

**AFRICAN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AS PRACTICED BY THE MAASAI OF  
KENYA**

**BY**

**ISANDA PERISTA KERUBO**

**A research project presented in partial fulfillment for the award of Master Degree in  
History of Education**

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**NOVEMBER, 2016**

**DECLARATION**

This research project is my original work and has never been submitted to any university for any award.

**SIGN:**..... **DATE:**.....

**ISANDA PERISTA KERUBO**

**REG/NO/ E56/63441/2013**

This research project is submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisors.

**SIGNATURE**..... **DATE**.....

**MR. MARTIN WASIKE**

**SIGNATURE:**..... **DATE:**.....

**DR. LYDIAH WACHIRA**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOUNDATIONS

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research project to my mother Baskaria Isanda, my sisters and brothers: Cecilia Kemunto, Stephen Nyaanga, Martha Kwamboka, Christine Bina and Emmanuel Otworu.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my special gratitude to my supervisors Dr. Lydia Wachira and Mr. Martin Wasike for your tireless support through this project. Your valuable advice, guidance and criticism during meetings and through E-Mail responses helped me a lot to come up with a better document.

My appreciation goes to my family members especially my sisters, Cecilia Martha and Christine for their unceasing moral and material support.

My friends and colleagues greatly contributed to my comfort and study. In a special way I appreciate Eliud Ominde for his words of wisdom and encouragement. I also appreciate my classmates Rosemary Sifuna and Rose for their moral support.

My sincere gratitude to my research assistants, Susan Oloitiptip, Purity Mure and Phyllis Tonkei for sacrificing their time and energy to assist me. To all my informants who gave me useful information willingly, I thank you.

Finally, I give thanks to almighty God who gave me strength to type and edit this project successfully.

## **ABSTRACT**

The Africans had their own system of Education before the coming of Europeans. This study aimed at investigating African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai of Kenya. The Maasai are well known pastoralists from East Africa who have lived a long and proud past. They have been purely trans-humant pastoralists. The study investigated the aims, content, teachers and methods of instruction of the indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai people of Kenya. This study was carried out among the Maasai people of Kenya.

The study was conducted through historical method of research. Primary and secondary sources of data were used. Primary sources included historical documents from the Kenya National Archives and oral testimonies. Secondary sources of data included books, magazines, journals and newspapers. Unpublished articles, academic dissertations and other published materials also formed part of secondary sources. The data collected was evaluated using internal and external criticism and was then analyzed qualitatively.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

A.I.E African Indigenous Education

M.I.E Maasai Indigenous Education

NACOSITI National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

O.I Oral Interview

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

Education has been defined differently by different scholars. For the purpose of this study, I shall limit myself to the definition given by Adeyinka (2000) where he defined education as the process of transmitting the culture of a society from one generation to the other, the process by which the adult members of a society bring up the younger ones.

African indigenous education refers to ways of teaching and learning in Africa which are based on indigenous knowledge accumulated by Africans over centuries in response to their different physical, agricultural, ecological, political and socio-cultural challenges (Merriam, 2007). Luthuli (1981) elaborates on this and states that education involves the training of young persons and the moulding of the youth of the nation with the aim of making them responsible adult members of their respective societies.

The general aim of African traditional education is based on the socio-cultural and economic features shared by the various communities. The harsh natural environment made survival to be the main aim of education. Every skill, knowledge or attitude learnt was either for protection and acquisition of food or shelter and ensuring successful reproduction. Other aims were to create unity and consensus in society, to perpetuate the cultural heritage of the ethnic community and preserve its boundaries, to inculcate feelings of group supremacy and communal living and to prepare the young for adult roles and status. This traditional system of education is similar in most African countries (Merriam, 2007).

In Africa, indigenous education of youngsters involved intellectual, physical and attitudinal training in order to develop fully into acceptable adults in the society. In addition, different kinds of games, including wrestling and running formed part of the traditional education curriculum. Training for healthy living, cooking, dressing, hunting, farming, carpentry, blacksmithing, drumming, dancing, marriage counseling and critical thinking also formed part of the traditional education curriculum at different stages of the life of the youth (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2002).

The African education experience was strictly set up to prepare the young for future roles in society in the African community and not necessarily for life outside the ethnic community (Nsamenang and Lamb, 1994). Boys and girls were taught separately to help prepare each sex for their adult roles. Every member of the community had a hand in contributing to the educational upbringing of the child. The highest point of the African educational experience was the ritual passage ceremony from childhood to adulthood.

In most societies which practiced initiation ceremonies, the end of the initiation itself was marked by circumcision for boys and clitoridectomy for girls which in turn symbolized the transition of the initiated from childhood to adulthood (Kenyatta, 1961 ; Datta, 1984; Rodney, 1972). Initiation practices were widespread and have been documented among such diverse ethnic groups as the Sidamo of Ethiopia, the Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania, the Nandi of Kenya, the Tonga of Zambia and the Zulu of South Africa (Datta, 1984).

Indigenous education of the African was a system of preparing the child for adult life. Fafunwa (1967) stresses that, the average African child lives within the cultural environment and is educated to become a conforming member of this enduring complex and highly organized

village society. The child in turn is expected to perpetuate the culture by passing on the same tradition to his own offspring. According to Duminy (1973) education, as found in the tribal life of the Bantu, was a very effective system which had in view the preparation of the child in order to make him fit to carry on the traditions of the community of which he was a member.

Tyrell and Jurgens (1983) argue that the primary emphasis in bringing up the African child is to impress upon him/her that his/her significance, safety and prestige rest with the group. Instead of being encouraged to express him/ her self and use his individual abilities and talents to achieve and acquire for him or herself prestige, he or she is made to conform.

Callaghan, (1998) argues that deciding how to care for and educate the next generation is an old matter to which individuals and cultural communities the world over have evolved various approaches .By revealing that Africa is home to the earliest humans, scientific evidence informs us that the continent has had the longest experience with the care and education of children, principally within family systems. In fact, for centuries and continuing today, Africa has educated its offspring “within the framework of an African culture” (Callaghan, 1998).

However, Eurocentric views state that there are just two educational systems which are Western education and Islamic education. They observe that since education necessarily involved writing, and African education was not written before the invasion of the continent by Arabic-Islamic and European educational systems, it means that there was no education. This view was not strange especially at a time when Eurocentric scholars like A.P. Newton, professor of imperial history at the University of London stated that “History only begins when men take to writing”(Newton, 1919). Yet a close study of the indigenous African education system shows that the universal objectives of education were targeted and remain inherent in African childrearing cultures. This

study attempts therefore to establish the indigenous system of education of the Maasai one of the nilotic communities found in Kenya and Tanzania.

The Maasai are a Nilotic ethnic group of semi-nomadic people inhabiting southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. They are among the best known local populations due to their residence near the many game parks of the African Great Lakes, and their distinctive customs and dress (Jens 2000). The Maasai speak Maa, a Nilo-Saharan language family that is related to Dinka and Nuer (Jens, 2000). They are also educated in the official languages of Kenya and Tanzania, Swahili and English. The Maasai population has been reported as numbering 841,622 in Kenya in the 2009 census, compared to 377,089 in the 1989 census.

The Maasai being semi-nomadic means that they follow the seasonal changes with their herds. The Maasai community has been living in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania for over 2500 years (McCabe, Perkin, & Schofield, 1992). They live communally and rely on their herds for subsistence. Pastoralists, such as the Maasai, can be described as, "...people who derive most of their income or sustenance from keeping domestic livestock in conditions where most of the feed that their livestock eat is natural forage rather than cultivated fodders and pastures" (Baxter, 1994:61).

Keeping of cattle is undoubtedly the most important economic activity of Maasai culture. Cattle are used in rituals and ceremonies to maintain relationships within families and between different clans as well as for food. In essence, they are the Maasai's livelihood. The Maasai are a patrilineal society in which clan memberships are inherited from the father (Homewood & Rodgers, 1991). A man's cattle belong to his clan; each clan has a distinctive mark that is branded into the ears of livestock (Ndagala, 1992).

In social organization, three or four families (domestic groups) live together, in what is called an *enkang*, and individual families change location every few years; they congregate in permanent settlements during the dry season and disperse to temporary camps during the wet season (McCabe et al., 1992; Talle, 1988, ). A domestic group is comprised of a man, his wives, and dependent children. An *enkang* is a “circular cluster of dwellings enclosed by a fence” (Homewood & Rodgers, 1991; Ndagala, 1992,). Members of an *enkang* cooperate in carrying out daily tasks together, such as making watering and grazing decisions, building cattle enclosures, and providing security for the *enkang* (Homewood and Rodgers, 1991; Ndagala, 1992, Talle, 1988).

As the study has particular reference to the Maasai, the researcher investigated the aims of African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai, the content of African indigenous education of the Maasai, the teachers and the methods used in teaching the indigenous education among the Maasai.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The art of transmitting knowledge through writing has existed in several African civilizations since ancient times. The Egyptians, Kushites and Christian Nubians all evolved written languages whereas for the majority of Africans, knowledge was revealed only orally and visually. Therefore, despite the fact that most African communities never had the art of writing and reading, they had their own ways of passing knowledge to the younger generation.

The main concern of this study was to investigate the indigenous education of the Maasai community. Despite the fact that it is the most celebrated community in Africa, most of the scholars who have studied them have not laid emphasis on their indigenous education. Scholars

like Ronoh have studied the effects of moran system of indigenous knowledge on Maasai youth's school attendance. Other scholars like Ole Sankan, studied the customs of the Maasai people.

The researcher therefore studied the indigenous education of the Maasai in relation to aims, content, teaching methods and teachers of this type of education.

### **1.3 Purpose of study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai with more emphasis laid on the aims, content, methods and teachers of this type of education.

### **1.4 Objectives**

The study was guided by the following objectives;

1. To investigate the aims of African Indigenous Education as practiced by the Maasai.
2. To examine the content of Indigenous Education as practiced by the Maasai.
3. To establish the methods used in teaching the Indigenous Education as practiced by the Maasai.
4. To determine the teachers of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai

### **1.5 Research questions**

This study was guided by the following questions;

1. What were the aims of African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai?
2. What was the content of African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai.
3. Which were the methods used in teaching African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai?

4. Who were the teachers of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai?

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

The findings of this study would contribute to the body of ideas and knowledge on indigenous education of the Maasai. This study will assist Africans especially from the Maasai community to appreciate indigenous education as practiced by their community. This study will also act as a knowledge bank for other researchers who will be interested in studying African indigenous education in future. The findings of the study are also expected to help modern educationists to use the best aspects of indigenous education in modern teaching and even include them in the curriculum.

### **1.7 Delimitations of the study**

The researcher studied the African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai community. The study concentrated more on the Maasai of Kenya.

### **1.8 Limitations of the study**

For a more conclusive result all the counties where the Maasai live should have been studied. However, this was not possible due to logistics and constraints such as terrain and funds.

### **1.9 Definition of operational terms**

#### **African**

The term African refers to all inhabitants of the continent of African. In recent cases this term has also been applied to mean African communities of European origin who look upon themselves as ‘White Africans.’ In this study, the term African was used mainly to mean the Maasai people who live Kenya.

## **Indigenous**

In this work the term "indigenous" is used synonymously with the term "traditional". Thus as applied in this study, tradition is the vehicle through which every child learns something of the society and store of accumulated knowledge and prejudice of his forefathers. This is in the form of artifacts, morality, behavior, attitude and the like that may be said to constitute culture.

## **Education**

Education has been defined differently by different scholars, but for the sake of this study education means the indigenous knowledge which was passed down by the elders to the younger generation among the Maasai community of Kenya before the coming of the Europeans in Africa.

## **African indigenous education**

This is education which was offered in the continent of Africa before the coming of the Europeans.

## **Teachers**

These are instructors of African indigenous education. These are the people who were given the task of passing indigenous education to the young ones.

## **Moran**

A moran is a young man who has just been initiated. He is a man between 14 years of and 35 years of age.

## **Formal education**

This is learning which takes place within an organized setting.

## **Informal education**

Learning that takes place through the process of observation, imitation and participation.

## **1.10 Theoretical Framework**

### **Social learning theory**

The social learning theory of Bandura emphasizes the importance of observing and modeling the behaviours, attitudes and emotional reactions of others. Bandura (1977) states that; learning would be exceedingly difficult not to mention hazardous if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: By observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed and in later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action. Social theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral and environmental influences.

