasai people ‘feed’ their cattle every morning (as they would call grassing the cattle), and it was the same with Laiboni village. I was amazed with the amount of cattle the villagers were walking out of the village (see photo 4.3). According to the teacher, there are at least two thousands cattle in total belonging to the entire village. The men walked the cattle every morning around 8:30, and returned to the village just before sunset.
I was in the village to observe the daily activities of the residents. Men and elder sons were out feeding the cattle, which left women and children home to look after the huts, or boma. The boma are surrounded by a fence of thickets, thorns and thistle which provides the community with protection from wild animals (see photo 4.4 and 4.5). Most of the wild animals, like the zebras and giraffes, have adapted to live harmoniously with both the people and their animals. Every married woman owns a boma and lives there with her children. The beds are made of sticks and the traditional “mattresses” are skins and hides. The rooms are round in shape, pitch dark inside and weakly lit. Only a small hole (about the size of the adult’s palm) in the wall inside each boma serves as a window. A small place identified as the kitchen area, is used for cooking, thus the interior is dark and smoky. The door is particularly narrow and generally low in height. Acacia trees are a common feature
around the *boma* and provide shade on a sunny day. The Maasai women respect men almost without exception. Duties such as rearing children, feeding the goats (see photo 4.6), cooking, milking cows and building houses are for women (photo 4.7 is an example of “working” Maasai women). They also build and maintain the *boma*. Women are very well organised in terms of their activities and tasks, for example, feeding the goats in the morning, looking after the children and teaching children to feed the goats. Picking firewood and making special Maasai jewellery during the daytime is also part of their activities.

4.4: Maasai Boma in the Laiboni Village (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
4.5: Maasai Boma in the Laiboni Village (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

4.6: Maasai women and children feeding the goats in the morning (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
Everyone in the village, including the children were all, more or less, wearing Maasai bead jewellery. Maasai women wear bead jewellery on a regular basis. Maasai women’s bead work is very important in the decoration of their body as it can be an identification of their position in society (Sendalo, 2009). Detailed beading is done by the women as a way of showing their creativity as well as to provide an economic income. They produce different patterns that reflect different age groups within the community. Colour is important and symbolises different things to this community (Nyangache & Nyambura, 2012). Green symbolises pasture, peace and vegetation. Blue equals the sky, God (Enkai in the Maasai language), who they take as the provider for water and pasture for their animals. Red will be used to represent blood from animals slaughtered during special Maasai
ceremonies, and the initiation of young men and women and others. Black basically will represent the people and the animals that live in their environment. White will mean purity and sometimes will symbolise milk. Yellow and orange represent hospitality (Nyamache & Nyambura, 2012).

After being at the houses, the teacher, the AIT staff and I walked back into the village, and in the middle of the village I saw an empty black tank placed on the floor on an angle, looking exactly like the one next to the school, with a small amount of dirty water inside (see photo 4.8). I realised that maintaining a water supply for daily living in Laiboni village is a serious challenge. I was still very surprised when I saw the dirty left-over water in the tank, which is meant to be for their daily use, including washing and cooking. Women and children in the village will often carry many empty drinking bottles and they walk a one-hour return trip to get clean water for drinking. The tanks, such as the one shown in the photo below, are used to save rain water, and for washing and cooking.
4.8: The water tank (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

After my day tour in the Laiboni Village, three of us had the chance to talk to some of my participants. I will provide more detail about these conversations later in the chapter. We then went back to the school and to the teachers’ room where they sleep during the school term, which was also to be my sleeping room. The teacher and the AIT staff shared one large double bed, while I slept in a sleeping bag on the floor from the second night onwards. The conditions were difficult, water was treated preciously, and apart from cleaning my face and brushing my teeth, I did not have a proper shower for the entire time I was in the village. The first night there I stayed in the teacher’s office next door, but I was unable to sleep because I was scared by the rats running around my sleeping bag, and the bats on the ceiling above me. There was no electricity and no gas. I had a torch that I had brought with me from New Zealand, and along with the kerosene
lamp these were the only two illumination supplies we had, which we used during
the evenings, for eating, walking and talking purposes (see photo 4.9 and 4.10).

4.9: The teacher’s room, where we cooked, ate, and slept through the evenings (Photo
taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
4.10: Photo taken with flash light. The kerosene lamp is the teachers’ only illumination supply during the dark (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

4.11: We are cooking pasta, with cabbages, beans and tomatoes (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
We cooked three meals per day over the coals (see photo 4.11 and 4.12 above), with the food supplies that we brought with us from AIT Karatu campus, including cooking oil, sugar, salt, jam, cabbages, tomatoes, pasta, flours, bread, beans, fruits and limited meat supply. These were my daily living conditions and alongside the environmental observations in the Laiboni Village, I enjoyed every one of those days. However, I did not have the same level of enjoyment and happy feelings when I saw the Laiboni School. Instead, I felt sadness. I had memory flashes in my head of the schools I had attended, the school buildings I had learnt in and the stationary and school equipment I had used. There was a big difference between my experience and the resources available to the Laiboni School.
4.2 The Laiboni School

Laiboni School is in the Laiboni Village and was built under the sponsorship of the non-government organisation (NGO), Art in Tanzania (AIT), the school was later taken over by the Tanzania government. My approach for collecting the primary data was based on informal interviews and observations with village residents in Laiboni Village and the School. Because I was in the village as an AIT volunteer, I also designed and organised two small tutorial groups, two hours in the morning and two hours onwards in the afternoon. English and Maths were taught in these tutorial groups according to the children’s individual education levels. All children were welcomed. This was an excellent chance for me to interact with the children and to observe their behaviours towards schooling and education. However, as mentioned in the methodology chapter, I did not have the authority to interview the children, only have the permission to observe the children, therefore their verbal expression has not been included, and only their behaviours that I observed have been included.

On the day that we arrived in Laiboni Village, we were warmly welcomed by the teacher and some of the children from the village. They dressed in traditional Maasai dresses, mostly red sheets, called shukas. The shukas were simply wrapped around their bodies, with a pair of simple sandals soled with plastic or tire strips. The stick in their hands could not be ignored. They guided me to the school where I would stay for the duration of my field work. We walked approximately 30 minutes from the main road to the Laiboni School (photo 4.13 is the view from the Laibobi School towards the main road).
I was introduced as a volunteer from AIT, and directed to the school. We walked from the bus stop 15 minutes uphill to the school, which is built on the edge of the Laiboni Village. Although I witnessed many poor quality school buildings in Moshi, it still shocked me. One single block building contained three classrooms (see photo 4.14), one teachers’ office, and one double bedroom for two teachers to sleep in during school terms. This is because teachers often lived far away from their homes. The classrooms were unfinished (see photo 4.15), without a proper roof and with unglazed windows (see photo 4.16). There were not enough table and chair supplies, and those that were there were all donated by past volunteers (see photo 4.17). There were six teachers in total, three from the Tanzania government, and three from AIT. The school had a total of approximately 150 students. I
wondered if the physical environment of the school and the lack of tables and chairs had any impact on the students' attendance at school; additionally, I wondered about the size of the school and whether it could meet the needs of schooling students from Year 1 to Year 5, with six teachers, fewer volunteers, and only three classrooms. The teacher replied it could be a very hard job but they were still able to manage difficult situations. However, the funding was still nowhere near enough, and they had to rely on external donations, which were still quite modest. This can be an issue for school attendance as the main attractions for attending school would be food. I will explain this further later in this chapter.

4.14: The Laiboni School (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
4.15: Unfinished classroom building (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

4.16: Inside one of the classroom (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
4.17: Not enough tables and chairs supplies, which were all donated by past volunteers (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

The school had a water tank at one end of the building (see photo 4.18) which provided students with drinking water during school terms. Three small toilet units stood further from the water tank (see photo 4.18). It took three to four minutes by foot from the classroom to the toilets which I once timed out of curiosity. The toilets were a “long-drop” style, with two big holes simply dug out from the ground, and with two concrete feet steps on each side that are higher than the hole for convenience purposes. Of course, there was no flush system in the toilet. I found it was interesting as one of the toilet units was locked at all times. I was later told that that unit was made especially for the teachers as well as the volunteers, because the teachers’ toilet unit is much cleaner compared to the other two units. There were also half-built brick fences set in between the tank and the toilet that attracted my
attention (see photo 4.18). Apparently the fences were built with the purpose of being a place to shower for the students but was not finished because the students, the Laiboni Village Maasai children, refused to take showers. They thought they were already “natural” and clean, and therefore did not need to shower. The funding for the shower was cut off. I further raised a question regarding the Maasai’s version of “shower”, the teacher explained that they will expose themselves outside their huts when it rains, as this is the ‘natural’ version of “having a shower”.

4.18: The tank, the three toilet units further down the walking path, and the “abandoned” building (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

The teacher walked me through the classrooms and the teachers’ room. The room consisted of one single office with two desks, limited teaching and studying supplies were stocked into the double glass door cabinet, and shelves against the wall. Here there were various materials, including exercise books, stationary,
reading materials, students’ homework, marking sheets, drawings, etc. (see photo 4.19). With approximately 150 students, material supplies and resources seemed very limited. Most of the materials and resources were donated and supplied by volunteers from various Western countries and AIT, especially the reading materials and stationary.