The social learning theory posits that people learn from one another via observation, imitation and modeling (Bandura, 1977). This theory is relevant to this study because among the maasai community, indigenous learning took place mainly through observation and imitation. The component processes underlying observational learning are: attention, including modeled events (distinctiveness affective valence, complexity prevalence functional value) and observer characteristics (sensory capacities, arousal level, perceptual set, past reinforcement). Retention including symbolic coding, cognitive organization, symbolic rehearsal, motor rehearsal, motor reproduction, concluding physical capabilities, self observation of reproduction, accuracy of feedback, motivation including external, vicarious and self motivation (Bandura, 1977).

In African indigenous education the children learnt mainly through observation and imitation. They acquired knowledge, beliefs and values by interacting with other people in the community.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1 African indigenous education

Education is an integral part of life in any society. The social and cultural forces surrounding each individual thus form the basis of indigenous education. Hinzen (1973) observes that during the long ages of pre-history, human beings survived because they were capable of learning by example and experience to adapt their way of life to their environment throughout succeeding generations.

Indigenous education in its various forms is intimately intertwined with social life. Sifuna (1990) emphasizes that what was taught in traditional societies was related to the social context in which people lived as well as the demands of their particular environment. Thus, indigenous education had a direct and symbiotic relationship with the environment (Castle, 1966 and Ocitti, 1973). Indigenous education also responded to social change and was an important catalyst of change. Indigenous education was therefore associated with social development.

Indigenous education takes many forms, depending on the particular historical and cultural background. According to Ishumi (1985) this education is influenced by the prevailing economic, social, religious and political systems. In short, this system of education sustains community development. In support of this, former President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, described indigenous education as an integral part of life (Nyerere, 1968). Mwanakatwe (1968) writing on 'traditional education' in Zambia shows how throughout the ages, different tribes had different approaches to the education of their citizens, beginning with the youth. He goes further to delineate the education of the boys with that of the girls and then adults.

Wilson (1966) argues that in its social aspects, indigenous education was well organized and led to disciplined people. Puberty rites generally involved a period of specific tuition conducted by seniors whose specific function by virtue of their status, was to teach the candidates. In puberty rites, not only was physiological education involved, but there was much social education dealing with the responsibilities of adulthood in relationship to the preservation of the society through control of family system.

Moletsane (1977) commenting about education in Lesotho defines indigenous education as: "that education in which skills and knowledge were developed by the society through centuries." In Lesotho, according to Moletsane (1977), education covered a wide variety of activities and learning experiences which included: initiation schools for male and female; apprenticeships; direct instruction by mothers, fathers, peers and other knowledgeable members of the society; self-instruction through trial and error methods as well as imitation and observation. Much education was carried out orally and was passed from generation to generation.

## **2.2 Aims of African Indigenous Education**

Although indigenous knowledge systems varied from one society to another, the goals of these systems were often similar. Indigenous learning was essentially an education for living. Its main purpose was to train the youth for adulthood within the society. Emphasis was placed on normative and expressive goals. Normative goals were concerned with the accepted standards and beliefs governing correct behavior, while expressive goals were concerned with unity and consensus. There were also elements within the system, which encouraged competitiveness in intellectual and practical matters, but these were controlled and subordinated to normative and expressive goals (Erny, 1981).

Houmouni (1968) clarifies that traditional education in Africa is characterized by the following features: Collective and social nature; intimate ties with social life, both in a material and spiritual sense; multivalent character, both in terms of its goals and means employed; gradual and progressive achievement in conformity with the successive stages of physical, emotional and mental development of the child.

It is the task of the family of the child to perform its duties correctly regarding his education. It is also the task of the entire community to educate the child to supplement the efforts made by the family. The child is educated and educates himself in the society, in the school of the family and in a social life with his age group and is constantly in contact with the various aspects of adult life.

Adeyinka (1993:17) argues that the purpose of education is to enable an individual to:

“1) Position himself /herself in the society into which s/he has been born to live; (2) explore the world and find his/her own place in it; (3) cultivate good habits and develop (the right attitude to life and work; (4) develop as a good citizen; (5) develop his/her potentialities to the full that s/he could acquire knowledge and training in a profession and earn a good living.”

Crittenden's argument that a person could live all his/her life without receiving purposeful education, particularly where aims and intentions are not clear from the start could therefore be understood (Crittenden, 1974). A well-rounded education would enable citizens live together purposefully in a dynamic global community (Adeyemi, 2000). This concept of purposeful living is set in the following cardinal goals of African traditional education identified according to Fafunwa (1974): To develop the child's latent physical skills, to develop character, to inculcate respect for elders and those in position of authority, to develop intellectual skills, to acquire

specific vocational training and to develop a healthy attitude towards honest labor, to develop a sense of belonging and to participate actively in family and community affairs and to understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.

Kenyatta (1961:99-100) sums up the traditional education of African children in the following words while describing the educational system of the Agikuyu (also spelt Kikuyu) people of Kenya:

“It will be found that education begins at the time of birth and ends with death. The child has to pass various stages of age-groupings with a system of education defined for every status in life. They aim at instilling into the children what the Gikuyu call "otaari wa mocie" or "kerera kia mocie," namely, educating the children in the family and clan tradition. Apart from the system of schools which has been introduced by the Europeans, there is no special school building in the Gikuyu sense of the word: the homestead is the school.”

This is one of the methods by which the history of the people is passed from generation to generation.

For Maasai youths, elaborate training and learning through the medium of indigenous learning took place just after circumcision. Upon being circumcised, Maasai girls received intensive education on their culture and expectations before getting married. The main aim of this type of education was to make them responsible adults and to prepare them for their future roles in society (Ronoh, 2008). In contrast, Maasai boys receive less intense education immediately after circumcision. Instead, after recuperation newly circumcised Maasai boys proceed to the *Moran* system of barracks life during which they obtain comprehensive indigenous teaching, learning

and training on indigenous subjects whose attributes are of particular interest to the Maasai as a pastoral society living in a harsh environment (Ronoh, 2008).

As Ronoh points out, the main aim of African indigenous education was to make girls and boys responsible adults. The researcher therefore examined the aims of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai before, during and after initiation.

### **2.3 Content of African Indigenous Education**

Indigenous learning in its various forms had many-sided characteristics intimately intertwined with social life. What was taught was related to the social content in which people were called upon to live. Among the Chagga of Tanzania, for example, there was some training in imitative play. It consisted of representations of scenes from adult life by means of which the young were made familiar with the norms and ideals expected from full and responsible members of the society (Raum, 1965). Indigenous education was not only concerned with the systematic socialization of the young generation into norms, beliefs and collective opinions of the wider society, but also placed a very strong emphasis on learning practical skills and the acquisition of knowledge which was useful to the individual and society as a whole. In broad terms, it emphasized social responsibility, job orientation, political participation and spiritual and moral values.

According to Castle (1966), the content or subject matter of traditional educational systems emanated from the physical, social and spiritual situations of pre-colonial African societies. The physical environment influenced the content of the curriculum in that what was taught was meant to assist the child to adjust and adapt to the environment in order to exploit and derive benefit from it. Castle argues that, "Whether the child's habitat was dominated by mountain, plain, river

or tropical forest, he had to learn to combat its dangers and to use its fertility." To come to terms with the physical environment, the growing child learned about landscape, the weather and also about both plant and animal life. As the child grew, he/she learned to understand the uses of both plants and animals in his locality, in addition to the taboos associated with them.

Among the Ogiek of Kenya, Nomi (2004) argues that all kinds of subjects were taught by the council of elders particularly those touching on the regulation of social and ecological management system. In essence, the youths were taught about their natural environment and basically how they could utilize their surroundings for their survival. For instance, they learnt which kinds of grasses were suitable for which purpose and the work that had to be done to obtain food by joining with elders in this work. Based on the relationship between survival and environment, the Ogiek children and youths learnt through a difficult forest environment and thus life was a real struggle against these difficult aspects of the environment such as learning the tactics and techniques of escape when attacked by dangerous animals, poisonous snakes or fighting for safety from fierce bees. Therefore, children had to be taught an integrated and broad based curriculum on all these important aspects of the environment in order to overcome and exploit them, taking into account their normative and moralist view of sustainable utilization of these natural resources.

The Maasai society exhibits a great love and concern for livestock especially cattle (Hollis, 1905; Galaty, 1977; Karehed and Odhult, 1997; Ronoh, 2008). Maasai people's lifestyles revolve around animal husbandry and related activities. This cultural inclination is a product of unfavorable environmental factors as many parts of Maasailand are arid and semi—arid (Ronoh, 2008). Therefore, ways of taking care of livestock in relation to the feeds and health of animals

formed part of the content of indigenous education passed down to the young ones of this community.

Ronoh (2008) and Sena (1986) agree that Maasai warriors learn to defend their people and property against attack from enemies in the *moran* institution. It is at this stage that they were taught how to protect and defend the community, among other subjects. Therefore in this institution, Maasai warriors were taught military skills. Other than military skills what else were the *morans* taught? This is one of the questions that this study answered.

Again as noted earlier, Ronoh argues that Maasai girls received intensive education about their culture and expectations before marriage upon circumcision. What he did not tell us is what these girls were taught which was yet another concern of this study. The study of Ronoh concentrated more on his topic which was the effect of *moran* systems of indigenous knowledge on Maasai youth's school attendance. His study did not go into the details of African indigenous education of the Maasai which was the major concern of this study.

#### **2.4 Methods of teaching African Indigenous Education**

From an early age the child was taught to accept, to value and to reproduce the behavior, customs and sentiments of the society into which he was born (Dreyer, 1980). Education was strictly enculturation of the traditional set of habits, attitudes and behavioral codes. Development towards adulthood proceeded strictly according to custom and social tradition. The education of the child also centered round the idea of what the child ought to become. What was expected was a mature adult who had to take his rightful position among the group.

The most common method that was employed in teaching the young traditional ways was imitation. Miller (1928) points out that there is little in the material equipment of primitive

society which the child cannot acquire through imitation. Miller continues to argue that dances and the songs that accompanied them were learned by observation and imitation. Together with the moments of 'pure' imitation went the deliberate educational measures taken by the adults in the community to make sure that the child was put well on his way to adulthood worthy of the tribal tradition.

Parents and other adults in the group were ever ready to assist the natural imitative tendencies of the young children. Oral instruction together with the showing of the example was extensively practiced (Duminy, 1973). A great variety of stories and legends were told. On the whole adults praised virtues and condemned stubbornness and faults. Good deeds were rewarded, bad deeds were met with due punishment. The idea was to help the youngsters grasp the prevailing ethical standards of the tribe.

Duminy (1973) continues to argue that proverbs and riddles were also very common, each playing its role in the forming of the youngster. Riddles served to sharpen the wits while in proverbs a great deal of traditional wisdom and folklore was expressed. The tribal wisdom accumulated in ages was stored up in riddles. As there were no written records, the only means of communication to the child was through oral repetition. Tribal history, philosophy, language, technology all had to be preserved in these tales and passed orally to the next generation.

Dreyer (1980) asserts that the child was actually forced by custom, tradition and societal ways to take an active part in his own development. In traditional society, the peer group played an important role in aiding the child to acquire the ways and customs of society. He was forced by custom to associate more with his peers who were his age mates.

According to Wagner (1949), other methods of instruction included involving children in productive work. Learning through the medium of work enabled children to acquire the right types of masculine or feminine roles. Children learned by being useful, by doing and working hand-in-hand with adults. Every mother, for example, wanted her daughter to master home-management skills before marriage. Similarly, every father wanted his son to become a competent farmer, hunter, fisherman or herdsman. Thus, of all the different aspects of education and training to which children were subjected, the one to which most attention was paid was the one that prepared them to be prospective wives and husbands. A child was expected to learn this largely by seeing and imitating, but he/she was given formal teaching usually after he/she had made a mistake or when the outcome of their work was found unsatisfactory.

Among some ethnic groups, formal instruction took the form of succeeding stages of initiation from one status to another. The most prominent initiation practices were those associated with circumcision in puberty. This test was regarded as the point of passage into full membership of the community. Circumcision was normally accompanied with formal lessons. They took the form of lessons, songs and tests by the instructor. Questions were asked in the form of riddles for the initiate to interpret their meaning. Such questions dealt with issues pertaining to the protection of the homestead against enemies, committing adultery and many others (Wagner, 1949)

For scholars such as Tatira (2000), taboos were a useful way of keeping check on children. As for him each taboo had two parts, namely, a ‘surface meaning’ (a lie) and the truth. In his words:

Shona people often use *zviera* (taboos) as one of the ways of teaching young members of their society. The Shona had, and still have, unique ways of transmitting social values

which are crucial to the development of their society. Zviera, among other practices, encourage conformity (Tatira, 2000:74).

In pre-colonial Africa, initiation ceremonies were common in both centralized communities and those that were a cephalous - without a central chief or leader. The initiation activity enjoyed a high degree of formalism: it was characterized by teaching and learning of pre-determined material in a specific physical setting where there was a clear-cut distinction between pupils and teachers (Rodney, 1972, Tiberondwa, 1978, Datta, 1984).

As in the training of young people for specialized occupations, initiation ceremonies lasted for varying periods. Among the Poro society in West Africa, for example, initiation schooling went on for as long as five years while the Tonga of Zambia initiated their female children over a period of between six weeks and four months (Datta, 1984). In either case, initiation ceremonies were meant to offer specific instruction in a wide range of areas, including farming, weaving, fishing, diplomacy, history and mother craft. Female initiates underwent physiological, social and moral education to become capable mothers and wives. On the other hand, male children who were initiated were trained to become defenders of their villages and good providers for their families (Kalusa, 2000).

Ole Sankan (1971) argues that the Maasai used taboos in teaching their youth especially the warrior class. As soon as an age group is circumcised, there are certain things which they may not do. Things from which they must abstain, for example soon after a young man was circumcised he was not supposed drink milk obtained from cattle his family. He was supposed to give it to his age mates. Furthermore he was not supposed to drink milk alone. Another warrior had to be around to take the first sip. As mentioned above, Ole Sankan mentions taboos as a

method of teaching among the warrior class. In his book *The Maasai*, Ole Sankan wrote about the customs of the Maasai. Though he mentions the taboos and the *morán* system, he did not go into the details of indigenous education of the Maasai which was the major concern of this study.

## **2.5 Teachers of African indigenous education**

In the majority of African societies, the greater portion of education was informal. As Rodney (1972) argues, this kind of education was acquired by children "from the example and behavior of elders in the society." Under this system of education, methods of teaching were less highly structured and the line between the teacher and the pupil was thin. Learning was by imitation, observation and repetition of what parents and other adults did and encouraging the young to do it. It was also done through oral literature and play. These enabled boys and girls to learn about the history of their tribe and enhanced their mental development.

Children also acquired such qualities as perseverance, self-control, courage and endurance. It is important to stress that in societies where education was largely informal parents were predominantly responsible for teaching their children. They inculcated good manners, norms and values into their offspring, using their household as the "school." This household education covered practical skills and continued as long as the child lived with his/her parents. All elders in the society were expected to play mother and father roles in teaching, scolding, advising, rewarding and punishing children in the village or community (Blackmore and Cooksey, 1980; Tiberondwa, 1978). Among the Banyaruguru of Western Uganda, an adult who showed no interest in the education of the young people in the community was regarded as being disadvantageous to the community. He or she was often branded a witch (Tiberondwa, 1978). This observation, which also applies to many other societies in Africa, denotes that the task of teaching and bringing up children in pre-colonial communities was a collective responsibility.

Hollis (1905) argues that knowledge comes from the pastoral nomad who is capable of recovering his lost animals by reading subtle animal tracks brushed into the dust or from the traditional midwife who is able to remedy a traverse fetus without having seen the door of a classroom. The ability to fix broken bones of both humans and livestock is yet another remarkable form of rich traditional indigenous knowledge. This study identified other teachers of African indigenous education other than nomads and explained how they did their work among the children in the Maasai community.

## **2.6 Summary of Literature**

The researcher has reviewed some of the literature which is related to this study. It has been established that many studies have been carried out by various scholars who have studied the Maasai culture and the *moran* institution. There is also documentation on the general custom of the Maasai people and also on the effect of *moranism* on western education.

Whereas all the above studies have been able to shed light on the task that was to be undertaken by the present study, it should be noted that due to the different objectives which these studies were out to address, none has been able to address the indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai in relation to the aims, content, teachers and methods of teaching this type of education. Going by the available literature therefore, a strong case was established on the need for a study like the present one which carried out an investigation on the indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai. The study therefore filled this gap by establishing the indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai with special reference to its aims, content, teachers and methods of teaching.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research design**

Research design is the scheme outline or a plan that is issued to generate answers to research problems (Orodho, 2003). On the other hand Kombo and Tromp (2006) observe that a research design is the ‘glue’ that holds all the elements in the research together. This research employed historical research method. Historical research is said to be systematic and objective location, evaluation and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusion concerning past events (Sifuna, 1995). In this case the researcher used historical design in which related themes, topic and arguments are considered together. As cited, above historical method of research was more suitable because it deals with the systematic search for facts relating to research questions about the past through which the researcher hopes to achieve a better understanding of the present institutions, practices and issues in education (Borg & Gall, 1983).

#### **3.2 Sources of data**

The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Data is anything given or admitted as a fact on which a reference is based. It is anything actual or assumed, used as basis for reckoning (Oso & Onen, 2008). Primary sources of data are those described items that are original to the problem under study. They have a direct contact with those events under reconstruction. In this research much of the primary materials were obtained from various archives namely; National Archives of the Government of Kenya and the University of Nairobi libraries. At the Kenya National Archives, the researcher found various documents which provided primary sources of data. At the University of Nairobi libraries, the researcher visited

Jomo Kenyatta Library at the main campus and Kikuyu Campus Library and found dissertations and books relevant to the study.

Interviews were also employed after documentation of archival materials to obtain primary information that was suitable to supplement the gaps in the archival materials and also to validate the documentary evidence that was classified as primary sources. The categories of people who were interviewed included five male and five female elders. The selection of the people interviewed was done on purposive sampling method. This means that the researcher consciously decided who was included in the sample. Those chosen were charged to have information that was a representative or typical of the entire population (Oso & Onen, 2008).

Secondary sources of data were also used. According to Borg and Gall, (1983) secondary sources are those in which the person giving description of a given event was not present when the event took place but only received his/her description from another who may not have necessarily observed the said event directly. In this case books were used. Others included unpublished articles, academic dissertations and published materials which included books and journals some of which are listed in the bibliography. These materials were obtained mainly from the University of Nairobi libraries at the main campus and the Kikuyu Campus.

### **3.3 Procedures of data collection**

The researcher started by visiting the National commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and obtained a research permit. The researcher then proceeded to visit local archives to search for primary sources of data. These included The Kenya National archives and the University of Nairobi libraries at the main campus and Kikuyu Campus after which findings were recorded. At these places, the researcher got documentary sources. Documentary

sources examined for this study included both primary and secondary sources obtained from archives and libraries. Documentary sources provided records about indigenous education and socio-cultural activities in Kenya's Maasailand.

The researcher also carried out interview sessions with some key informants. The researcher travelled to Maasailand where she held interviews using interview schedules with male and female elders at three different areas. The study area consisted of three research sites namely: Lele among the Matapato sub-ethnic group, Ngamata among the Purko sub-ethnic group and Iseuri among the Kankere sub-ethnic group. The selection of the respondents was based on purposive sampling. The targeted population consisted of male and female elders. The selection of the respondents was based on age.

The elders were selected because they were custodians of tradition knowledge in the Maasai society. The sessions enabled the researcher to collect the information that could not be directly observed to clarify some issues under discussion. These interviews were important as they filled up the information gaps created by the inadequacy of the records. Interviews were found ideal because they allowed the researcher to gain control of questioning and also obtain historical information (Oso & Onen, 2008).

To help the researcher to collect data especially from illiterate respondents, three research assistants were identified and trained, one for the Lele Site, another for Ngamata and the other for Iseuri Site. The basic qualifications were that they had completed form four and were attending or had attended post-secondary educational institutions. In addition, they had to be familiar with the local people and environment, show confidence, and display enthusiasm. The

assistants also had to be articulate speakers of both Maasai language and English and have good writing skills.

Archival and library search was another technique that was used to collect data for this study. This technique focused on the search and the study of documentary sources and materials that illuminated past life and activities of Kenyan Maasai. Data obtained through interviews was supplemented and corroborated with data from documentary sources. Documentary sources examined for this study included both primary and secondary sources obtained from the University of Nairobi Libraries at the main campus and Kikuyu Campus and The Kenya National Archive. They included books, unpublished articles, academic dissertations and published materials which included journals.

### **3.4 Evaluation of data**

The sources of data were evaluated before the data collected was accepted as historical evidence for the study. In this regard the sources of data were exposed to internal and external criticism. External criticism aimed at evaluating the nature of the source to establish their originality while internal criticism was applied to establish the accuracy and worthiness of the information (Borg & Gall, 1983).

The external criticism as used for this study was to ascertain that the documents used were original and not forgeries. This therefore involved a careful scrutiny of the authors' characteristics and qualifications to establish their abilities as reporters of events in question. Factors and conditions that influenced the production of those documents were examined. Internal criticism on the other hand aimed at ascertaining the truthfulness of the information contained in the documents. This was done by examining the competence of the authors or

reporters of the said facts being reported and lastly whether their reports are in agreement with other available information on the same topic available by different people who also witnessed those events (Koul, 1984).

### **3.5 Data Analysis and presentation**

The data was accepted as historical evidence after being verified and validated. The evidence was analyzed qualitatively. In qualitative analysis the researcher describes the historical fact in a systematic way to come up with useful conclusions and recommendations (Sifuna, 1995). The researcher perused through the collected data and identified information that was relevant to the research questions and objectives. Then the researcher developed a coding system based on the samples of collected data (Koul, 1984; Sifuna, 1995). Kombo& Tromp, 2009; the outcome of the analysis was presented descriptively as research findings of the study that was grouped into chapters. Based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations for further study were made.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE MAASAI: THEIR ORIGIN AND ORGANISATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the origin of the Maasai people briefly as an essential background to the study of the indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai. The researcher shall discuss the social, political and economic organization of the Maasai.

#### 4.2 Historical background of the Maasai

Maasai legends and folktales tell much about the origin of present-day Maasai beliefs. These stories include their ascent from a crater, the emergence of the first Maasai prophet-magician (*Laibon*), the killing of an evil giant (*Oltatuani*) who raided Maasai herds, and the deception by Olonana of his father to obtain the blessing reserved for his older brother, Senteu (Bentsen, 1989). For the sake of this study, the researcher shall limit herself to the origin story according to Kipury (1983) who notes that the Maasai originated from somewhere in the north at a place called *Ende-e-kerio* (the scarp of Kerio). Although many scholars have referred to this place as the south-eastern region of present day Lake Turkana, some oral sources suggest that it may have been somewhere further north, in the present day Sudan at the Bahr-El-Ghazel valley.

Kipury (1983) and Bentsen (1989) agree that the Maasai migration southwards ensued after a dry spell. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the present day maa-speaking peoples have occupied the region from near Mt. Marsabit in northern Kenya to Kiteto in Central Tanzania a distance of about 700 miles from north to south, and about 200 miles from east to west. The Maa languages are a group of closely related Eastern Nilotic dialects spoken in parts of Kenya and

Tanzania. Maa- speakers in Kenya comprise of the Maasai, Samburu, Njemps and groups of the Dorobo neighboring the Maasai (Kipury, 1983).

Spear, (1993) and Bentsen, (1989) agree that one origin myth reveals much about present-day Maasai relations between the sexes. It holds that the Maasai descended from two equal and complementary tribes, one consisting strictly of females, and the other of males. The women's tribe, the *Moroyok*, raised antelopes, including the eland, which the Maasai claim to have been the first species of cattle. Instead of cattle, sheep, and goats, the women had herds of gazelles. Zebras transported their goods during migrations, and elephants were their devoted friends, tearing down branches and bringing them to the women who used them to build homes and corrals. The elephants also swept the antelope corrals clean. However, while the women bickered and quarreled, their herds escaped. Even the elephants left them because they could not satisfy the women with their work.