4.19: One cabinet and one shelf contain all the school materials for all the students
(Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

As mentioned earlier, the main reason for some of the children to attend school was that the school supplied breakfast, morning tea and lunch, which usually consisted of maize and cereal. The Laiboni School is one of the very few schools that received food supplies and limited medical supplies (calcium tablets and basic
medications, for example, pain killers) from the World Food Programme (WFP), as well as from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). These donations were achieved through the hard work of AIT. Although primary education in Tanzania is compulsory and free, there are still numbers of children who do not attend school. Food then becomes a very good way of attracting children to come to school. So, in order to encourage children to come to school daily, and to have enough energy to study, students were fed while they were in school. The WFP and USAID are supportive by delivering maize and cereal to the school monthly (see photo 4.20 and 4.21). There are also two 50-litre water tanks inside the teachers’ bedroom, and water pumps located outside of the village that could fill the water tank when empty, although it would take two hours return by foot to get the water. This water was for cooking and drinking purpose. Shower water for teachers appeared to be limited; approximately two litres of boiling water was mixed with four litres of cold water for body cleaning, all of which fitted into a bucket and was carried to a slightly hidden open place to quickly clean the body in the dark.
4.20: Maize supplied from WFP and USAID (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

4.21: Cereal supplied by USAID (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

On the other side of the wall in the office, a poster-sized timetable was pinned onto the wall, written in English. The poster stated the activities and classes that the students would do and have for each time frame. The timetable was very well
structured, unlike traditional Maasai education, where there is no schooling as such, and where children would learn from their parents through real life practice (Barrett, 2006). Students would come to school in the morning wearing school uniforms as the Maasai traditional clothes were not acceptable in the school. There was a set timetable for each subject, including Mathematics, English, Kiswahili (Swahili), Science, Civics, Geography and History, with morning tea and lunch to fit in between time (see photo 4.22). Each class period is 40 minutes. I found that in Tanzanian schools in general, children often came to school at 7 or 7:30 in the morning to begin cleaning classrooms or planting plants outside the classrooms. It was the same with the Laiboni School. In the timetable shown below (see photo 4.23), the school started at 7:20 in the morning Monday to Friday with general cleaning of the classrooms, and breakfast was served at 8:20am. Formal classes started at 9am and five different lessons were taught until the 12:20 break for lunch. Afternoon classes started at 1pm, with two lessons taught before children went out to play sports and clean the classrooms; other activities could be included such as feeding the cows. The curriculum followed was the same as other schools in Tanzania.
4.22: Subjects that the school is teaching: Mathematics, English, Kiswahili (Swahili), Science, Civics, Geography and History (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

4.23: Timetable of Laiboni School (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
At the time of my fieldwork, Laiboni school was facing many challenges. The needs of Laiboni School were well written in English and pinned on the wall (see photo 4.24), and support from the outside community, such as from tourists and volunteers, was being sought for school activities. The challenges listed are shown in the photo below and included buildings that needed to be completed and extended, stationary, food supplies and cooking equipment, an improved playing field for the students, electricity or solar power/panels, and the need for computers, first aid boxes, blackboards, tables, desks and chairs.

![School challenges](image)

4.24: School challenges (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

As a volunteer from AIT in the local school, part of my assigned responsibility was to help the children, including teaching and interacting (for example playing) with the children. Due to the school closing down for two months, for the two tutorial sessions I organised, I set the time to start at 10am and 1pm for
approximately two hours each, but not strictly limited. Both English and Maths
were taught, depending on the children’s individual levels. For those who attended,
I asked them why they had come and which levels they are in at school. Basically
two kinds of children came; first were those who were just circumcised and could
not walk the cattle or work. These children would like to take the time doing
something else rather than stay at home doing nothing. The other group of children
that attended my tutorial were the ones that really wanted to learn (see photo 4.25,
the learning boys). Interestingly, all the children that came to the tutorials were
boys. I was touched by the motivation and desire of the children to learn (photo
4.26 – a boy stayed longer try to get one kind of the Maths equations right). They
showed me a different aspect of their view on education and life in the village, but,
as stated earlier, I did not have permission to interview the students. From my
observations and talks with the boys, I felt their strong desire to connect to the
outside world; some of them strongly showed this desire by studying hard and
engaging with learning, and asking me curriculum-related questions that they had
not fully understood during school terms.
4.25: The boys were learning Maths in my tutorial class. The boys who have been circumcised wear black *shukas* (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

4.26: One of the boys was learning Maths (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
In the spare time that I had, I walked around the *boma* within the village, greeting others and asking “strange” questions as a way of chatting with the residents. These questions could be ones like “when will you start cooking dinner?” or “what other tasks do you need to do for the day?” As I walked around the village, I continued to observe and discover objects that were rather “modern” compared with the traditional Maasai living objects and materials.

### 4.3 The Visible Changes in the Laiboni Village

The next few days of my visit, I visited the village as often as possible before and after my tutorial hours; apart from my interview hours, I interacted with the village residents, observing their activities. As with other traditional Maasai villages, Laiboni village had no electricity. I found a very interesting fact in the village – the use of solar power. The village had already started using solar power as their source of lighting and for other forms of electricity use. There was one solar panel on top of nearly every *boma* (circled in the photo 4.27), and a small light bulb hanging down inside each *boma* with a wire, which would light up the inside. This is a very good example of how, compared to traditional Maasai living, Laiboni village has started enjoying the benefits that electricity can add to their daily lives. The solar panels were also able to charge their cell phones when needed. Very few young Maasai men had cell phones or knew how to use a cell phone. The cell phones they were using were not smart phones, thus they could only do texting and calling. Most of the Maasai residents there seemed satisfied to rely on this source of electricity and told me that they would not be happy if solar power and the solar
panels were taken away. This can be seen as a sign that the Maasai culture is slowly changing. However, there was a small group of village residents who did not like the new things that had come into their village and what it meant for their traditional life. I noticed that those people who were against new things were often females from the older generation. They believed that “Western imported” items were destroying their belief in what it meant to be a Maasai. I asked for examples, the solar power and solar panels, and houses built with bricks and concrete were the answers to my question.

4.27: Solar panel on top of the boma (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

Small buildings were the second thing after the solar panels that attracted my attention, especially the newly built houses that I observed. Usually for Maasai villages, boma are the only form of housing people would see inside the villages. However, in Laiboni village, at one side of the village, there were several more
modern houses built inside the village (see examples in photo 4.28 and 4.29), which were built with concrete and bricks, and had well-polished wooden doors keeping the wind and animals outside. I could see many modern objects and items inside the houses through the glass windows, including proper beds built with wood and soft mattresses, and cooking equipment. Unlike other cooking areas inside the boma, where people would cook on the floor, inside the houses a proper hearth was installed that cooked food by burning wood sticks underneath. Also, I was surprised to see fluorescent tubes installed, sofa chairs, and other furniture that I had not expected to see in a Maasai village (I did not take any photos of the inside as the houses are private properties and the consent to go in and take photos was not granted). The houses were completed in early 2012, just a few months prior to my arrival. I wondered who lived inside; people told me one was a chief’s house that the chief slept in two to three nights a week, depending on his mood, and where his first wife was also allowed to live. Other “modern” houses belonged to the chief’s first and second sons. I further raised my question again on electricity use; they replied that there was no electricity connected to these houses.
4.28: “different kind” of object in the Laiboni Village (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

4.29: The “modern” house inside the Laiboni Village (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
My experience at Laiboni village made me aware of the changes in the traditional culture, which proved that the Maasai culture has slowly changed over time and was still undergoing change. All the above images of the village also showed that Maasai people were adapting their traditional culture to include the acceptance of some new things, including things that would enhance the convenience of their everyday lives. One other notable example could be seen in the teenagers that knew to go to the teacher in the Laiboni School to ask for tablets, such as painkillers, to take to stop headaches, instead of trusting their own traditional herbal medicines, simply because the tablets were easy to take and worked faster. Children in the early years of primary school would be given other medicines as a form of vaccine and also calcium tablets, and all of those tablets and medicines were supplied by international organisations, to help children and Maasai residents avoid sickness as much as possible. Although they still lived in boma, and ate traditional Maasai food, many Maasai had started to take into consideration new things that made their lives easier. The solar power lighting system, the use of modern medicines, and modern buildings were the most substantive examples of this.

This might be seen, however, as increasing dependence on outside actors rather than the Maasai becoming self-sustaining. During my tours of the village, I greeted some of the village residents and had brief conversations. From these conversations, I did gather that there are some parts of the community who are refusing to embrace new things and took the position that it was more important to protect their own culture that they were proud of. These people expressed the feeling that in terms of the younger generations, the more open-minded they became, the faster they began
accepting new things, and the less protective of their own traditional culture they would be. The tendency of young Maasai to quickly opt for outside medicine was one good example of their concerns.

It is important to note there are areas where change was not so obvious. One such area of life was in regards to food. Laiboni Village residents generally ate traditional Maasai food, which included milk mixed with blood and animal meat. Milk is the most important food source in traditional Maasai culture. *Kule* is the Maasai word for milk, it is feminine plural but has no gender prefix. Milk is drunk fresh, curdled (*kule naa-oto*), and mixed with blood (*kule naa-ilanga*), sometimes as a “crude butter or even after being sundried on a hide as powdered milk” (Maasai of Kenya, 2012). Cows milk is the main source of milk, but also goats milk and sometimes sheep milk was drunk. The next most important item for the Maasai is meat. Both the teacher and the elder’s son explained to me that the blood that was added into the milk was acquired from the cow’s jugular. They fire a blunted arrow into the vein and then used the fresh dung to close the wound after they had drained off the amount of blood needed, thereby not killing the animal. Usually the fresh meat is supplied by sheep or goats, as the cows can only be sacrificed at family events (such as marriage) or special occasions. Animals of course often died of disease or natural causes; the meat was not to be thrown away and was often eaten, along with other wild animals killed by the Maasai when such animals would attack their cows.

The Maasai strongly believed that their traditional Maasai food made them strong and healthy. This positive association has made them resilient to outside foods taking over their traditional diet. Indeed, they may be reluctant to try new
food items, even if they are young. I recalled one evening, we had left over dinner which was pasta with vegetables and beans, the teacher took it and presented to the three children whom were standing outside of school office. They saw the pasta and their instant reaction was to ask us: “What is this?” We explained and invited them to try a small amount. One of them refused to eat it simply because it “looks strange”; two other children were excited to try, and we handed them spoons but they rejected. They instead used their fingers and grabbed the food from the pot and started to eat. One of the boys said to me that it was “yummy”, while the other did not like it.

4.4 The participants and their individual views

The interviews were a major part of my fieldwork. I let each of the interviewees choose the place they felt most comfortable for the interview. The purpose of this was to allow each interviewee to fully expand their views, feelings and thoughts around the topic. The unstructured questions were based on their personal experiences and opinions of the past and current educational system for their children, and their own life experiences in relation to the education system. Each of the informal interviews took approximately 30 minutes, and most of the participants were happy to talk longer. I have mentioned earlier in the methodology chapter that one of the disadvantages is the risk that the interviewees would tell the interviewer what he or she thinks the interviewer would like to hear. In order to minimise this risk, I did not write anything down on paper in front of them after they signed the consent forms. I recorded my general questions and answers, and
packed the recorder away and started chatting with them. During this time, more residents surrounded and joined the conversation and the environment became more friendly and relaxed.