According to the same myth, Spear and Bentsen agree that the *Morwak*—the men's tribe—raised cattle, sheep, and goats. The men occasionally met women in the forest. The children from these unions would live with their mothers, but the boys would join their fathers when they grew up. When the women lost their herds, they went to live with the men, and, in doing so, gave up their freedom and their equal status. From that time, they depended on men, had to work for them, and were subject to their authority.

Modern history on the other hand has it that the ancestors of the Maasai (or more properly Maa-speakers) came to East Africa from southern Sudan sometime during the first millennium AD. They settled in what is now Kenya and Tanzania, and continue to live there today. By the early nineteenth century the Maasai community was the most powerful community in Kenya due to

the activities of the morans. Their power declined due to internal feuds between the Maasai sub-groups (the Purko and the Kwavi) and also due to drought and famine. The Purko were pastoralists while the Kwavi practiced crop farming. At the height of their power they lived in and on either side of the Rift, occupying an area stretching from Lake Baringo in the north to central Tanzania in the south (Homewood and Rodgers, 1991).

### **4.3 Political organization**

The traditional Maasai system of government was decentralized with every age set of every section (*Oloshon*) having its own elected political as well as ritual leaders. A section is a subgroup of the Maasai with a unified political, social and cultural identity (Grandin, 1991). While the political leaders presided over meetings and secular functions, ritual leaders officiated at religious rituals. All these leaders were elected during the *moran* hood stage, and retain their positions all through their lives. The Maasai political organization was therefore based on the series of age sets. An age set is a recognized and sometimes an organized group consisting of persons often male only who were of approximately the same age (Radcliffe-Brown, 1929).

Age sets formed part of political structure in which clan systems were involved. Vavra (1991) noted that as each boy got circumcised he was incorporated into a generational category or age set. He and his cohorts passed through the stages of warrior hood (*moran*), junior elder, senior elder and retired elder, each stage lasting about 15 years. The senior elder age set had the primary responsibility for the traditional administration in Maasai land. Junior elders carried out the instructions of the senior elders. The warriors on the other hand provided security for the community.

The respondent (Kisimpol, Oral Interview (O.I), 22.11.2015) asked on the procedure of belonging to a given age set revealed that every Maasai belonged from birth to a certain age-set which determines his social life, status and the task required of him. The first big step is the circumcision ceremony (*Emorata*), the crossing over from boyhood to manhood. After the circumcision ceremony, they became *morans* and were from then on warriors. They then passed through the other age sets which categorized them till old age. The interviewees revealed that the categories included the following:

#### **4.3.1 Laiyoni**

These were the uncircumcised boys of the Maasai. Their duties entailed herding the goats daily: taking the animal to the waterholes, protecting the animal against thieves and predators and undertaking training from the old people. From the age of 8 years, they were given the responsibility of herding the cattle. They were not allowed to keep any engagements with girls and were fully subordinate to the authority by their fathers. This changed when they were circumcised at the age of between 10 and 18. They were then referred to as warriors or *morans*.

#### **4.3.2 Moran (Konrianga)**

This group comprised of young warriors. Their duties were to protect the kraal and their families against predators and raids. They were supposed to be constantly on the look out for fertile areas and it was up to them to organize the move to these new areas. They were allowed to take up relationships with girls who had not undergone clitoridectomy in maasai language referred to as *endito*. They were also allowed to move freely attending distance ceremonies without the permission of the father. Afterwards the *moran* was allowed to marry. Each man was entitled to several wives.

### **4.3.3 King'onde**

This was the group of senior warriors. Their work was to help the *moran* to protect the kraal and take care of project solution and problem solving. They were also god-fathers (*ol-piron*) to the *moran* and kept them under control as they often provoked unintentional incidents in neighboring villages or with authorities.

### **4.3.4 Makaa (till 50 years) and seuri (till 60 years)**

These were old gentlemen (junior elders). They looked after the apprenticeships of the younger generation and were there as reliable contact people for any questions; they were resource people to the young men behind them. They provided security to the families and looked after the essential interests of the clan. They also maintained the preservation of the classes and more importantly the continuity of the Maasai culture.

### **4.3.5 Meshuki**

This group comprised of the chiefs (senior elders). They remained in the kraal and were taken to be wise contact persons by all women and boys. They had the right stay at home and rest. They were exempted from carrying out any physical duties. The *Meshuki* were actively involved in any decision-making and had the last word. They often owned status symbols in the form of wildebeests' tails and wooden staffs (*eng'udi*). They were greeted by children and *morans* with heads stooped as a sign of respect where by the senior elder then touched the person's head with his hand.

According to Saitoti (1986), these age-sets elected their leaders. For example, the *olauoni* or *olotoni* was the elected ritual leader of the senior military age-set. Oloibon kitok was elected the ritual expert who came from the *engidoji* sub-clan and attained his influence within the tribe and sometimes outside it due to his strong personal reputation. Apart from their respective roles in

circumcision ceremonies, they also sanctioned plans of war or raiding proposed by the military age-set. The oloiboni also directed the *eunoto* ceremony which promoted junior military age-set to the status of senior soldiers.

The oloiboni constituted an isolated group. They were all members of the same sub-clan and were avoided by members of other sub-clans out of the fear of their supernatural powers. They did not belong to age-sets and were felt to owe allegiance to no particular clan. According to Jacobs (1965), Maasai commonly compared their oloibon to an adopted orphan boy.

Since age-sets were recruited and promoted on basis of biological age, their corporate ascent to the various levels of age grades was kept in line by a relatively fixed cycle of age-set ceremonies. The important age-set ceremonies were validated by ritual figures whose authority originated from outside the age-set system itself. The age-set system may be characterized as a self-perpetuating system that was highly regularized and difficult to alter in its operation. As long as the young male population resided within the age-set area and their biological age advanced, sufficient pressure within the society was created for the formation of a new set and the promotion of the sets in existence (Jacobs, 1965).

The life of women differed dramatically from that of men. They didn't have much power among the Maasai community (Naishoo, O.I., 23.11.2015). The interviewees further revealed that leadership majorly lied in the hands of men in the age-set system. When a woman was married, she automatically joined the age group of her husband. After marriage, they were responsible for the raising of the children and the preparing of the girls already at an early age for the life of a wife. From the early age of 15 to 18 years, the young girls helped the mothers and grandmothers in all tasks. The political organization of the Maasai was important to this study because

indigenous education of the Maasai was offered differently at different levels content wise. Even the teachers changed as one moved from one level to the next.

#### **4.4 Social organization**

The smallest unit in the Maasai social setup was the nuclear family (*Olmarei*) which was made up of the father, the mothers (because most Maasai men are polygamous) and the children of all the wives. Grandin (1991), describes the household as the primary unit of production. It is the centre of livestock ownership and is essentially autonomous in its decision making. Each married man had a gate used by his wives and dependants. The gate carries the name of a man and it is the symbol of his autonomy as a cattle owner and a founder of a family.

Talle (1987) states that the Maasai households lived together in large compounds called *Enkang* (boma). Homewood and Rodgers (1991) describe the *enkang* as the Maasai ideal, allowing for co-operation over grazing and herding decisions. It was inhabited by several families normally 6 to 12 who joined together on basis of common interests in the economic exploitation of their immediate vicinity (Jacobs, 1965; Njoka, 1979). The Maasai were divided into patrilineal clans called *inchomoto*. The Inchomoto were further subdivided into sub clans called *Olgilata*. An important function of the clan system was to regulate marriage.

Bomas were grouped into larger units called neighborhoods (*elatia*) which controlled local resources such as watering facilities and grazing land. A neighborhood was made up of a cluster of bomas usually a kilometer away from each other. Each neighborhood was centered round a permanent water point and although membership varied over time, it was made up of people who resided there (Grandin, 1991).

Neighborhoods were in turn grouped into localities called *Enkutoto* in Maasai language which controlled enough wet and dry season grazing and water resources to support their population in all times (Jacobs, 1965). According to Southgate and Hulme, (2000), each neighborhood had its own local governance structure composed of councils of elders. Each male Maasai belonged to an area in which he had a right to reside. This focused on men as women moved to their husband's home upon marriage and had no right to cattle ownership.

Potkanski (1993), Grandin, (1991) and Ndagala, (1982) agree that the localities were further enlarged to form territorially based sections (*Iloshon*). Spencer (1990) described sections as self contained ecological units, and Kipury referred to them as natural communities (1989). Grandin, (1991), noted that these were sub tribes of the Maasai with a unified political and administrative structure. The territories include; the Purko, Matapato, Kankere, Keekonyokie, Loodokilani, Ildamat, Dal el kutuk and Kaptiei. Each section was made up of several families. Each section had a fixed territory that belonged to members collectively. The territory of each section was large enough to provide adequate grazing in normal and dry seasons but not during extreme droughts.

The Maasai as a whole formed a distinctive social unit sharing a culture, language and social structure. The freedom of movement of a producer and his house hold declined with increasing size of administrative unit. While it was easy to cross from one boma to another, sectional boundaries were difficult to cross even in drought times. If allowed to cross into another section one was to remain there for as short time as possible (Jacobs, 1965).

Understanding the social organization of the Maasai also helps one to understand the aims, content and teachers of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai. The social organization

helped understand the social set up of the Maasai which in turn helped us understand who the child interacted with right from childhood. The family being the smallest social unit shaped the character of the child a great deal and it was the first learning institution of the child.

#### **4.5 Economic organization**

The Maasai were essentially livestock keepers. They kept herds of cattle (traditional shot-horned zebu), sheep, goats and donkeys for transport. They lived on their livestock's milk and also meat and blood. In Kenya, the Maasai lived in kraal camps in the savannah lands in southern Kenya. Cattle were the centre of the Maasai life providing their food. Their by-product; skin was used for clothes and dung to plaster their houses (Talle, 2007).

Kisimpol (O.I., 22.11.2015) revealed that the Maasai used livestock for subsistence, cash income and social aspects. Livestock were also important assets in marriage and rituals as well as paying fines. All these cemented social bonds and ties. Sankok (O.I., 22.11.2015) agreed with Kisimpol that although sheep and goats were frequently slaughtered for food, Cattle were reserved for rituals and ceremonial feasts which were quite numerous in the lives of the people. Livestock were also used as prestige, for instance one commanded high respect in the community if he owned many cattle than anyone else in the area. The Maasai were regarded as poor when they owned less than 100 cattle or medium when one owns between 100 and 500 cattle. Those owning more than 500 cattle were regarded as rich (Anderson, 1995).

As Fosbrook (1948) put it, the Maasai had a tradition of supporting each other. The livelihood of the poor household was supported through a culturally determined coping mechanism locally known as *ewoloto*. This is socially designed subsistence strategy based on a mutual support system. Under this system, poor families were granted cattle or paid in kind after having herded

cattle of other households. There were also instances where such families were given cattle to look after and use their milk

Traditionally, the Maasai diet consisted of six basic foods: meat, blood, milk, fat, honey, and tree bark (Nestel, 1989). Wild game except the eland, chicken, fish, and salt were forbidden. Naipanoi (O.I., 21.11.2015) one of the respondents asked on the diet of the Maasai, agreed with Nestel that for the Maasai, eating chicken and fish was shameful as they had in their possession big and prestigious animals like cattle, goats and sheep. According to the respondent, the Maasai despised fish because it stings. Allowable meats included roasted and boiled beef, goat, and mutton. Both fresh and curdled milk were drunk.

Animal blood was drunk at special times. Blood was given to a woman who has given birth (*entomononi*), to a circumcised person (*esipoloi*) and to the sick person (*oltamueyiai*) while recovering or an accident victim. Nkurunah (O.I., 23.11.2015) also revealed that blood was also drunk by elders (*ilamerak*) to alleviate intoxication and hangovers. It was either to be tapped warm from the throat of a cow, or drunk in coagulated form. It can also be mixed with fresh or soured milk, or drunk with therapeutic bark soups (*motori*). It was from blood that the Maasai obtained salt, a necessary ingredient in the human diet. People of delicate health and babies ate liquid sheep's fat to gain strength.

Kisimpol and Sankok (O.I., 22.11.2015) revealed that honey was obtained from the Dorobo tribe and was a prime ingredient in mead, a fermented beverage that only elders were allowed to drink. In recent times though, the respondents confirmed that with the changing times, fermented maize (corn) with millet yeast or a mixture of fermented sugar and baking powder have become the primary ingredients of mead.

The Maasai generally ate two meals a day, in the morning and at night (Fosbrook, 1948). They had a dietary prohibition against mixing milk and meat. They drank milk for ten days—as much as they wanted—and then ate meat and bark soup for several days in between. Some exceptions to this routine existed. For warriors, however, the sole source of true nourishment was cattle. They consumed meat in their forest hideaways (*olpul*), usually near a shady stream far from the observation of women. Their preferred meal was a mixture of meat, blood, and fat (*munono*), which was thought to give them great strength.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the social, political and economic organization of the Maasai community. This was important because the social, political and economic organization contributed a lot to the type of education a community passed down to its young ones. These Organizations helped us understand the major ways of life of the Maasai people. It was in these organizations that the child was supposed to be molded to fit as a member of the society; therefore, understanding the social, political and economic organizations helped in understanding the type of education a child was given since he/she was supposed to be raised to conform with the norms of the society he/she is born in.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **AIMS AND CONTENT OF INDIGENEOUS EDUCATION AS PRACTICED BY MAASAI**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher will examine the aims of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai. It will also analyze what the children were taught in terms of content for both boys and girls. The content will include what the children were taught before initiation, after initiation during the seclusion period and after the seclusion period.

#### **5.2 Aims of African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai**

Maasai Indigenous Education (MIE) aimed at preparing the young generation to become useful adults in household, village and tribe. Its purpose was to bring up an individual as a responsible person in the society. This was done through transmission of attitudes, values, skills, social standing and the various customs of the society to the younger generation (Naikuni, O.I., 8.12.2015).

Maasai indigenous education also aimed at equipping children on how to perform social function by respecting their adults and other people in the society. For instance, in the village which they belonged, children learnt different survival skills. Boys learnt from an early age how to herd animals and girls learnt how to take care of the home by doing house hold chores assisted by their mothers, older sisters and grandmothers (Sankok, O.I., 22.11.2015).

In addition, Maasai indigenous education prepared individuals for employment in their own environment because it was believed that people must live. To this effect, it taught children how to find food through herding. Maasai indigenous people believed that shelter was very important

for people to live in hence construction of houses was encouraged and some women developed skills in building since it was the duty of women to build houses in the Maasai community (Kisimpol, O.I., 22.11.2015).

The Maasai people also believed in good morality, that was how to live. Education tended to focus on instructing children how to live in order to be accepted in the society. Accepted values such as honesty, generosity, diligence and hospitality were part of education. Children were expected to conform with the moral laws set by the society failure to which punishment was administered to the individual who conducted him/herself contrary to expectations of the society. Therefore, education aimed at bringing up men and women who were morally upright (Naipanoi, O.I., 21.11.2015).

Maasai indigenous education was an agent of transmitting culture to the young generation. The educators taught children on societal norms within their own society. Education aimed at producing an individual who respected and adhered to the values and norms of the society. This education was for everyone in the society. It existed for the purpose of strengthening the Maasai community. The aim of Maasai indigenous education was to teach the accepted standards and beliefs governing good behavior, creating unity and general agreement among the people (Nailantei, O.I., 21.11.2015).

There was also political education which led to political stability. Society was based first of all on family relations, the smallest social unit was the homestead in which a child learnt how to relate with the father and mother and the larger extended family since most Maasai men were polygamous in nature. These children were also taught how to recognize leaders at all levels; military, civil, religious and judicial who dealt with matters affecting the people in their areas.

Education therefore aimed at bringing up children who were submissive to all forms of authority (Kisimpol, O.I. 22.11.2015).

This type of education had religious teachings centered on a supreme being who the Maasai called *Enkai*. The young people had to learn when and why spirits of the departed had to be appeased and how ceremonial purification had to be performed. The value of certain charms and protective medicine were also taught. Education therefore aimed at bringing up children who were God fearing and respected the Maasai deities and ritual leaders (Memusi, O.I., 11.12.2015).

The physical environment influenced the aims of Maasai indigenous education and content of the curriculum. This shows that what was taught was meant to assist the child to adjust and adapt to the environment so that the child could exploit and derive benefits from it. Education aimed at producing children who appreciated the environment and utilized it for survival by being a good pastoralist. There child was therefore expected to appreciate pastoralism and love animals especially cattle which the Maasai believed was God given according to the myth they explained earlier in the study (Naishoo, O.I., 23.11. 2015 and Memusi, O.I., 11.12.2015).

In addition all the respondents agreed that the principle aim of Maasai indigenous education was to prepare an individual for self reliance. There was early introduction to adult life from the age of six years. This was to free the child from depending on the parents. To this effect, education was based on the assumption that an individual can participate in community life and benefit from the education it had to offer. Learners were given knowledge for survival through skills such as herding, carpentry, hunting and farming.

### **5.3 Content of African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai**

Education began in the family circle where the child was born. As the child matured he/she learnt to work with affection. Children were taught to be accountable for their actions. When children acquired some medium of languages, they learnt the manner of respect and greetings from elders. Young Maasai children greeted their elders by bowing down and giving them their heads as a sign of respect. In return an elder touched the head and greeted the child verbally (Naipanoi and Memusi, O.I., 11.12.2015).

The socialization of the child was monitored by the parents. Through childhood, the child's knowledge and performance of duties were checked by close relatives and neighbors. One was expected to be disciplined and follow rules of behavior in the community. The child also learnt names of members of the family and neighbors, plants, animals and insects with the assistance of older children and adults (Nailantei, O.I., 21.11.2015).

Children in the Maasai community were also taught how to live and work as useful members of the community. Education broadened after initiation. Boys learnt how to look after livestock far away in the fields away from the homesteads. They were required to count animals each of which they were expected to know by name. They ensured every morning and evening that none of the animals was lost. They were also taught how to set traps for wild animals and were allowed to go hunting when they became of age. Girls on the other hand learnt how to do household chores assisted by their mothers (Memusi, O.I., 11.12.2015).

### **5.3.1 Girls' education**

All female respondents agreed that much of the learning for girls took place after undergoing clitoridectomy. They further revealed that after incision, girls were put in seclusion where they were taught by their mothers and other older women in the community.

#### **5.3.1.1 Domestic education**

All female respondents on the other hand agreed that girls learnt; household chores, how to take care of children, how to build a house and also how to be good and submissive wives to their husbands. Girls were also expected to be good cooks to their husbands. They were therefore taught how to prepare delicious meals for their families (Naserian, O.I., 9.12.2015). Girls also learnt how to milk cows, fetch firewood, fetch water, pick and clean gourds from vines to make containers and decorate them with leather and beads. Milk, blood, water, honey and corn meal were stored in them. They also learnt how to make beads and make jewelers including arm and leg bracelets and emulate (Naipanoi, O.I., 21.11.2015).

#### **5.3.1.2 Family education**

Girls were taught on the responsibility of a married woman. They were taught on how to take care of their husbands because they were expected to get married immediately after they had recovered. They were also taught on home management skills which included taking care of family property. Girls were also taught to be submissive to their husbands and to respect them at all instances (Nailantei, O.I., 11.12.2015). The respondents also revealed that the girls also learnt how to relate with the age set members of their husbands. This was because the girl became a member of her husband's age group immediately after marriage. They were supposed to treat the age-set members of their husbands with respect just as they treated their husbands. The girls were also taught on how to relate with the extended family of their husbands. They were taught

to respect their in-laws and co-wives if any. Quarrels among co-wives were not tolerated. This is because co-wives were expected to live harmony and assist each other in times of need (Naikuni, O.I., 8.11.2015). The first wife was to be respected by all the rest.

### **5.3.1.3 Respect and taboos**

The child learnt complex relationship existing among members of the clan and the community at large. The girl child was taught to observe various taboos especially concerning health and morality. For example, girls were supposed to get out of the house when their fathers got in. This was meant to avoid close contact between a father and his daughters to avoid incest (Naipanoi, O.I., 21.11.2015). It was also a sign of respect to give room for the parents to talk. Children were also expected to work hard and show initiative in all their social undertakings (Lekutit, O.I., 9.12.2015).

Girls were also taught to respect their elders. Naishoo (O.I., 23.11.2015) remembers the cautious words of her mother, “My daughter, don’t ever call anybody older than you by name, you will become numb.” This was a warning to almost all the girls in the Maasai community to help them respect the elders and give them their place in the community. Girls were therefore taught to address their elders in the right way. They therefore were not allowed to greet their elders by shaking hands but by stooping down and giving them their heads as a sign of respect.

### **5.3.1.4 Hygiene**

Personal hygiene also made part of the subject matter taught to girls. According to Memusi, (O.I., 11.12.2015), girls were supposed to maintain personal hygiene by cleaning their bodies regularly and keeping their clothes clean. They were also supposed to look beautiful. They were therefore taught on how to decorate their bodies by putting on bracelets which were traditionally

made by experts in that field. Their homesteads were also supposed to be kept clean. The girls were therefore taught by elderly women on how to keep their homesteads clean and the importance of doing so.

After the seclusion period when the girl had fully recovered, she was married immediately to a man already betrothed to her (Naipanoi, O.I., 21.11.2015 and). All female respondents agreed that education of girls did not end when the girl got married, it continued even after marriage. (Memusi, O.I., 11.12.2015) revealed that the girls continued receiving lessons from their mothers in-laws, husbands and older co-wives on family matters. This implies that education continued even after marriage. Lessons on how to take care of the home and property continued even after marriage. The husband was judged with the responsibility of teaching her wife on his likes and dislikes. The mother in-law and co-wives were charged with the responsibility of teaching the girl on how to take care of newly born babies. The girl was taught on the right food to give the child and on how to feed the baby. The girl was also taught some traditional herbs which were helpful to the baby.

Boys on the other hand learnt little during the seclusion period (Kisimpol, O.I., 22.11.2015). Much of the learning of boys took place at the manyatta where boys went immediately after initiation. A manyatta was special kind of buildings erected intentionally to host young boys after initiation and train them on moranhood (Naikuni, O.I., 8.12.2015).

### **5.3.2 Education in the manyatta**

The moran system was a Maasai institution that arose from deliberate pedagogical processes related to warrior hood among other subjects. Such processes entailed indigenous learning and training experiences, which emphasised the importance of the institution as a significant aspect

of Maasai identity. It was a stage into which male Maasai youths entered soon after concluding their circumcision rites. The *moran* system took six or seven years (Ronoh, 2008). It was a significant period in Maasai social organization. It began immediately after one was circumcised until the period the initiate was ready to join the ranks of junior elders and eventual marriage.

Moran hood was a form of military organization which obliged all male population between the ages of about 17-30 to submit to a special discipline and to constitute a warrior class. Each generation comprised of two age groups: the right and the left each of which came into being when the young men were circumcised. They were usually 14-17 years of age at the time they were circumcised (Lekutit, O.I., 9.12.2015).

The right hand always preceded the left. The right hand and left hand were subsets of *moran* age groups which came into being preceding each other to make sure that moranhood was not left vacant. After the young men had completed the circumcision ceremonies which lasted up to two years, they for another five to seven years lived in special *manyattas* or warrior camps together with their mothers and other members of their families. In these warrior camps, the *morans* were taught by men of a senior age group on their responsibilities and roles in the community. Towards the end of the period, they held *Eunoto* ceremony when *morans* have their pigtailed cut off and with the drinking of milk, the *manyattas* are broken up and the young men become junior elders and settle down and marry. The left hand followed the right but is formed before the right was broken up so that there was always an overlap (Ronoh, 2008).

A year or two after the left hand had in their turn drunk milk the two hands join together and became the ruling age grade of the tribe. At this time, they were usually between 30 and 35 years of age when they took over and remained in power for about 15 years; that was while the other

cycle of the right and left was being completed. The activities practiced by *morans* were persistent and pleasurable. This was the time when one was expected to make wealth before joining the rank of elders. This stage was never left vacant because while one group graduated to become junior elders another one was there ready to take over as *morans*. On the other hand, the girls shortly after their initiation got married and merged into their husband's age-sets (Lekutit, O.I., 9.12.2015).