*The Chief – Mr. L.* 1

Mr. L. was the chief of the village, he spoke limited Kiswahili, and no English. During my interviews, his oldest son acted as the interpreter, and signed the necessary consent forms. Mr. L. was a well-respected man by his people; he was very proud of his village, as it was considered a fairly wealthy village with over 2000 cattle owned by the village people. He stated that he had more than 50 wives, over 300 children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, and that they were all living in the village. Mr. L. asked me if I had seen the local newspaper (published some time ago). I answered yes. The newspaper reported the number of residents in the Laiboni Village, and about the work AIT was doing to build the Laiboni Primary School. This was important so that all the children in the village were able to attend a school not so far from home, whereas other schools involved approximately two hours of walking), as shown in the photo 4.30.

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1 Real name not used in order to retain anonymity.
4.30: Laiboni School appeared in the local newspaper (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

Mr. L. claimed that he was over 100 years old, remained in good health, and still wanted more children, and to have a beautiful “White wife”. He had been chief of the village for a long time, from “before the colonial period” as he answered. When asked about the colonial period, he could not recall, and only replied that it was a “long time” ago. Mr. L. stated that he had never attended school. He told me many stories about the changes in the world through his eyes; he said:

“For a long time we still live like Maasai, but now with Western [ideas] mixing with the Tanzanian government, we don’t understand, but now we have houses built in the village, and solar power systems”.

Yet he added very proudly,
“I am happy with the change because the government are bringing good ideas to us”.

The young children in the village were all attending primary school. Mr. L. stated that:

“School is everything, and brings more volunteers to teach children and good ideas to the village. School is good, people in the higher position need education. School can change everything, children can find a job in town and it brings the money to help the family and the village”.

At one point, I stated to Mr. L that if the children continued to study at school and absorb the formal curriculum, the higher level of the education goes, the less the Maasai culture will remain in their minds. I asked Mr. L if he concurred with such a statement. He quickly replied:

“A long history is hard to change; only better ideas and futures will be accepted here [in the village]. It is O.K. to change the living environment but not the culture, because there is no need to change the culture. The educated one is better because they can communicate in Swahili, and they have better behaviour”.

I found very interesting the idea of “better ideas and futures”, probably meaning that the solar power system and the modern buildings would only change the living environment and not the culture. While it was true that the traditional way of living in Maasai boma continued, I was not sure if Maasai culture had remained
unchanged. Currently, there is more than one house built with concrete and bricks in the Laiboni village. From my point of view, the light inside the boma and houses built with concrete and bricks are signs of the culture changing. “Behaviour” is another word that attracted my attention; Mr. L. thought that the “better behaviour” related to those more likely to have an open-mind when compared with the uneducated people.

Throughout our conversation, I found that Mr. L. was a very strong-minded person, and strongly believed that the children would not be affected too much by the current education systems. He did not believe that education would change the Maasai, and saw that there was no need to change the culture. The reason for this is that he believed the Maasai culture had existed for a long period of time, and was resilient and could not be changed, regardless of how young the children were when exposed to the “multi-culture” society. However, he did mention that there were, occasionally, children who had grown up with a good education and had decided to come back with changes which others found very hard to accept, and such grown-up-children had been banned from the village. I further asked him if he could give me an example, and he said Christianity, but Mr. L. did not wish to expand further. His oldest son answered my concern after the interview had finished - one of Mr. L.’s sons attended education and finished college, and at the time of my interview he was working in Arusha. During his journey of studying, he became a Christian. He came back to the village with his “Swahili” wife after graduation and found a job, but refused to dress in Maasai clothes and live in the boma. He was trying to “prise” other residents into the Christian faith, which he believed was a good thing; no one in the village accepted his views and his attitude
made Mr. L. angry and upset. The son now only talks to his mother and refuses to be “obedient” towards Mr. L. He only has two wives regardless of Mr. L. wanting him to have as many as possible. His second wife, arranged by Mr. L., is a traditional Maasai woman who lives in her own boma, while the son and his first wife both lived in Arusha and occasionally returned to the village to visit his mother. During his stay, he and his first wife lived in a house that was on the very edge of the village. Mr. L.’s oldest son referred to this arrangement as “being banned from the village”.

As the interview continued, Mr. L. said that

“children will not change their self-identity, and the one that does not come back does not have enough memory in the head”.

Change of belief can play a major role in the Maasai culture, which is not acceptable in the village. While comparing the Western curriculum with the traditional Maasai education, Mr. L indicated that children are learning both. After school, the mother taught girls and the father taught boys about the traditional Maasai culture, such as cooking and grassing the cattle. We ended our interview with a small chat; Mr. L. asked about where I came from originally (I am not European) and why I moved away from my birth country, and what kind of courses I took in the University. He said that he wishes more volunteers would come to Laiboni School to teach the children English so they could communicate with the “outsider”, and more good ideas would come into the Village. The conversation ended due to Mr. L. leaving to visit a neighbouring village. With permission, I had
taken the photo with Mr. L. and his oldest son who helped with the translation (shown in photo 4.31).

4.31: Mr. L. and his oldest son (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)

*The teacher – Chris*

Chris, a 37-year-old teacher, had been teaching the Maasai children in the Laiboni School since 2009. In Chris’s mind, the best way to help the children was by teaching them knowledge which would benefit their lives; becoming a teacher had been Chris’s dream since he was younger. Chris was the only teacher I interviewed during my field work, due to the other teachers all going home because of the

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2 Real name not used in order to retain anonymity.
school being closed for two months. Chris attended education from primary to college.

The word “education” to Chris meant the world. He believed that education can help lives, meet people’s needs in life; it also provides the opportunity to learn other languages, such as Swahili and English, which in today’s Tanzania is very useful. When I asked him about the word “schooling”, he immediately answered, “it is the way to higher education”. Chris indicated that, for him, as a teacher, he wanted to help the Maasai children in the Laiboni Village by bringing the world to them through telling many different and amazing stories of things outside of the village - for example, that there were many different countries in the world, not only America and Canada.

Over the years that Chris had been teaching in the school, he said there had not been a big difference in terms of the numbers of students at the school. According to Chris, in the Laiboni village, the average woman would have five children, and among those five children, only one or two out of the five would be selected to attend school. One of the difficulties could be that some of the children did not like school, but are forced by their parents to go to school, and this for him is a waste of time and money. This raised my interest in knowing how the parents chose which child would go to school, or if they chose randomly. Chris answered,

“The child can be randomly chosen by the parents to go to school
or to walk with the cows”.

In other words, primary education is compulsory in Tanzania, and while the Maasai will conform, they will only send one child, because other children need to help
out the family. I asked Chris if the government knew this and had done anything about it. Chris said that the government does not know how many children are in each Maasai family, and as long as they see one is going to school, the government is happy. In other situations, if that one child does not like school, then he/she then is able to swap with another child (in the same family) who wants to attend school. Chris also revealed that,

“the Tanzania government had worked hard with the Village, especially the chief, Mr. L., so that most of the children in the Laiboni village are attending school”.

Chris also mentioned that the Maasai parents nowadays did not mind letting their children attend schools to learn Swahili, which could help the family to communicate with the outside community, and he stated that in some cases this had made their lives easier. For example, they would be able to trade animals for food or money in a close-by town where Swahili was the only means of communication.

Although all of the children in the Laiboni village were attending primary school, I noticed that only approximately 5% of those children were girls. I asked Chris further about this, and he said:

“Because most of the girls are meant to get married and there is no need for the girls to be educated at school, even with the girls who are willing to continue to study in the secondary school, the parents will try to stop girls, they will encourage the boys to continue with their education”.

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I asked if he knew why the parents had such an opinion. Chris said they valued the boys more than girls, and after a girl got married, she would move to the husband’s *boma*, whereas boys can go out and work, and come back to the village with knowledge that they could exchange for money. He referred to the ideas of “finding a good job” and that “good education helps to find a job” (I interpreted this as meaning that it would be easier to find a job with higher education levels, and these young men could then share their salary with their family).

Chris believes that the current education system would change the Maasai culture, perhaps making them vulnerable, as he said:

“In the future, education will change the Maasai culture ...

*Because they believe there are better things outside, things such as Christianity could well interfere with the Maasai culture*”.

The children, as they grew older, would choose their own idea of a better way of live. When I asked Chris if he was able to give me an example, he answered,

“I definitely believe that the children who attended school will have different concepts of life, and future directions” … “The children come to class sometimes do not like to listen to their parents” … “the culture is something very hard to change, but it is changing, slowly. For example, girls who had education, they do not like to circumcise their children”.

His example has shown that a rather significant mind-set change can occur with the introduction of new ideas.
Chris is very certain that the current education system could lead to the loss of the Maasai culture and identity. In his view, the elderly people in the village, who had not been educated under the Western education system, would have a harder time as time passes. The world is changing, and they were unable to communicate in Swahili with the outside community. This was particularly true in terms of financial opportunities. This can be seen simply by going to the market in a nearby town, where there is buying and selling of food or cattle, but where some elder Maasai are unable to communicate. They therefore relied on their children and/or grandchildren for communication. When the elders pass away, the younger generations, who are familiar with the advantages of formal education, would come along, As Chris stated:

“Brings the better ideas, leave the bad ideas behind” .... “One day, after many many years, the Maasai culture will be gone, and what is left is for the tourists” ... “the children who attend education, they do not live the same way their parents do, they will searching for the better life for their own”.

I spent the entire week with Chris, therefore we had more time to chat and discuss. He complained that the Maasai people are sometimes are very stubborn, like Mr. L. for example. Chris believed that the school brought many tourists and volunteers and they could bring money, by buying jewellery from the women in the village, and by making donations to help the children. Mr. L did not know how to speak English or Swahili, so he sent his sons to school to learn Swahili and English. This reminded me of his oldest son who acted as the translator between me and Mr. L. during our conversation. He stated that the Laiboni Village will
change to “something only for tourist purposes” and that it had already begun its changing process – but he felt that it was for “good reasons, children can have a better life”. I asked Chris if it might be true that children are learning traditional culture from their parents after school and that way there was a possibility that the Maasai culture would persist. Chris disagreed with me, and said:

“children do not have enough food, and after a day in school, they are tired, and all they want to do at home is eat and sleep. Also, they will have homework from school that they have to finish, otherwise they will get punished at school the next day”.

With permission, I took a photo of Chris (see photo 4.32).

4.32: Chris with the stationary I brought from NZ for the school (Photo taken by Yao Yao, August 2012)
The role of the women/mothers in the village is to take care of almost everything, such as looking after the goats, cooking for the men, looking after the children, milking cows, gathering firewood, and so on. They even help with building the boma. Because of how busy they were, it was quite a mission for me to find parents who were willing to be interviewed. Women in the village were very shy about sitting down and talking to someone from outside of the village; some of the mothers refused to have interviews simply because they needed to sign the consent forms, but had never seen a pen in their life, and were very scared to hold it to write. This deeply shocked me. With the help of the AIT staff and Chris, we managed to find two mothers who were willing to participate. Neither of them knew their exact age but they were approximately in their 20’s and 30’s, and neither of them had attended school. Due to the confidentiality purposes of this research, their real names cannot be identified. I will identify them as Natalie* and May*. They are wives of Mr. L.’s sons.

Both Natalie and May are traditional Maasai women. Natalie has two children and May has three. They did not have any form of formal education but they nevertheless believed that the education their children were receiving was good, and that education would do both their children and the village a great deal of good after graduation. Both of them said that they would encourage their children to continue with their study if they were able to, and both women expected financial support from their children once they had grown up. The mothers indicated that

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3 Real names not used in order to retain anonymity.
they even wanted them to find jobs outside the village, even in other countries. I asked them why they felt education was so important for their children. They both said that, “Because after education, they can get jobs and bring money home”. I asked if they saw education as having any other advantage apart from finding a job and bringing in the money, and they both shook their heads, indicating that they did not know.

Natalie was able to give me an example of the curriculum children were learning at school that was making children think differently:

“They think about different places and think different jobs, and others do not go to school only thinking to continue with the normal Maasai life”.

May stated that children who had been to school were able to speak Swahili and minor English, whereas others could not.

“The children that went to school have better ideas from outside than those that did not go to school”.

Interestingly, both Natalie and May believed that the Maasai culture would be “finished” one day. As Natalie commented:

“The Maasai have already been getting education and the Maasai culture has already changed slowly, but [the Maasai culture] not all changed like the local people”.

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Natalie pointed at the “modern” buildings in the village (for example, Mr. L.’s house, as referred to earlier in this chapter) and believed that one day, all the *boma* in the village would be replaced by those buildings. May felt language and communication was the most significant difference that had changed in Maasai culture, as communication is very important and necessary for supporting Maasai’s daily lives. Both women relied on their children in many respects. In relation to getting help from the children, they would like to encourage their children to go to school and get educated. Natalie pointed out another change can be seen in the children wanting to go away from the village and dress like local “Swahili” people, changing into traditional Maasai clothes only when visiting the home village. She later on said that she wanted to go out of the village and see what the outside communities were like, and she also expected her children to take her out one day when they grew up. This is in contrast to Mr. L.’s belief that the Maasai culture will never change and never “finish”, based on his sense that people in the village will not change their values and that no children would want to leave the village.

Medicine for both cattle and people is another aspect that Natalie talked about, stating,

“*before if someone got sick, they used traditional Maasai medicine, but now, we can take them to the hospital, so I think Maasai culture is changing slowly*”.

Both women were very happy that the government was actually helping their children to go to school, but they have to also teach children the Maasai culture because the aspects of the culture, expressed in daily tasks, have to continue, such
as milking the cows and walking the cattle. Both Natalie and May would love to teach their children something they learned at school, but are unable to do so as they do not know what the children learn at school. Natalie added in the end:

“After children complete school, I would want to leave here with my children and to find a job, but this does not mean forgetting the village and the culture”.

May said very strongly that,

“I will be very upset if children go out of the village after school and leave the village and Maasai culture behind”.

I asked Natalie and May if I could take a photo of them, but they were afraid of the camera, so they indicated that I should take a photo only from a distance, so they know the camera cannot hurt them (see photo 4.33).
I met Patrick at the ‘Art in Tanzania’ Karatu campus. He was 25 years old at the time and had worked for Art in Tanzania for one year. He accompanied me during my stay in the Laiboni village. Patrick was responsible for my safety and daily activities in the village, as well as cooking. He was a very open-minded and caring person, and had a sense of humour. Knowing the purpose of my trip, Patrick demonstrated his support by translating and sharing knowledge.

Patrick, had very similar views to Chris, particularly in regards to the idea that the Maasai culture is changing and will “disappear one day”. I asked him the reason, and he said he has been there (the Laiboni Village) several times, and already noticed the differences over time. For example, children do not like to walk cattle and feed the goats after school, and they will only do that in school breaks, and are actually trying to get away from doing this task. The children asked staff members, teachers and volunteers’ questions about what the outside world looked like, and wanted staff to show them places on the world map. Some of the children would say to the volunteers that they wanted to continue school and to go out of Tanzania when they finished with school. Patrick raised a question here:

“if they want to go out to have a look at the world, how are they going to see and treat the traditional Maasai culture? It’s too much of a difference, and bad living environment”. Further he added,
“only the old people stay in the village, after they die, no one is left; if the culture continues, it would be kept with those who did not go to school or perhaps also for tourist reasons”.

Although he had a rather strong opinion about the impact of education on Maasai culture, I wondered about his personal education experiences.

As Patrick talked about his education path, I learned that he had also attended school from primary school to high school, but did not go to university for personal reasons. He decided to seek a job to support his life. One year ago, with the great advantage of being able to communicate in English, he was hired by Art in Tanzania as a cook responsible for volunteers’ breakfast, lunch and dinner. He said:

“it was not an easy job, the food they eat is different from us, I have to be careful not to get anyone sick. After a few months, I am starting to take volunteers out to placements instead of staying in the house cooking, which was very good. If I did not go to school and learn English, maybe I only can do a basic physical job, because I did not go to College. Education is the way to a good future”.

I was impressed with Patrick’s story, I asked him if he would think the education provided for the Maasai children was useful in relation to their own culture. He responded,

“yes, but not too much. Maths, English and Swahili are useful because they can count and communicate. But other than those, not so useful”.
I wondered how the Maasai children would think of themselves growing up under the Western education system, so I asked his thoughts on the phrase “sense of belonging”. Patrick responded by asking a question, “does it mean where you come from and how you think you are?” I said that I would like to hear his opinion, there is no right or wrong, and if he could link it with the Maasai culture. Patrick answered:

“I think it does not matter where they go, they will still be Maasai, and which village they belong to, they will not forget about that, that is something they cannot change. But their children maybe not, they maybe think their mum or dad is a Maasai, but themselves are not so much of a Maasai”.

I then asked if he agreed with the idea that “the current education system may change children’s sense of belonging”. He immediately answered “yes”. I wondered if the village residences planned something in order to prevent the loss of their culture. Patrick answered negatively, saying that he thought that the Maasai leaders at the moment had not come to terms with this reality and they had not yet realised the impact of education on their traditional culture.

“Maybe one day they will realise but it would be too late, and will be impossible or take a very very long time to change back”.

Patrick did not want his photo to be taken.
4.5 Further interpretations

Throughout the interviews, there were clear signs showing how one Maasai culture has been changed. Although the Laiboni residents still appear to be living their traditional pastoral Maasai life, the school education which the village children have been participating in has already impacted their thinking about life, with some wanting to become a doctor, a vet, or a tour guide as their dream jobs in the future. Based on the answers from the parents with regard to their expectations of their children when they finished their education in the future, it seemed that there was no desire for their children to stay in the village and live lives similar to themselves. They would like their children to become educated to go out and “find a job” and get paid to help the family and village by “bringing money home”.

The words and phrases “can speak Swahili”, “good/better ideas”, “good jobs” and “bring money back” constantly appeared during all of the interviews. Those phrases can be seen as the social values of the Maasai culture that have changed over the years. The Maasai may no longer rely on their pastoral life entirely as they are facing challenges; communication can be a major factor, as reflected in their phases, “can speak Swahili”. The older generation are not able to communicate in Swahili, and instead they can only speak Maa, the Maasai language, which has created great difficulty in their daily living. For example, in the Maasai market nearby where they sell their cattle, cow’s milk or hand make jewellery to exchange money or other necessary daily living supplies, older persons rely on their children as interpreters and communicators.
For years, the Maasai people have lived without electricity, and have lived in houses built with wood sticks, mud and cow dung. However, in the Laiboni village, solar lights and houses have appeared. This reflects the results of the commonly mentioned phrase “better/good ideas from the outside community”. The architectural and technological differences of the outside world have already been clearly demonstrated in the village. Within the village itself, they can compare the fully furnished and concrete buildings with glass windows to the traditional Maasai huts, which were built with branches and cow dung, bedding that is made with sticks and natural animal skins, and the small hole in the boma that is used as a window. The solar power system that can now be seen on top of many boma, and the light bulb inside of the hut that allows them to see and do activities inside, can be compared to the traditional Maasai huts where the interior is dark and smoky. These factors indicate the changes in the Maasai culture. The transition away from the pastoralist Maasai way of living is already in evidence. However, this does not necessarily lead to the assumption that the village residents are actively trying to “dispense with” the traditional Maasai culture. For example, it is the number of cows that equate to wealth in the pastoralist tradition and not the obtaining of material goods. Nevertheless, there is some appreciation of the convenience of outside objects that means there is possibility for future change in ways of accepting the social norms.

Parents also have slightly changed expectations for their educated children. The curiosity and desire for city lives can be revealed from the interviews with the parents, as the phases “find good jobs” and “bring money back” were frequently invoked. In their vision, education represents work opportunities, which also
represents better income. Migration of the young to urban areas in order to find a paid job and to support their families in the homeland has become an expectation of the parents and the village. This is likely to lead to future changes in Maasai culture. The work opportunities can also be reflected in the bigger cities, such as Arusha. However, work opportunities and experiences can cause separation between the traditional Maasai pastoral life and the Tanzania “modern” life. Traditional Maasai clothing can be an example. The majority of jobs in Tanzania do not allow Maasai to dress as traditional Maasai, instead, shirts and pants for men, and non-Maasai dresses for women, are the expectation in most work places. Lifestyle patterns can change quickly after finding jobs. There is clearly a marked difference for many Maasai compared with the traditional way of Maasai living, and in particular when their important daily activity is to walk and graze the cattle. All of the participants except for the chief tended to believe that the Maasai culture would “fade away” in the future, and that the education of the young is playing an important role in leading the change. Expectations of the older generations from the educated children and signs of the culture changing are the major issues arising from the fieldwork.