As observed above, *moranhoo*d was a stage in which all male initiates entered immediately after circumcision. Among the Maasai, the boys were circumcised every 10-15 years over the previous age-set and when the elders considered the time to be ripe for a new age grade to take over the functions of the *moran*. All boys aged about 14 years and above were circumcised and in one course became warriors (*morans*), the preceding age grade retired and became elders. Prior to circumcision, the boys were grouped together in preparation for circumcision. This stage took about four months. After circumcision, they were taken care of by their parents in order to heal. The ceremonies played an extremely important role in instilling loyalty to tribal traditions. After circumcision, the *morans* assembled in a *manyatta* where they received intense training and learning from the elderly men in the community. What they learnt in the *manyatta* included:

### **5.3.2.1 Civic education**

Various subjects were offered to male Maasai youth under the *moran* system. They were meant to enhance several values and develop certain skills among male Maasai youth. Indigenous Civic Education was taught which promoted and fostered patriotic values in Maasai youths. Through the subject, male Maasai youths learnt to be patriotic members of their community. Ronoh (2008) asserts that the *moran* training inculcated in male Maasai youth a distinct love for their society, a disposition which is marked by loyalty and readiness to defend it at all costs. Lekutit

and Naikuni (O.I., 8.12.2015), adds that at this stage, they were also taught to respect and obey their leaders. A few of them were selected to become age-set leaders and were specially trained on leadership styles and command. At this stage, the age-set spokesman (*ol-aiguenani*) and his assistant (*ol-otuno*) were chosen and obtained basic training on leadership and governance. Through the indigenous Civic Education offered during *moran* system, male Maasai youths learned the art of resolving conflicts and the skills of effective communication.

Boys learnt methods of defense against enemies. Raiding of cattle was also important between the Maasai and their neighbors such as the Gusii and Kikuyu. This was a way through which a young *moran* acquired wealth in readiness for marriage. After initiation young *morans* with their age group members learnt how to acquire wealth for themselves and the community by raiding the neighboring communities. At this stage *morans* were expected to acquire as much wealth as they could because after the *moran* stage that opportunity was not there since the *moran* now graduated to be an elder. Therefore, much of the learning for boys took place in the Manyatta after circumcision (Nkurunah, O.I., 23.11.2015 and Lekutit, O.I., 9.12.2015).

#### **5.3.2.2 Social and family life**

In the *moran* system, the young men also learnt social and family life. In this subject, the male Maasai youth learnt about Maasai ceremonies and virtues of corporate unity, comradeship, social cohesion and the principle of sharing. They also learnt gender relations and marital responsibilities including family life. From this subject, Maasai *morans* obtained lessons on corporate unity, comradeship and social cohesion based on mutual trust and cordial relationship to each other. In addition, the subject of social and family life enhanced the value of sharing among the *moran*. They learnt to share practically everything including food, water and company and at the later stage, even their wives (Metian, O.I., 9.12.2015).

The *morans* also learnt courtship and interpersonal relations. For instance, Maasai *morans* were taught the art of seduction as well as the technique of courting women. Other attitudes learnt in social and family life included the desire and yearning to fulfill the social responsibilities expected of them. In addition, the commitment to sharing was fostered in the *moran*. They learnt to commit themselves to the practice of sharing everything with the members of the age-set (Metian, O.I., 9.12.2015).

### **5.3.2.3 Economics**

At the *moran* system, the *morans* also learnt economics and other productive arts, as well as environmental studies. Ronoh (2008) established that with respect to economics, male Maasai youths were taught the importance of becoming rich in livestock ownership. In addition, they obtained skills on the sustenance and expansion of this wealth. Older members of the society took it upon themselves to instruct young boys and youths how to carry out activities related animal husbandry, for example herding, identification of nutritious grass and as well as treatment of diseases. According to all male respondents, under *moran* system, male Maasai youths were given elaborate training about facets of animal husbandry.

All the male respondents noted that indigenous animal husbandry enhanced core attitudes in the Maasai community. For instance, it developed a strong commitment to livestock production as a distinctly Maasai activity. The subject also enhanced attachment to livestock keeping. According to Sankok, (O.I., 22.11.2015), Kisimpol, (O.I., 22.11.2015) Lekutit, (O.I., 9.12.2015) and Naikuni (O.I., 8.12.2015), animal husbandry inculcated in Maasai learners a unique desire to participate in pastoral activities from an early age. This implies that in the traditional settings, the Maasai people deliberately educated their children and youths about the knowledge and skills based on their economic mainstay.

Through the economics, Maasai *morans* promoted and fostered values, skills and attitudes that enhanced the acquisition of cattle wealth and management of livestock. For example, they learnt how to organize and actualize cattle raids to acquire cattle. All the male informants agreed that the Maasai *morans* were taught that it was at this stage that one was expected to acquire as much wealth as he could through cattle raids. Some of the animals acquired at this stage could be used to pay bride price later in life when the *moran* married and the rest will be kept for family use. In livestock management, they were trained how to control the breeding habits of livestock especially sheep and goats.

Through the medium of productive work, Maasai children and youths learnt to be prudent by carefully identifying their advantageous opportunities and avoiding occupational risks. They were expected to learn as they worked. Maasai children and youth learnt to be responsible and productive members of the society. Economic and productive activities in Maasai society provided very valuable learning opportunities and educational experiences that were instrumental to support the economic structure. Participation in such activities led to enhancement of the means of survival in the society.

#### **5.3.2.4. Environmental studies**

Another subject offered to the *morans* was environmental studies. In this subject, Male Maasai youths learnt about plants and animals, various land features and their importance, different human and bovine diseases and their treatment, quality of pasture as well as the significance of salt licks and saline springs. This study found out that Maasai people comprehensively learnt a lot through their indigenous ecological/environmental knowledge. Evidently, the pastoral Maasai's deep knowledge of the living components of the ecosystem allowed him to exploit the ecosystem sustainably (Sankok, O.I., 22.11.2015).

The importance of geographical features such as highlands, plains and other water bodies was also taught. As observed by (Kisimpol, O.I., 22.11.2015), Maasai children and youth were taught the importance of the plains (ol-purkel) as wet grazing zones and mountains and highlands as wet grazing zones and mountains and highlands (o-supuko) as dry season grazing areas as well as strategic points for defense and security of their land, property and people (Lekutit, O.I., 9.12.2015). During rainy seasons, livestock were driven to the plains where there was plenty of pasture, water, saline springs and salt licks; during the dry seasons, livestock were moved to forested highlands which were bound with grass and water.

Indigenous knowledge and skills on herbal medicine were elaborately developed on male Maasai youths during the *moran* system. The youths were trained to identify various trees and shrubs with medicinal values. In addition, they were trained to diagnose diseases, prescribe treatment and prepare appropriate herbal concoctions. Herbal concoctions were administered as digestive and excitants, especially for Maasai warriors (Kisimpol, O.I., 22.11.2015). Moranhood was viewed as part and parcel of the Maasai culture. It was an important stage which every Maasai male child had to pass through before becoming an elder but it is quietly dying as many people are get educated.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter examined the aims of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai community of Kenya. It was discovered that there were many aims but the main one was to prepare young ones to become useful adults in the community. The content of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai was also analyzed. It was also discovered that since this type of education was gender based, the content also differed according to gender. Girls and boys were taught separately and the content matter also differed.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **METHODS AND TEACHERS OF INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AS PRACTICED BY THE MAASAI**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher will examine the methods and teachers of African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai. Methods of teaching included the formal and informal methods of teaching among the Maasai. The teachers refer to the people who passed down this knowledge from one generation to the next.

#### **6.2 Methods of teaching indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai**

Rodney (1972) noted that indigenous education was both informal and formal in all African communities. The Maasai community was not an exception as revealed by Lekutit (O.I., 9.12.2015). He explained that methods used in teaching African indigenous education among the Maasai community were both informal and formal.

##### **6.2.1 Informal methods of teaching**

Informal education was a lifelong process and involved the acquisition of values, attitudes, knowledge and skills relevant to the day to day affairs of society (Ocitti, 1973). This type of development was stimulated by study through observation and participation of the role of the extended family and the community as a whole, of its accumulated wisdom as translated through proverbs, riddles, songs, legends and folklores.

Observation and imitation were used in teaching young ones in the Maasai community. Informal education included involving children in productive work and observation. A child was expected to learn largely by seeing and imitating. From an early age the Maasai child was taught to accept,

to value and to reproduce the behavior, customs and sentiments of the society (Samperu, O.I., 22.11.2015). Education was strictly enculturation of the traditional set of habits, attitudes and behavioral codes. Development towards adulthood proceeded strictly according to custom and social tradition.

The child's education also concentrated on what the child ought to become. What was expected was a mature adult who had to take his rightful position among the group. The most common method that was employed in teaching the young traditional ways was imitation (Memusi, O.I., 11.12.2015). A child was expected to learn by seeing and imitating. This method of instruction included involving children in productive work where children worked as they observed what the elder or teacher did. Learning the art of blacksmithing which he enjoys now, Nkurunah (O.I., 23.11.2015) recalls the words of his grandfather who taught him, "Son, you need to watch what I am doing carefully because tomorrow I expect you to do it without my help."

There was little in the material equipment of indigenous society which the child could not acquire through imitation (Datta, 1984). This was echoed by Memusi (O.I., 11.12.2013) who explained that dances and songs that accompanied learning were learned by observation and imitation. Children observed how the elders and their peers did it and later copied the same in their presentations. Together with the moments of imitation went the deliberate educational measures taken by the adults in the community to make sure that the child was put well on his way to adulthood worthy of the tribal tradition. Parents and other adults in the group were always ready to assist the natural imitative tendencies of the young child.

Folklores and legends were extensively used among the Maasai people as a method of teaching young ones (Samperu, O.I., 11.12.2015). A great variety of stories and legends were told. On the

whole they praised virtues and condemned stubbornness and faults. Good deeds were rewarded, bad deeds were met with due punishment. The idea was to help the youngsters grasp the prevailing ethical standards of the tribe.

Folklores among the Maasai were based primarily on day to day happenings. Most of these bore very close relationships to life. Much of the ethical teachings children received came from folklores, most of which had happy endings and involved triumph over difficulties. Virtues such as communal unity, hard work, honesty, courage and conformity were reflected in many of the folk tales. By listening to folktales children learnt a lot about human follies, faults and weaknesses. The usual time for narrating folklores was the evening by the fireside. According to Kisimpol (O.I., 22.11.2015) folklores were narrated in the evening to keep children alert as they waited for supper. Evenings were also appropriate because the day's activities had come to an end so working time was not interfered with.

On teaching virtues, Lekutit (O.I., 9.12.2015) recalled the folklore below which was mainly told to children to warn them against arrogance. The folklore encouraged children to embrace virtues like sympathy and understanding and overcome cruelty and arrogance. The folklore was called, "Girls of the knee."

Once upon a time there lived a cruel old man. His wife conceived but as was his habit, the old man did not like seeing her take a rest. As soon as she had completed one task, she was told to take on another. And no sooner had she completed the second task than she was commanded to take up yet another. This routine continued everyday from morning till night, so that the poor old woman though pregnant was kept on her feet each day until the early hours of the morning.

Many months went by. The woman persevered and kept working since her husband could not permit her to rest. She would wake up every morning before dawn to do the milking, after which she would lock up the calves in their pens. Having done this she would dash to the river to fetch water for the household. Later she could run to the forest to fetch firewood. It was also her duty to plaster the house. Every single job in the home was supposed to be her responsibility. As though that was not enough, she would be called upon to water the cattle while her husband rested at home. Overwhelmed with fatigue, she collapsed and died. She was seven months pregnant.

The morning after his wife died, the old man woke up with a large swelling on one knee. At first he thought it was a boil but the swelling grew bigger and heavier by the day until the old man could barely walk. “Since this boil is not coming to a head, am going to lance it come what may,” the old man said. As he lanced the boil, to his great surprise there, there emerged two adorable little girls. Amazed as he was to this strange occurrence, the old man was nevertheless delighted at the arrival of his twin daughters. He named one of his daughters Nasira and the other Naserian.

The old man brought up his daughters with a certain amount of difficulty. Whenever he went to fetch water or firewood, he strapped one child on his stomach and the other on his back. He also carried the children everywhere. He endured many difficulties but nevertheless succeeded in bringing up his daughters until they were big girls.

When they were big enough to be left on their own, the old man locked the girls in the house whenever he had to go out. They remained there until his return. When he came back, he would sing a song he had composed to alert his daughters. The song went as follows:

It had grown tender but would not burst

My daughters of the knee Nasira and Naserian

My beloved ones let me in.