4.6 Conclusion

The visit to Laiboni Village provided evidence of the changes the village is going through. It would have been ideal if I could have stayed longer. The solar panels and the change in the buildings are the key markers of the changing Maasai culture compared to their traditional way of life that is compared to the pitch dark boma.
and the reliance on the sunlight coming through a window the size of a palm. The residents’ mind-sets are also going through a change, and they want to engage with the societies outside of the village, even if they do not necessarily want to change their culture. The people are starting to believe there is a need to send at least one of their children to school, to attend the “Swahili education”, and to put them in contact with the “outside”, to be able to “find a job” and “bring the money” in order to achieve a “better life”. Certainly there are also differences in thinking between generations. The younger generation’s curiosity about the world outside of the village has become stronger to them as time passes by, where some of the older generation still refuse to adopt the changes that are already happening in the village. They worry about the loss of their Maasai culture. I shall analyse the informal interviews and the changes in the next discussion chapter.
Chapter V. Analysis and Findings Discussion

In the following subsections, I discuss the themes that I categorised as “culture and cultural identity”, “language”, “tradition”, “values”, “colonial curriculum”, “indigenous knowledge and culture”. I observed that there had been some key changes in the Maasai culture, language attitudes, traditions and value system over time. I sought to understand how the adoption of the colonial curriculum played a role in these cultural changes, and how these cultural changes in turn impacted upon changes in Laiboni villagers’ sense of cultural identity and belonging.

5.1 Culture and Cultural Identity

Eliot (2010) suggested that,

the culture of the individual is dependent upon the culture of a group or class, and that the culture of the group or class is dependent upon the culture of the whole society to which that group or class belongs. (p. 4)

Culture can be defined as the following: 1) the life of the people involved as a whole; 2) the social legacy an individual acquires from his group; 3) a way of thinking, feeling, and believing; 4) an abstraction from behaviour; 5) a theory on the part of the anthropologist about the way in which a group of people in fact behave; 6) a storehouse of pooled learning; 7) social learned behaviour; 8) a set of techniques for adjusting both to the external environment and other individuals; 9) communication (Kluckhohn, 1985; Kashima, 2000; Li & Karakowsky, 2001).
As discussed earlier, culture embraces a wide variety of objects, both tangible and intangible. It is the “total way of life” of a group of people and “storehouses of pooled learning” (Kluckhohn, 1985, p. 166). It is an important factor in the shaping of one’s identity (Pratt, 2005). Various factors play a role in the construction of one’s cultural identity. These factors include, but are not limited to, one’s race, ethnicity, language, community, religious beliefs, social class, occupation and education (Holliday, 2010). Culture and identity influence how individuals and groups position themselves, and how they perceive and interact with the world.

According to Jenkins (2000),

Identity, 1) is often reified; 2) means something in and of itself so that people act in terms of it; 3) a clear distinction of kind is made between individual and collective identifications; 4) an understanding of identity as potentially more or less vulnerable to the homogenising and centralising forces of modernity, rationalisation, mass-society, and globalisation. (p. 117).

Similarly, Relph (1976) proposed three main concepts pertaining to cultural identity. These are “static physical setting” (physical features or appearance), “activities” (observable activities and functions) and “meanings” (or symbols). A sense of cultural identity or belonging is formed and preserved in the fusion of these interrelated elements. In one culture sharing group, a shared sense of identity is formed and transmitted among its members. Mcintosh, Hinch and Ingram (2002) also indicated that the identity that is shared and valued by a certain cultural group contained these three dimensions. The exact components under each dimension vary from culture to culture.

In the context of the Laiboni village, some of the “physical” elements were observed, for example, the village itself. The place where one lives, its location,
the surroundings and natural environment exerts a fundamental effect on the culture that one wants to exhibit. In the Laiboni village, traditional Maasai shelters are built using locally abundant, readily available and easy-to-find materials. These usually include sticks, straws, grass, mud, animal dung and dirt. The Maasai used to have a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle. The traditional houses are designed for people who move seasonally. Their traditional clothing is also an evident sign of the Maasai culture. *Shukas*, the Maasai traditional dresses described earlier in the thesis, are typically red sheets wrapped around the body. Other colours and patterns can also be found. Different colours have different meanings. Boys who have been circumcised, for example, wear black for a few months. Moreover, the Maasai artefacts and bead work are also an exhibition of their cultural tradition. The Maasai people have a long history of bead working. Everyone in the village, including the children, more or less wear Maasai bead jewelleries. Their body ornament is a display of their cultural identity and an articulation of their position in the community.

The cultural life and identity of the village can be analysed by reference to the ‘activities’ frame. As stated earlier in Chapter three, the Maasai is a society that was once nomadic or semi-nomadic, and traditional Maasai life is centred on their herds. An essential part of the Maasai people’s daily activities is the walking and feeding of their cattle, which is also the primary source of their food. The number of cattle processed is a manifestation of a family or a village’s wealth. The Maasai people used to speak their own language, Maa, while nowadays, young people started learning and speaking Swahili. The Maasai are also known for their traditional dancing and music activities, for example, the unique traditional
jumping dances. Various rites are also performed. Circumcision is a typical one that manifests a Maasai boy’s passage to the status of a young warrior. The ritual is a painful process, but the young boys must endure it in silence to show their courage. Various other unique rituals are also performed, although the time limit of my fieldwork did not offer me a chance to observe these rituals.

As I noted earlier, the three elements of cultural identity are interrelated. The “physical” features and the “activities” are also conveyors of cultural meanings, which constitute the intangible, underlying, and probably the most important elements of a group’s cultural identity. According to McIntosh, et. al. (2002), meanings are the “outward expression or interpretation of culture and identity” (p.96). The abstract, intangible characteristics convey the essence of Maasai identity. They combine with the “physical setting” and “activities” to produce a shared group identity that is uniquely Maasai. The Maasai beliefs, mythology, values, tradition and protocol are all conveyors of its cultural meanings. The Maasai’s spiritual and symbolic bond with the environment, for example, conveys a significant part of the group’s culture and identity. The students that live in the village refused to take showers because they considered themselves “natural” and thus clean. Similar to other indigenous groups, the Maasai perceive human beings not as separate from the environment, but as an integral part of it.

According to Relph’s (1976) framework, cultural identity is founded on these three dimensions. However, identity is not something that is fixed or static. Hall (1990) stated in his often-cited article Cultural Identity and Diaspora that,

Cultural identity...is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as ‘being’. ... Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they [identities]
are subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power ... identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past (p. 394).

One’s ethnic and cultural identity is deeply embedded in the broader political and social environment and is subject to change along with changes in broader social and political conditions. The Maasai society has already showed signs of change. It becomes increasingly difficult to maintain a nomadic and pastoral lifestyle under the influence of modernisation and globalisation. Most Maasai communities have been established similar to the Laiboni village. Traditional Maasai communities used to be self-sufficient. With the changes in Tanzania’s economy and government policies, the Maasai people started to trade their cattle, crafts, and beadwork with outsiders in order to bring in more money or exchange for other modern goods. As discussed in the historical overview chapter (see 2.3), various Christian missionaries have entered the communities since colonial times and had an impact on various aspects of the Maasai people’s lives (Chidester, Mitchell, Phiri & Omar, 1994). Schools were built under Western educational values and principles. Teachers are usually short-time volunteers from Western countries or recruited from outside communities. Western curricula were introduced to the classrooms and students were required to wear Western-style school uniforms. Additionally, many villages have converted to Christianity (Chidester, et. al., 1994). In addition, various international agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) also arrived, extending their “worries” to the villages’ current situation. These organisations brought with them Western medicine, food supplies, volunteers and money. The Laiboni School, for example, now heavily relies on external donations and assistance. Tourism is also developing.
and many Maasai villages now rely on tourism for the village’s economic development. These changes can all exert influences on people’s cultural identity in terms of the physical setting, activities of the village, and ultimately the meanings derived from lived cultural reality.

The construction of identity is also the “combination of self-identification” and the “perceptions of others” (Weaver, 2001, p. 388), and self-perception plays a vital component of identity. If a person constantly identifies himself or herself with a group that has a shared system of symbols and meanings, as well as norms of conduct, he or she is identifying him or herself as a member of that group (Collier & Thomas, 1988; Weaver, 2001). The Maasai as an ethnic group possess unique cultural traditions, values, beliefs, social organisation and ways of life. From my observations and interviews in the field, the elders in the Laiboni village still identify themselves as Maasai. They still speak the Maasai traditional language, wear traditional dresses, and hold a stick symbolised as a Maasai warrior to show their traditional way of life. In regards to the students, they may still perceive themselves as Maasai, but once they find a job in town, and move out, the children may not regard themselves as Maasai, and they may become, as the adults in the village would say, “Swahili”. They may not perceive themselves as different from people outside the community. As I discussed earlier, cultural identity is not fixed or unchangeable, it is constantly constructed. Various social, political and economic factors can influence a person’s choices toward which cultural group he or she wants to abide by, although the range of choices are relatively limited (Weaver, 2001). Individuals can pick up values, behaviours, attitudes and beliefs of another group which they are not its members. The cultural group which one
aspires to attain membership is termed as a reference group (Sherif & Sherif, 1953). If a certain culture is no longer appealing to its members, it faces the danger of assimilation into other cultures.

Cultural identity is different from race or citizenship. All the cultural elements and experiences that guide an individual member through life are learned through interactions with other members in the same culture. For students in the Laiboni School, their chances of learning from their parents, grandparents and other village members are minimised. The school curriculum shows little direct link with the Maasai culture and few of the teaching staff or learning materials are from the community itself. Students have expressed their reluctance to continue their current lifestyle. The current education system does not place much effort in protecting and preserving the Maasai traditional cultures, nor does it foster sensitivity to and appreciation for its cultural practices. In the following subsections, I analyse some of the other changes that are taking place in the Laiboni Village, and explore their relationship to the younger Maasai generation’s cultural identity.

5.2 Language and Cultural Identity

Language is an important part of cultural identity. Scholars from a variety of disciplines, such as linguistics, sociolinguistics, social psychology and sociology of language, have long been investigating the link between cultural identity and language (Giles, & Johnson, 1981; Jeon, 2010; McLaughlin, 1978). Giles and Coupland (1991) argued that speaking the language of a cultural-sharing group where a person is originally from has symbolic importance for keeping one’s
cultural identity. Speaking one’s ethnic language not only facilitates the inheritance and preservation of the community’s cultural traditions but also benefits communication and cohesion within the group. Scholars such as Soldatova (2013) have indicated that linguistic and cultural identities can mutually affect each other. For example, the use of a common language within a cultural-sharing group influences the formation of cultural identity, while one’s cultural identity can influence one’s language attitudes and choices of language learning and usage.