On hearing the song, the children would immediately know it was their father and they would open the door for him. This went on for a long time. One day, some people from an enemy country came into the old man's village. They heard the voice of the two girls talking inside the house. They hid in the nearby bushes to await the father of the children whose voice they had heard. In the evening, the old man returned and sang his usual song:

It had grown tender but would not burst

My daughters of the knee, Naserian and Nasira

My beloved ones let me in.

The enemies listened to the old man's song. They spent the night in that village. Early the next morning, the old man took his cattle out grazing leaving the children locked up in the house. The enemies timed the old man, and on realizing that he was about to return home, they went to the door and sang the old man's song. The girls opened the door thinking it was their father. The enemies abducted the twin girls and went with them to their country.

The old man arrived soon after, but when he sang his usual song he received no response. Finding the door partly open, he entered only to find no one in the house. He realized that his children had been stolen. He conducted a search for them far and wide but to no avail. The old man had lost a wife and then his children because of his cruelty.

The Maasai also used proverbs and riddles in teaching. Proverbs and riddles formed a very important part of Maasai oral literature, each playing its role in the forming of the youngster. In proverbs a great deal of traditional wisdom and folklore was expressed. Proverbs were used wisely in ordinary conversations. Proverbs were the condensed wisdom of the great ancestors. In a proverb, one or two moral ideas were contained in a simple sentence. Old people and the parents used them in their dealings with children to convey precise moral lessons, warnings and advice, since they made greater impact on the mind than ordinary words (Kipury, 1983).

Nalamael (O.I., 11.12.2015) concurred with Kipury that proverbs in the Maasai community were used by elders when they wanted to warn, ridicule, correct and advice the young ones and not the other way round. This means that young people among the Maasai community were not allowed to use proverbs while addressing the elders. Different proverbs served different roles. This depended on the context at which they were used. Some were used to warn, others were used to educate and others to teach different values of the community. These values included hard work, cooperation and unity, obedience, respect and discipline among others. The following are examples of proverbs (*Ndung'eta-el-rasha*)

When teaching on cooperation and unity, this proverb was told to the children (Kisimpol, O.I., 22.11.2015).

*Menang'silig kewan.*

Facing backwards does not perform itself.

Meaning: a simple act like turning backwards has to be performed. The proverb emphasizes the importance of initiative and that of corporate action. Everyone had a part to play however small

it may be and therefore people were not supposed to ignore a small act for it is as essential as a big one.

Teaching on obedience and respect, Sankok (O.I., 22.11.2015) recalled the following proverb he was often told by his father:

*Memurata olaiyoni oota menye.*

He who has a father is still not circumcised

Meaning: A man will always be subordinate to his father and will still receive orders from him.

*Memut elukunya nabo eng'ene.*

One head does not consume all knowledge.

Meaning: There is limit to one person's knowledge. No one knows everything.

*Olapa oibor inkera.*

The children are the bright moon.

Meaning: Children bring pleasure and joy into the home.

Teaching on responsibility, the following proverb was told to children. It was meant to help children understand that no matter how difficult the responsibilities before hand were, they should not tire or loose hope. Giving this example, Naipanoi (O.I, 22.11.2015) recalled her late mother telling her that proverb when she was working very hard to provide for them while she was sick.

*Meyek olenkaina ilala lenyena.*

The elephant does not get tired of its tusks.

Meaning: A person carries his burdens without tiring.

Apart from proverbs, riddles were also used in teaching. Riddles were posed in form of questions, puzzles, phrases or statements devised to get unexpected or clever answers. Riddles used as questions or puzzles while teaching children were supposed to provoke critical thinking. They were mainly posed at the opening of each oral literature session to alert the audience usually children and to prepare them for evening's entertainment and learning (Kipury, 1983).

Apart from keeping the audience alert, riddles were also used to sharpen the mind. When a riddle was posed, the child was expected to reason and then take a decision on the correct answer (Sankok, 2015, O.I., 22.11.2016). Riddles among the Maasai community also served a number of other functions. They extended children's knowledge of various subjects such as the cause and effect of shapes, sizes, colors, lengths and numbers. The following are examples of riddles (*Iloyieta*) used to test knowledge of either numbers or colors:

*Q. Kidung'ang'ata bkari aare nimiking'amaro?*

The two of us cross the wilderness without talking to each other?

*Ans: Iyie oloip lino.*

You and your shadow.

*Q. Mugie ai naten ilasho?*

My brown one with speedy calves?

*Ans: Enkawuo o mbaa.*

The bow and arrow.

*Q: Anaa keidurrak nein nanyokie?*

They moved homes and the red one was born?

*Ans: Enkima.*

The fire.

Riddles were also used to teach the children on the importance of cooperation and communal co-existence (Nailantei, O.I. 21.11.2015). For example,

Q: *Olkiteng'lai otii erishata ool mang'ati?*

I have an ox which lives in the midst of enemies?

Ans: *Olng'ejep.*

The tongue.

This riddle was meant to help children understand that the tongue is found in the mouth and surrounded by teeth which are very sharp but they teeth do not harm the tongue. This means that the two parts of the body assist each other in their roles. Without the tongue, the teeth are useless.

Another aspect of oral literature that the Maasai used for teaching was use of songs. The Maasai had songs for various occasions. There were numerous folk songs with which children were associated with as they grew up which contained a lot of oral literature. Oral literature contained in songs gave the learner not only desired message but also equipped the individual with communication skills among other values (Kipury, (1983). There were many children's songs which were learnt, recited and sang by children during free time enabling them partly to gain a mastery of their mother tongue. Apart from the fun derived from them, they also helped to promote mental development of children.

Apart from children songs, there were also songs for different occasions such as naming, initiation and marriage. The initiation songs were used to cheer up the initiates and teach them of their future roles and also to rebuke on bad behaviors. The naming songs were used to congratulate the parents and to praise the new born (Metian, O.I., 9.12.2015).

Songs as a method of teaching indigenous education among the Maasai were taught through rote learning and repetition (Memusi, O.I., 11.12.2015). Songs and praises were to be learnt by heart and repeated time and again. Education measures in songs also included ridicule, threats, promises and reward normally in the form of praise.

The Maasai also used myths in teaching. Myths were regarded as tales imaginatively describing or accounting on a natural phenomena. They also included tales about gods or things which were beyond the understanding of men. They were tales about imaginary events, tales which tried to explain the beginning of things such as death or how specific groups of people came into being. In myths, the young were informed of their past and their cultural heritage with the aim of stimulating pride and in cultural institutions which formed the basis of the community's survival (Abosi and kandiji-Murangi, 1995). The following is an example of a myth regarding the supremacy of God who is the supplier of all cattle:

In the beginning, Enkai (God) lived on earth in joyful communion with all the cattle in the world. One day, a terrible calamity occurred which sent him and the cattle zooming off into the sky. Enkai and the cattle tried to live in the clouds but there wasn't enough grass up there to feed the cattle. Enkai called down to a human named Naiteru-Kop and told him to expect a special delivery.

Naiteru-Kop who lived near the Oldonyo Le Nkai volcano was surprised to see a large herd of cattle sliding down to earth on a vine." Look after them for me," said enkai. "They don't like it up here so I am giving them all to you"

Naiteru-Kop was amazed. He looked at all those animals, he was rich! One of his neighbors was even more amazed and spitefully cut the rope through sheer jealousy. This ended the cattle

bonanza. But with divinely granted ownership of the entire cattle population of the world, Naiteru-Kop was not complaining.

As for Enkai, he is up there in the clouds and can swerve between two different manifestations. When he is in a good mood, the clouds are black and full of nourishing rain. When he is annoyed, the clouds are dry, red and full of life zapping lightning. When there aren't any clouds, he is probably taking a vacation at the holy volcano Oldonyo Le Ngai (Mountain of God).

The educational value of such a myth to the young is substantial. First, it tells them that God is kind and loving in that He freely gave Naiteru-kop animals. Secondly, it mentions the characteristics of people and highlights acts that should not be emulated like jealousy. If the neighbor of Naiteru-kop was not jealousy, animals will still be flowing freely from the sky. This teaches the children that jealousy acts can stop blessings.

### **6.2.2 Formal methods of teaching**

Among the Maasai, there was a varying period of formal instruction given by elders or special groups in initiation to adulthood (Kipury, 1983). Likewise, children received specialized instruction as apprentices in herbal medicine, blacksmithing and midwifery. The intent of all that education was to fit the child suitably in the society. Formal education as practiced among the Maasai could be equated to school education. Informal education actually acted as a feeder to the formal education structure. Formal learning was imparted by clearly identified instructors and learners were aware of the learning process, unlike the informal education where learning took place indirectly through observation, imitation and participation in daily activities.

Formal learning among most African communities took place during initiation ceremonies. Every culture in the world ritualized the important milestones throughout life with birth,

marriage and death being typically marked by special ceremonies. In Africa, initiation ceremonies were rooted in deep, conservative traditions facilitating the crucial cycle of transition from childhood to adult life and the making of families (Raum, (1967).

Regarding the African child, initiation ceremonies tended to focus heavily on the preparation of young children to be good husbands or wives and excellent fathers or mothers in the family and society at large. The period of initiation was the most important time in the life the Maasai both for the individual initiate and for the whole community. The rite of initiation for both sexes signified a distinct period of formal teaching and examining with specially selected and experienced elders giving instruction and setting tests (Ocitti, 1973).

The life of a Maasai child was a series of conquests and tests involving the endurance of pain. For men, there was a progression from childhood to warrior hood to elder hood. When a child attained the age of four years, the lower incisors were taken out with a knife. As they grew older, they underwent tattooing on the stomach and the arms, enduring numerous cuts into the skin (Memusi, O.I., 11.12.2015).

Ear piercing for both boys and girls came next after tattooing. The ears were cartilage using hot iron. When this healed, a hole was cut in the ear lobe and gradually enlarged by inserting rolls of leaves or balls made of wood or mud. The bigger the hole the better. Those earlobes that dangled to the shoulders were considered the best. According to Naishoo (O.I., 23.11.2015), this was done to enhance the beauty of an individual.

Circumcision for boys and excision for girls followed. This was the most important event in a young Maasai's life. It was a father's ultimate duty to ensure that his children underwent this rite. The family invited relatives and friends to witness the ceremony which were held in special

villages called *imanyat*. The *imanyat* dedicated for circumcision of boys were called *Nkang oo ntaritik* (villages of little birds) (Ronoh, 2008).

Circumcision itself involved great physical pain and tested a youth's courage to endure pain without shedding tears. Nkrumah (O.I., 23.11.2015) argued that this period of pain was meant to prepare the initiates for tough responsibilities of adulthood. If they shied away during the exercise, boys brought shame and dishonor to themselves and their families. Members of their age group ridiculed them and they paid a fine of one head of cattle. However, if a boy showed great bravery, he received gifts of cattle and sheep.

Girls on the other hand endured even longer and painful ritual which was considered preparation for child bearing (Nailantei, O.I., 21.11.2015). During the initiation period, girls were taught on their awaiting responsibilities as wives to be by their Mothers and elderly women in the community. Girls who became pregnant before excision were banished from the village and stigmatized in their entire lives. In a few months after initiation, the young woman's future husband came to pick her to live with his family

After initiation, the boy who before was a *laiyion* (lad) now became a moran. In the Maasai community, passage from boyhood to manhood may have taken a form of killing a wild animal preferably a lion as a sign of courage and warrior hood. While in seclusion the moran together with others of his age group were taught by men of a senior age group on their responsibilities, taboos and how to acquire wealth. Boys belonged to an age group right from birth while girls belonged to the age group of their husbands (Lekutit, O.I., 9.12.2015).

After passing the tests of childhood and circumcision, boys went to the bush for several months where they learnt to overcome pride, egotism and selfishness. They shared their most prized

possessions, their cattle with other members of the community. However, they also had to spend time in the village where they sacrificed their cattle for ceremonies and offered gifts of cattle to new households. This stage of development matured a warrior and taught him respect for others, and he learnt how to contribute to his community. The stage of young warrior hood ended with the eunoto rite (Metian, O.I, 9.12.2015). The eunoto rite was a graduation ceremony which marked the end of warrior hood and the beginning of junior elder stage.