During my field study, the words and phrases “can speak Swahili”, “can speak English” have constantly featured and were an interesting theme that attracted my attention. Mr. L. believes that Swahili and English can bring more volunteers and tourists; for teacher Chris, he thinks a large part of school education means language learning, and one of the key motivations for the Maasai parents to send their children to school is to learn Swahili. With the changes in the traditional way of life and the broader language environment, their language proficiency in only Maa has created more and more difficulties and inconvenience for them. The older generation have to rely on their children or grandchildren to communicate with people from the outside. When the elders pass away, the younger generation will come along, knowing and realising the great advantages of speaking Swahili and English, and they will see less and less importance in maintaining their own ethnic language. It is very likely that they will prefer to teach and speak Swahili to their own children one day, which can lead to the fading and loss of the Maasai language. Less and less value is placed on the Maasai ethnic language. Some previous studies have, after all, shown that one of the influencing factors that discourages indigenous language usage is the indigenous people's disadvantaged socio-
Based on my interactions with Maasai students and interviews with the school teacher and AIT staff, most of the students who attended school have also showed a desire to see the outside world. They do not want to live the same way as their parents. They would like to search for a “better” life of their own. For them, Swahili and English are much more “useful” and important than their own indigenous language.

There is no denying that language choices are influenced by various broader social, economic, and political factors. There are clear signs that the values toward the old language and their cultural values change through the education that the young Maasai villagers receive. Drawing evidence from my field study, it is clear that the primary focus of the school curriculum on the learning of Swahili and English changes Maasai young children’s language attitudes and reinforces their language choices of Swahili or English over their indigenous language.

Language is an important element of cultural diversity and is central to a person’s cultural identity and sense of belonging. If a Maasai youngster is no longer willing to learn Maa, the language spoken by his or her ancestors, a certain richness of communication and connection is lost. If one day, Maasai young people are no longer able to speak their ancestor’s language, a certain aspect of their cultural identity and cultural traditions will disappear. Contrarily, speaking and valuing one’s mother language brings a sense of cultural belonging.
5.3 Tradition and Cultural Identity

Tradition is a rather abstract term and contains multiple meanings. In its simplest and “most elementary” sense, as proposed by Edward Shils in his renowned book Tradition, tradition means “anything which is transmitted or handed down from the past to the present” (Jacobs, 2007, p. 12). It usually refers to practices, beliefs, modes of thinking, teachings and institutions that have been inherited from old generations and still have an influence on contemporary members’ thinking and way of life (Narayan, 2013). To be seen as a tradition, certain patterns of beliefs or practices are said to have been handed down through at least three generations. It is something that has been “created through human actions, through thought and imagination”, something that was “performed or believed in the past” (Shils, 1981; Jacobs, 2007, p. 13). Tradition can also include buildings, sculptures, paintings, tools and other material objects. Tradition can function as an adhesive to hold a society together. It is a central part of a person’s cultural identity and gives a person a sense of who they are and where they come from. Various dynamics have, however, recently lead to the disappearance or gradual extinction of a focus on tradition in human societies. Such dynamics may include globalisation, modernisation, industrialisation, cultural assimilation or marginalisation of certain cultural groups, especially ethnic minorities (Langlois, 2001; Narayan, 2013).

Tradition is not as static as people would normally think. As tradition is transmitted and received from one generation to another, it is very likely to undergo certain modifications or variations. In addition, the recipient may have new interpretations or understandings toward it. However, some of its essential elements, symbols or institutions still persist. The change of tradition is a quite slow
process that might involve multiple generations; most people who are in the process of its change may not be aware of it in their daily life. As Jacobs (2007) explained in regards to Edwards Shils’ (1981) Tradition theory in his article, tradition can deteriorate and lose its adherents,

Because their possessors cease to present them or because those who once received and re-enacted and extended them now prefer other lines of conduct or because new generations to which they were presented find other traditions of belief or some relatively new beliefs more acceptable, according to the standards which these generations accept (Jacobs, 2007, p.15).

From what I have observed in the Laiboni village, there definitely are changes in the Maasai culture and its cultural traditions. For example, as discussed in the fieldwork chapter: the installation of solar panels; houses rather than boma have been built with bricks and concrete; young people preferring to use Western medicine; Maasai traditional clothing, shukas, not allowed in the school; tourism resulting in some villagers begging for food or money from tourists and the selling of hand-made crafts and jewellery; the conversion of some Maasai youngsters to Christianity; and young people wanting to find jobs in town. It appears that the villagers have viewed the changes occurring around them and in some cases assessed the new addition as more appealing than the traditional culture. An example is where the villagers view the new houses as a sign of wealth, or where solar panels create the convenience of electricity which makes life easier.

From the point of view of sociology (Rawls, 2009), the Laiboni community can be seen as a traditional community. With the acceleration of industrialisation in the twentieth century, the concept of traditional society versus industrial society has become an important area in the study of human society. The study of traditional
society offers new insights into the rapid social transformations and social
development during the twentieth century. The defining characteristics of
traditional society include the non-separation between family and business, the
division of labour mainly according to age, gender and status, the great importance
of custom in the value system, and self-sufficiency and relative autarky (Langlois,
2001). Other important traits include filial piety, relative stability, the emphasis on
group welfare and harmony over individual interests. According to this definition,
the Maasai community can be categorized as a traditional society. Its tradition plays
an important role in the organisation of community order, authority structure and
individual behaviours. The distinctive Maasai culture can contribute to the study
of Anthropology, Archaeology, Sociology and various other social disciplines. In
artistic contexts, the unique Maasai art forms, such as handicrafts, traditional
dances and music, might inspire the development of new artistic expressions.

To be sure, I am not arguing here that the Maasai people should adhere to all of
its old traditions and the changes observed are signs of cultural deterioration. There
are indeed certain dangers to inheriting traditions blindly as much as there is in
blindly adopting new outside customs. For some scholars, tradition can be
conceptualised as an impediment to new things, creations and social development.
For a very long time, a great proportion of Western thinkers believed that the
majority of the “beliefs, practices, and institutions prevailing in their [traditional]
societies needed to be changed, replaced, or discarded in favour of new ones, which
would invariably be better ones” (Shils, 1981, p. 2). For a very long time,
“rationality and scientific knowledge” were regarded to be the antithesis of
“traditionality and ignorance” (Shils, 1981, p. 5). As stated by Gross (1992),
tradition “is simply no longer able to provide the thread needed to keep the fabric of social life from unravelling” (p. 3). For some scholars, traditions should give way to new conceptions, new things and social revolution. Karl Marx (1978) once famously said,

The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. The social revolution cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future. It cannot begin with itself before it has stripped off all superstition in regard to the past. Earlier revolutions required world-historical recollections in order to drug themselves concerning their own content. In order to arrive at its content, the revolution of the nineteenth century must let the dead bury their dead. (pp. 595–597)

In my opinion, Marx’s idea on tradition is too radical in that it does not recognise various aspects of tradition that are still valuable even to our modern society. It does not mean that traditions should not be changed or adjusted, or that we should retreat to old ideas or restore old set of norms. For example, from a purely personal point of view, the Maasai’s notions toward personal hygiene and their treatment with animal fences and flies were difficult for me to accept. In the fieldwork chapter, I mentioned that the amount of flies is regarded by local people as a sign of wealth. However, it would be absurd to cast away all the knowledge, understandings, skills and philosophies that have been passed down by indigenous people for centuries. Their experiences, especially their unique ways of interacting with the natural environment, may provide valuable insights that would positively shape modern development. Their unique art forms, clothing, craftsmanship, buildings are a great contribution to today’s cultural diversity. However, the current educational system and colonial curriculum fail to recognise, acknowledge or preserve Maasai traditions (Martinez & Waldron, 2006). New ways of looking at Maasai people’s cultural tradition and re-examination of its worth in the rapidly changing African
society may provide new insights into the reform of the colonial educational system, present-day curriculum, pedagogy and classroom practices.

5.4 Culture and Value

Another major theme that has emerged during my fieldwork at Laiboni Village is the changes in Maasai villagers’ cultural values. Cultural values can be defined as “guiding principles of a person’s life, which are organised into a complete system of priorities” (Urzúa, Miranda-Castillo, Caqueo-Urízar & Mascayano, 2013, p. 1296). Values are therefore different from norms. In a given society, norms represent those standards, rules and guidelines that are agreed by the majority of its members as right or desirable. Norms directly regulate human behaviours. Values, on the other hand, are those underlying concepts believed by its members as good or evil. Norms are the codified expression of a society’s values ((Urzúa, et. al., 2013). Values can also be conceptualised as,

A selective orientation toward experience, implying deep commitment or repudiation, which influences the ordering of ‘choices' between possible alternatives in action. These orientations may be cognitive and expressed verbally or merely inferable from recurrent trends in behaviour” (Kluckhoh, 1961, p. 18).

As such, we can identify some of Laiboni villagers’ values either from my interviews or from direct observation in their patterns of behaviours.

Values, in its simplest definition, relates to ideas, opinions and attitudes about what is good, important and desirable (Urzúa, et. al., 2013). Values reflect individuals or groups’ sense of rightness and wrongness or what “ought” to be.
Values are the underlying forces that influence a person’s attitudes and behaviour. A given society’s value systems are built on the long-time expression of its members’ preferences and agreement over what is significant, beneficial and desirable. As explained by Bossman (1991), “values constitute every society's inherent moral fibre, describing what at the deepest level gives integrity and direction to individual behaviour as well as the entire social order”. Values, are invisible, yet they “provide coherence to every social order, underlie a society's mode of teaching children and rendering fair judgments in public affairs” (p. 661).

Culture and values are not separable. Members in one cultural-sharing group share some common values. Such values reflect its members’ social expectations and collective understanding of the good, right, significant, beautiful, etc. Individuals in one culture-sharing group also make preferences and moral choices based on his or her personal judgment, as a response to either broad environment (for example, nature and the world) or a particular set of circumstances. As explained by Richard Niebuhr (1963),

the idea or pattern of responsibility may summarily and abstractly be defined as the idea of an agent's action as response to an action upon him in accordance with his interpretation of the latter action and with his expectation of response to his response; and all of this is in a continuing community of agents. (p. 65).

Such a personal moral response, according to Niebuhr (1963), helps to define and constitute an individual's personal identity. Individualism, as valued by most Western cultures, is an example of this view. Individualism places moral responsibility and ethical decision making on the individual (Bowring, 2016). Individuals are held responsible for their own moral choices and must act
responsibly in everyday life guided by an awareness of common laws and conscience (Bowring, 2016).

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) designed a framework for the analysis of different value systems in various cultural contexts. This framework is called the value orientation model and is based upon extensive cross-cultural testing and analysis. This widely recognised value orientation model identifies five areas of human concerns that can apply to the everyday life of people in all cultures. The five concerns include the following: (1) selecting a principle mode of human activity (whether being, being-in-becoming, or doing), (2) relationships of humans to each other (whether collateral, lineal, or individual), (3) basic outlook on human time (present, past or future), (4) human to nature relationship (whether subject to, in harmony with, or a challenge to be mastered), and (5) assessment of human nature (whether good, bad, or neutral). By analysing these five areas we can gather a broad idea of the Laiboni villagers’ cultural values. Due to the limitation of my time in the field, some of the Laiboni values may not be identified. In terms of person-to-person relationships, the Laiboni villagers would fall into the category of “lineal”, rather than “individual”. It is mainly the chief in the village who decides most of the village’s affairs. The traditional Maasai society is quite patriarchal, with elder men making decisions for the community. These elders are believed to have more authority and more experience. Other villagers usually accept what they decided without too much discussion. Males are also the decision maker in the family. This kind of arrangement is quite different from communities that highly value individual’s rights. In communities that value individualism, people voice their own opinions and they make decisions by vote. In terms of human to nature
relationship, the Maasai see themselves as part of nature. It is manifested in their view that there is no need to take showers because they are naturally clean. The Maasai used to live in harmony with nature. Their ability to farm in deserts and scrublands is believed by Oxfam as a solution to climate change (B.B.C., 2008). The Laiboni villagers also believe that the number of cattle is an indicator of a family or a village’s wealth.

A society’s value system is under the influence of various economic and political factors. Education, too, is believed to play a key role in the construction of society’s value system (Bossman, 1991). Similar to tradition, values can be transmitted and learned from one generation to the other. In the process of transmission, gradual changes may occur. A close examination of data collected from the field has shown some of the changes in Laiboni villagers’ values. There are signs of the influence of capitalism. Their relationship with nature has also changed, as can be evidenced of solar panels. Most villagers are happy with this new source of energy and expressed concern if these devices were to be taken away from them, even Mr. L., the village chief was happy with the changes occurring in the village. Although Mr. L. did not elaborate on what exactly was “good” or “better”, I infer from the interview that he was referring to modernisation, technologies, Western civilization and more materially affluent life.

New technologies, imported goods, Western food supplies and medicines are believed by most Maasai residents to constitute “better” things. Instead of revering elders in the village, lots of people expressed their opinion that the younger generations are more open minded and are faster at accepting “new” things. In the historical chapter, I mentioned the two ways education as a medium of preserving
and circulating culture is expressed: education as a formal medium performs a function of educating, civilising and humanising for wider public interaction; and the informal medium functions to transmit the norms for social activities in more intimate contexts (Assmann & Czaplicka, 1995). The major changes that the young Maasai are facing nowadays, within the forever expanding globalisation, are not only the limitations on their traditional pastoralist lifestyle, but also how their traditional lifestyle might have limited them socio-economically. There is evidence that Maasai are realising the importance of money and how money can improve life materially.

Words and phrases similar to “good ideas”, “better behaviour”, “good jobs”, and “more money” constantly appeared during my data analysis. The things and ideas that the Laiboni villagers categorised as “good” or “better” relate nothing to their traditional way of life or values. “Jobs”, “more money”, and “go outside” now have become more appealing and desirable to them. Education, as pointed out by teacher Chris, has changed Laiboni students’ world view and their view toward their own community. Education, together with other economic and political factors, has showed signs of impact on the values of Maasai villagers, especially the younger generations.

5.5 Colonial Curriculum, Indigenous Knowledge and Culture

The Western curriculum adopted by the Laiboni School does not incorporate relevant indigenous knowledge and training in indigenous life skills. This may lead to the loss of Maasai children’s cultural identity and sense of cultural belonging.
Indigenous knowledge refers to the knowledge, understandings, skills and philosophies that have been passed down by local people from generation to generation (UNESCO, 2009). For centuries, indigenous people have gained useful knowledge about the environment they live in and acquired unique ways of knowing, seeing, and thinking. Their knowledge and unique ways of interacting with their surroundings were developed through thousands of years of trial and error and are still valuable in the era of globalisation. During the participant informal interviews, the mothers stated that children who had been to school were able to speak Swahili and minor English, whereas others could not, as well as “the children that went to school have better ideas from outside than those that did not go to school”. The chief of the Laiboni village has his own houses which are built with bricks and concrete, with modern furniture readily installed. The village residents are seeking treatments from the doctors in the hospitals rather than relying on their traditional medicines. All of those changes are indicating the knowledge of the Maasai people is expanding and more acceptance of the “outside” environments. This knowledge constitutes a central part of today’s cultural diversity and may provide new insights in solving many of the world’s problems today. Their wisdom in agriculture, animal husbandry, crafting, art, medicine, and management of natural resources cannot be ignored in attempts to achieve locally-appropriate sustainable development (UNESCO, 2009).

Similar to people in other African indigenous cultures, the Maasai people have long put an emphasis on the acquisition of practical knowledge and skills, for example, hunting, crafting, farming and animal husbandry. However, the colonial knowledge system usually has little relevance to Maasai people’s customs and life
experiences. The education curriculum places little emphasis on the significance of local culture, history and tradition, which might cause a gradual detachment from Maasai students’ own cultural identity. Young people will place less and less value on their traditional culture and way of life.

Curriculum, according to Eisner (1975), includes not only content, but also the structure and organisation of knowledge, “the purposes and functions of schools and schooling” (p.11), the way of teaching and learning, and also the distributions of time, money, human resources, knowledge and other educational resources. For critical curriculum inquiry thinkers such as Paulo Freire (1970) and Michael Apple (1991), it is not enough for educators to think about the question of “what should be taught at school” but also “who should decide what to be taught at school”. Apple and Smith (1991) believe that the questions of “what knowledge” and “whose knowledge” are central to the construction of a knowledge system (p. 46). Numerous educators and thinkers have been critical towards the invasion of Western cultures and how they have been implanted and conveyed in the curricula and classrooms. They have argued that what is regarded as official or legitimate knowledge is the result of intricate power struggles among various class, ethnic, race, economic, political and religious groups (Freire, 1970; Eisner, 1975; Apple & Smith, 1991; Hickling-Hudson, Matthews & Woods, 2004).

The formal, Western-style colonial educational system adopted by the Laiboni School was established based on the perception that Western language, thought and knowledge were better than indigenous versions. The structure and content of school curriculum does not encompass knowledge, skills, values, and moral beliefs that may give Maasai students a sense of cultural belonging. A large part of the
Western curriculum has been structured in ways that greatly differ from Maasai people’s knowledge and student’s out-of-school experiences. As the Art in Tanzania staff member, Patrick, expressed in the interview, most Maasai people in the village think that Math, English and Swahili are “useful” to learn because they can count and communicate, which helps the family communicate and trade with outside villagers. The current curriculum does not emphasise the “uniqueness” and the “value” existing within Maasai’s own culture. Those “useful” subjects all have little relevance to Maasai’s indigenous culture. As expressed by Chris and Patrick, the current education system could lead to the gradual loss of Maasai culture.

In the case of Maasai schools, local community members are not actively involved in children’s education. The learning materials were mostly donated by Western volunteers. Little of the teaching and learning materials in the Laiboni School are made using local resources or reflect local cultures. As I mentioned in Chapter 4 (Fieldwork), the major attractions for parents of sending their children to school is the food supplied by the Laiboni School. Most parents have no idea what their children are learning at school and cannot communicate with their children over school subjects. Successful community involvement would mean including parents, elders and other community members into the discussion of school affairs and establishing school policies and curriculum development. Skilled craftsmen, artisans and storytellers can all be invited to participate in students’ learning and practical skills development. As established by the Laiboni School staff, the school is facing various pressing challenges. The school’s heavy dependence on external donations, volunteers, and other help make it little different from schools in colonial times. The school cannot achieve sustainable development
without effective motivation and support from the community. The abundant local and indigenous knowledge resources have not been fully developed and used. Additionally, the ignorance and devaluation of the wealth of unique local cultures, traditions and customs will further perpetuate colonial legacies (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Active community involvement and participation can ensure the preservation and inheritance of the shared cultural traditions, customs and social norms, thereby facilitating a contextualised and culturally appropriate indigenous education.

Indeed, even if certain practical education and skills training are incorporated in the school curriculum, educators should also be careful to indigenize the knowledge and skills taught according to the unique social, cultural and historical context of the community. There is no denying that since the independence of Tanzania in the 1960s, ambitious local politicians, educators and practitioners have all tried to revitalise Tanzania’s education system to build a knowledgeable, skilled work force that can contribute to the country’s new development (see Section 2.2).

In terms of incorporating practical education, Semali and Stambach (1997) studied practical education among the Chagga people in Tanzania who reside on the slopes of Mt. Kilimanjaro. By using qualitative research methods, they investigated how the incorporation of subjects such as farming practices and home economics into local primary and secondary school curriculum actually influenced Chagga youngsters’ values toward environment, local resources and domestic relations. They found that although the intentions of including practical education into schooling are good, the actual results are not that satisfying. The lessons students learned from agriculture sciences and home economics classes were not
contextualised at local levels and sometimes contradicted indigenous beliefs, values and practices that had been passed down for generations. This has actually led to the devaluation of indigenous cultures and values, as well as changes in traditional gender roles and power relations within indigenous Chagga society. Semali and Stambach (1997) thus proposed that a successful indigenous educational curriculum should be contextualised according to the distinctive cultures, values, beliefs, histories of an indigenous community. They also suggested mobilizing community members, local farmers, craftsman, elders and parents into designing the curriculum and school decision making. Their study of the Chagga community offers additional insight into the actual implementation of indigenous education in the Maasai community in Tanzania.

The Maasai generally are still perceived to be poor, uneducated and thus “backward” in comparison with much of mainstream Tanzanian society (Bishop, 2007). However, as evidenced, the village is going through changes as they face a fast-moving world, and issues such as whether they should integrate with the “modern” society, which might involve increased detachment from their traditional cultural identity, which has become a salient issue for the residents of Laiboni.
Chapter VI. Conclusion

In Africa, the Maasai tribe is considered to be one of the most prominent tribes. Although this tribe is surrounded by the communities who have adopted and welcomed the modern way of living, the Maasai appears to have remained intact and continued its commitment to its culture and traditions (Elness-Hanson, 2006; Ole Kantai, 2004). This thesis took place in a Maasai village, the Laiboni Village, in Tanzania. It examined how the Western education system had impacted the local Maasai’s social values. In particular, the thesis investigated how the older generation recognises the impact of Western schooling among their children, including the loss of their culture, and sense of belonging. Factors associated with educational participation/non-participation have been discussed in this thesis. If we focus on educational development and opportunities, however, even in this supposedly traditional, indigenous tribe, change and transformation have been observed.

Although there are already signs of changes in the Maasai community’s culture, language attitudes, traditions, and values, these transformations are a gradual and slow process. During my stay in the Laiboni village, I did not have the permission to interview the children, therefore future research will be needed to find out their ideas toward cultural changes in the community and how they perceive these changes. Longitudinal studies that follow up these Laiboni children can also provide some insights and further data. It would be interesting to know if the children currently engaged in the Laiboni village education system find jobs in town, move out of the community, or if they or their children still feel strongly connected to the Maasai.
6.1 General conclusion

During my stay in the Laiboni Village, the cultural changes of the traditional Maasai that I have observed can be divided into two major parts: the physical impact -- the use of new materials; and the psychological impact – particularly those brought by the Western educational system. The two most visible changes in the new material use were the solar panels and the chief’s modern houses which were built with bricks and concretes. I treated those as important pieces of evidence which show the changes of the Maasai are going through. Inside those modern houses, there are well-polished wooden doors that keep wind and animals outside. Inside they have soft mattresses, cooking equipment, a proper hearth installed that cooks food by burning wood sticks underneath, a lighting system, a sofa chair, and so on. As for the solar panel systems, almost all the boma in the village have them installed in order to provide limited access to electricity for lighting and other needs. This would have been unthinkable before the modern international society came in contact with this isolated community. Some villagers even have cell phones to allow limited communication with the outside world.

As for the psychological changes, these can be seen through the interviews with the participants. The Laiboni villagers admit in the interviews that the education their children receive, especially languages and mathematics, allows them to communicate with outside people and conduct trade for their community, which also changed their life to some extent. This is addressed mainly through the interviews with the local people. The villagers have rather mixed feelings about the
changes. The younger generations enjoy the conveniences, and at the same time, the older generations are worried that those changes may lead to changes in their traditional culture (although arguably changes had already taken place). They villagers unanimously appreciated the modern changes that Western education and outside aid brought to them with the electricity and the solar power systems as well as the ability to communicate with outside people.

From the perspective of the chief, Mr. L., the modern houses were really appreciated as well as the education that enabled the children to do the math or speak in a language that outsiders do; yet he does not believe that the local cultural can and will be changed. The younger females also appreciated their sons being able to communicate in other languages such as Swahili, but did not really think it represented a big deal in terms of its significance for culture and identity change.

One of the tensions regarding attitudes between the generations became apparent to me during the course of the research. The females of the older generation, even more than the males, were really against the changes that are brought into the village, and yet the younger generations enjoyed the convenience. The younger generation learned quickly from the Western education system, and accepted new ideas and things easily. The teenagers already knew that they should ask for Western pills when they were not feeling well, instead of turning to their parents to use local traditional herbal medicines.

Views from the professional teacher also demonstrated that the function and power of education, and that ultimately in some way a person’s thinking and beliefs will be changed. The children will be able to go out of the village and find new jobs
that pay well, and that alone means that local culture will be changed in the end. Another point is that as the children spend more time at the school and less with the families, the Maasai culture will eventually fade away with more children going for the “better life” in the outside world. This can be seen as a tension between the professional workers and the older Maasai generation. Western education does not help in terms of preserving the local community culture. As mathematics, English and Swahili are the main things that are taught in school, the traditional Maasai ways of living are now kept alive mainly for touristic reasons, and the older generations on the other hand are less concerned in keeping the faith in keeping the old tradition. They are very much proud of their own culture and the long history that they have been through. As a consequence, they think it is unlikely that the culture will change with the influence of the current Westernised education system.

There were some indications of future changes in local culture during my fieldwork. One example can be seen in that the children expressed their willingness to become doctors, tour guides or even vets when they grew up. These professions are traditionally not common in the Maasai culture. The parents also expressed their wishes in having the children going out of the village and not following their old lives. The children now are taking on the responsibility to trade cows for money on behalf of their parents who can only speak the Maasai language, Maa, instead of Swahili.

The frequently mentioned expressions during the interviews included “speaking Swahili”, “good ideas from outside”, “good jobs”, “bringing back money”, and all confirmed how the local people’s thoughts have already been affected, perhaps
without their own realisation. The changes in culture are probably finally going to happen with more Western penetration through the education system entering into the village, even though the current changes do not appear to be that significant or that fast (Kaul, 2012). In addition, the situation is also expected to be even more different when the current children who are now receiving Western educations grow up, and who have likely by then made more contacts with the outside world.

The young Maasai, enveloped by an ever fast moving ‘modern’ world filled with Western ethnocentric ideology, may become so vulnerable that the cultural identity of these young people is at stake. As noted above, the school experience increases the possibility for the young to migrate from the pastoral land to bigger cities as a result of job seeking. In this way, the tendency of abandonment of the traditional life has more or less interrupted the Maasai nomadic livelihoods. Unless the youth intend to keep the customs alive, the cultural heritage and tradition with the embodiment of indigenous knowledge may be discontinued and even permanently lost. Therefore, the young Maasai will play an important role in exploring an appropriate way of both keeping their cultural identity and accessing the modern way of education.

6.2 Future Research Suggestions

Although there are already signs of changes in the Maasai community’s cultures, language attitudes, traditions, and values, these transformations are a gradual and slow process. Whether the Maasai culture will disappear or only be left for tourists is still an open-ended question. Studies that investigate cultural changes among
other indigenous communities would provide us with some comparable insights. During my stay at Laiboni village, I did not have the permission to interview the students. Future research is needed to find out their ideas toward cultural changes in the community and how they perceive these changes. Longitudinal studies that follow up on these Laiboni students could also provide some insights. I would like to see if they find jobs in town, move out of the community, if they or their children still perceive themselves as Maasai. Additionally, there is opportunity for research that investigates how indigenous knowledge can be best incorporated into Maasai school education, curriculum reform, and ways to preserve, rather than displace, Maasai cultural traditions through education.
Appendix

Research questions for parents *(the questions may be asked in different ways and in different order during the informal interview depending on the participants’ answers)*:

1. Have you ever attend school?
2. What do you think of the current “schooling” and “education”?
3. Are all of your children go to school?
4. Do you want your children to continue study if they graduated from primary school?
5. What do you expect your children to be doing when they grow up?
6. Do you believe that the current education can bring you and your family a better life? And why?
7. What do you expect your children to learn from school?
8. Do you believe the current education is better than the traditional Maasai education? And why?
9. What do you think of the curriculums that your children are learning at school? Any usefulness?
10. Do you think that the children goes to school are act and think differently compare to the children are not attend school?
11. If I say: “the current education is leading the Maasai culture to fade away slowly”, what is your thoughts towards this statement? Why do you think that way?
12. The phrase “sense of belonging”, what does this mean to you?
13. Do you think the current education is distracting your children’s sense of belonging as a Maasai?

14. When you talk to your children whom attending school, do they show any different views or thoughts of their future? Eg. What do they want to achieve; what do they want to do with their life; etc., anything that you have heard of from your children.
Research questions for AIT staff (the questions may be asked in different ways and in different order during the informal interview depending on the participants’ answers):

1. How long has this school been built?
2. What are the education goals for the school and students?
3. What do you expect the students to achieve when they graduate from this primary school?
4. How useful do you think of the education you are provide for the children in relation to their Maasai culture?
5. What do you think of the words “schooling” and “education”?
6. The school is a Maasai school, what’s the biggest difference when comparing to other school in Tanzania?
7. I am aware that there are big differences between Maasai traditional education and the current education system. How do you think the education this school provide has reduce the difference?
8. How do you think the education the children are receiving now may impact on their future? Eg. Values of life, values of their community?
9. How do you understand the phrase “sense of belonging”?
10. Do you believe the current education system maybe impact on these children’s “sense of belonging”?
11. Do you believe that, as nowadays, the education system changes, and leaning towards the Western education system, it can drive Maasai children away from their own culture?
12. Do you have any long term plans for this primary school? If so, what is it?

   How do you plan to achieve the goals?
Research questions for teacher (the questions may be asked in different ways and in different order during the informal interview depending on the participants’ answers):

1. How long have you been study in school before working full-time?
2. How long have you worked in this school?
3. Why did you want to become a teacher?
4. What do you think of the word “education”?
5. What do you think of the word “schooling”?
6. Over the times, have you noticed any increases or decreases in the number of students attending school/classes?
7. What do the children think of schooling?
8. What’s their parents’ attitudes towards sending the children to the school?
9. For children who have graduated from this primary school, what’s the percentage of them going into secondary school?
10. How do you think of the current education/schooling had impacted on the children’s future?
11. Do you agree that the children who attended school will have different social values / future directions? What caused those differences?
12. I understand that in Maasai culture, there are huge differences between their traditional education and the current education system. Do you think it has impacted students’ recognition of their self-identities?
13. Do you think the curriculums that you are teaching is relevant to their daily lives?
14. Do you believe that the current education system could lead to the loss of Maasai culture?

15. For the children whom are NOT attend school, what do you think of the reasons/causes?

16. What actions does the school take to minimal the unattendance number?

17. What are the goals for this school? Anything you can think of.
Research questions for the village chief (*the questions may be asked in different ways and in different order during the informal interview depending on the participants’ answers*):

1. How long have you been the chief of this village?
2. Have you ever attend school?
3. What has changed the most in this village over the years?
4. What do you see the future of this village?
5. Do you encourage children to go to school?
6. What do you think of “schooling” and “education”?
7. Do you believe that “education can change everything? And what makes you think of that?
8. What do you think of the current curriculums that children are learning at school?
9. When comparing the traditional Maasai education, what do you think of the advantages and disadvantages of the current education system?
10. Do you believe that the current education will impact on the children’s sense of belonging?
11. Do you believe that the current education system can lead to the lose of Maasai culture?
12. Over the years, you must have seen different people in the village who are educated and those are not, what can you say about them? Anything that you can think of.
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