Circumcision of both the male and female child was a fundamental important initiation rite in many African societies (Ocitti, 1973). As regards the Maasai community, a young girl was not be suitable for marriage unless she underwent the incision ceremony. Usually the ceremony is attended by the females of the girl's family. Despite the world wide criticisms of female circumcision, the ceremony was done to enforce chastity among females and is central to the initiation rights of girls entering adulthood. On the other hand, male circumcision was done to promote hygiene and braveness. In this practice, the circumcised was congratulated for becoming a man.

Apprenticeship was another method of formal teaching. In communities like the Nupe and Ashanti of West Africa, apprenticeship was used in training young children in medicine, hunting and copper and iron smelting (Ocitti, 1973). Both theoretical and practical approaches were used in training young children on these occupations. The Maasai community was not an exception. As revealed by Nkurunah, (O.I., 23.11.2015), herbal medicine was widely used by the Maasai in pre-colonial times. When children got sick, the mother was responsible for giving advice and first aid before the father's assistance was sought. She fetched different types of curative leaves, roots and juices from particular trees. Men and women learnt this from their parents. Girls were

taught to collect medicinal herbs from forests by mothers. In initial stages, they would accompany mothers to forests and learnt right types of medicinal plants.

There were individuals who were recognized as herbalists. They came from special clan called *Inkidongi*. A person who wanted his child to learn the skill from the specialist would pay a fee and the training took a period of time. The apprentice learnt through observation and observation that is, the apprentice accompanied the herbalist to the forest and helped in collecting the herbs as the herbalist explained each herb and its role (Naishoo, O.I., 23.11.2015).

Nailantei (O.I., 21.11.2015) revealed that a person practicing witchcraft did this in secrecy since it isn't accepted openly in the community. They trained their children in the art privately. When discovered, a suspected witch/wizard was driven out of his/her own home to live with maternal uncles. Others could be subjected to death sentence. There were some specialists in exorcising witches and wizards. They passed the skill to their off springs. Witches or wizards who were ready to come out of the art could visit these specialists for exorcism.

Iron working was a major economic activity. Sankok, (O.I., 11.12.2015) revealed that iron tools were used among various community members to do different activities, for example the Maasai used arrows in war and knives to slaughter animals. The skill of iron work was transmitted from father to son and also to other children who were interested in learning the art. Blacksmiths called *Ilkunono* in Maasai made knives and weapons using iron.

Naipanoi one of the female respondents explained that weaving was practiced by women and was passed to girls who continued with the art. The skill the girl obtained depended on personal interest in skills practiced by her older sisters, mother or grandmother. The girls learnt this art through observation and participation.

### **6.3 Teachers of African indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai**

Education began at birth and ended with death. The child had to pass through stages of education defined for every status of life (Orcharson, 1961). Orcharson further argues that in most African communities, parents played an important role in educating the children. This was not exceptional among the Maasai people. Nailantei (O.I., 21.11.2015) revealed that among the Maasai, mothers educated all the children in the earliest years. All children were taught by their mothers from birth to close to 7 years. After 7 years, fathers took over education of male children while the mother remained in charge of the female. Both parents aimed at instilling in the children the family and clan traditions. They could be assisted by other members of the society since the child belonged to the community.

The father was responsible for the male child's masculine training and intelligent character (Sankok, O.I., 22.11.2015). A boy was required to learn his extended family history and that of his society, the geography of the region, names of neighboring communities and the nature of relations with them. He also learnt the handling of weapons, hunting, military tactics, care and breeding of cattle. Division of labor between males and females and rule of good manners at home and sports was also learnt.

Mothers were in charge of the girl's training. Mothers ensured proper upbringing of female children as regards cooking, home management, marriage affairs, sex education and building of houses since it was the role of women to build houses in the maasai community. (Lekutit, O.I., 9.12.2015). Girls who failed to behave inline with the accepted norms of the community especially those who got pregnant before marriage brought shame to their mothers.

Specialists were also a good source of education in teaching some aspects among many African communities. Among the Maasai people of Kenya, some of the aspects where specialists were

used included: teaching of herbal medicine, mid-wifely and blacksmithing. The Maasai community practiced medical knowledge known as *olchani* (“herbal medicine”) which was used in everyday life. This type of knowledge was only passed down by a specialist to the individual candidates or to the family members by a specialist called *ilkunono* (herbalist) (Naipanoi, O.I., 21.11.2015). Medical knowledge was learnt through observation and imitation. Children learnt by accompanying the herbalist in his or her daily duties to the forest to pick the herbs, in preparation of the herbs and in treatment of the patient.

Mid-wifely was also widely practiced among the Maasai community (Memusi, O.I., 11.12.2015). The community had special women who were experts in helping women through their pregnancy period by massaging them and offering medical attention when necessary. These specialists were also knowledgeable in child delivery. This specialist knowledge was passed down by the midwives to the young ones who were normally members of the same family lineage with the mid-wife.

Blacksmiths known as *irkunono* were also an important source of knowledge (O.I., Metian, 9.12.2015). This art of making iron tools was mainly passed down to boys since it was perceived to be a male profession. Blacksmiths passed down the knowledge to boys of their family lineage and other boys whose parents requested the specialists to teach. The boys were mainly taught on how to make arrows, bows and knives which were commonly needed in the community. Arrows and bows were mainly used by *morans* to protect the community from external attack. Knives were used to slaughter animals and to eat roasted meat at home and in ceremonies.

Peers also played a role in the education of young ones. Naikuni (O.I., 8.12.2015) revealed that in some cases, children learnt from their age mates on how to behave in some occasions. In most

cases, this took place during their free time in play. Children among the Maasai engaged in games and plays which imitated the roles of adults such as child rearing, hunting, animal keeping and home management. These roles were mostly gender based and so the games and role plays in children games were also gender based. Naipanoi, (O.I., 21.11.2015) also revealed that newly married women (*siankigi*) learnt a lot from their peers. Recalling when she was a young woman, Naipanoi revealed that she learnt a lot of family matters from her peers.

A child was actually forced by custom, tradition and societal ways to take an active part in his own development. Among the Maasai community, the peer group played an important role in aiding the child to acquire the ways and customs of society. He was forced by custom to go about with his peers only. To a large extent the child was at the mercy of his educators. In all this the child had to participate actively without forgetting complete submission to those above him. Failure to which punishment applied which sometimes took the form of youths taking severe beatings (Nalamael, O.I., 11.12.2015)

Other adults in the community were also a good source of knowledge among the Maasai people. Traditional education was a continuous process under the guidance of the Maasai elders. Like the knowledge systems of any other indigenous communities, it was based on harmony between the community and the immediate environment. All elders in the society were expected to be play mother and father roles in teaching, scolding, advising, rewarding and punishing children in the community (Tiberondwa, 1978). Importance was placed on respect for community pride and the maintenance of the natural resources upon which they derived their livelihood.

In case of young wives, senior wives and husbands managed traditional education. According to Naishoo (O.I., 23.11.2015), husbands educated their newly married wives on how to treat

animals. Senior wives and mother in-laws picked from where the mothers left and continued educating young wives on household chores and what was expected of them in their new status in the new family.

## **6.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the methods of teaching indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai people of Kenya were analyzed. These methods included formal and informal methods of teaching. The teachers of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai people of Kenya were also identified.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will review and briefly discuss the findings of the study. The summary, conclusions and recommendations will be drawn from the discussed findings based on the objectives of the study. Possibilities for future study will also be noted.

#### 7.2 Summary

The researcher studied the indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai. This has been done by focusing on the aims, content, methods of teaching and the teachers of this type of education. The study has revealed that indigenous education of the Maasai had concrete aims which were to be attained at a given point. They included teaching the young ones to conform to the set standards of the community morally, socially and intellectually. Education also aimed at bringing out a person who was responsible and hardworking.

Efforts have also been made to show the content of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai. The study has shown what both boys and girls learnt at different stages of development through to adulthood. The study has also revealed that this type of education was gender based and therefore the content differed according to gender. The content was drawn mainly from the environment where the child lived. Children were taught to make use the environment around them for survival. Children developed themselves economically by using the available resources in the environment therefore there were no unemployment cases. The children were also taught on how to be responsible and hard working members of the community. Respect for the elders

was also emphasized. Education also stressed communal and social aspect rather than individualism.

The study has also revealed the people who were taken to be the holders of knowledge. Most of them were parents and elderly people in the society. Knowledge was also received from people who were specialists in different fields such as carpentry, mid-wifely, herbal medicine and blacksmithing. These skills were learnt through apprenticeship which involved attaching a child to a specialist from whom he/she could learn. Children also learnt from their peers as they played or as they shared experiences.

The researcher also studied the methods of teaching which included informal and formal. Though the methods were categorized as formal and informal, they complemented each other. The informal methods included use folklores and legends, proverbs and riddles, songs and myths. The formal methods included apprenticeship and initiation ceremonies.

### **7.3 Conclusions**

The study revealed that the Maasai people had their own ways of educating the young ones. Education was gender based right from child hood. The adults played a major role in passing down the culture of the community to the young ones through indigenous education. The findings also show that the upbringing of a child was not only the responsibility of the parents but a collective responsibility of all members of the society.

The findings of the study also reveal that education of the child began right at birth. At the tender age, the mother played a major role in educating children of both sex. The father took over education of boys when they had grown up mostly after initiation. Gender roles dominated

education of children at all levels. Discipline and morality were also taught. This shows that children were shaped to become responsible members in the community.

#### **7.4 Recommendations**

From the findings some recommendations have been made. Some elements of indigenous education that affect the future of a child positively should be retained and borrowed by the curriculum developers of western education. These elements include morality, discipline and responsibility. Right from early childhood, children were taught to respect elders and to imitate them. This helped children to become disciplined and responsible members in the community. Parents on the other hand were always present to guide the children on what was expected of them and to correct them wherever they made mistakes. This role in the contemporary society has been left for teachers. This needs to be corrected by educating parents on the need to take a leading role in the growth of their children.

The inclusion of indigenous pedagogy and knowledge in teacher education programs may provide teachers with proper pedagogical approaches to draw upon while offering an opportunity of developing deeper understanding of indigenous education. The indigenous methods of teaching such as storytelling and use of myths and proverbs can make teaching and learning more lively and interesting to both the learner and the teacher.

Parents and elders in the community should continue being good role models to children. In the Maasai community, children belonged to the community. All elders took part in the growth and development of children. Wherever a child made a mistake, any elder in the community had a right to rebuke and discipline where necessary. This needs to be emulated in the contemporary society so as to keep children on track and help children to become disciplined members of the

society. Discipline of children should be a responsibility of all members of the society and not only parents and teachers.

On the other hand, with the fast changes in the contemporary world, some traditions and beliefs which affect children negatively need to be changed. For instance, the issue of excision of girls needs to be stopped for it affects their health negatively. Similarly, giving out underage girls in Marriage to elderly men needs to be stopped. Girls need to be empowered by being given a chance to learn and realize their dreams.

Also the strict training of boys after circumcision needs to be revised. After initiation, the Maasai boys went to the forest for several months for training. This led to school drop outs among the teenage boys. Also, during the preparation of boys from for graduation from one grade to another, the boys gathered in special for two months in preparation for the great day when the graduation (*eunoto*) ceremony will be carried out. This led desertion of duties by the young men who were employed since they didn't want to be taken as outcasts by their peers and community. This act needs to be stopped or revised because it makes the community remain backwards in terms of development.

### **7.5 Suggestions for further research**

Further research is recommended in order to develop the area on African Indigenous Education.

Suggested topics to be explored are:

The effect of western education on the continuity of the age set system among the Maasai community. In pre-colonial Kenya, the age set system was developed in stages right from childhood to old age. There was teaching and ceremonies involved before being ushered to the

next level. A study on how this institution has been affected by modern education can provide knowledge on the continuity of indigenous education as practiced by the Maasai.

Further, research and analysis on the pedagogical methods of modeling, mentoring and ceremony as educational tools would offer further insights into alternative and effective teaching strategies. Detailed investigations on how such methods were utilized and how students responded could expand the documentation of the indigenous pedagogical methods of teaching among the Maasai community.

Research on intertribal interaction and sharing between the Maasai community and other communities may increase the awareness on knowledge production and transfer and further expand definitions and concepts on how knowledge was culturally constructed. Commonalities and differences among various indigenous peoples may provide continued understanding of diversity within educational practices as well as identifying central or common principles that were shared among various groups.

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## ORAL INTERVIEWS

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>status</b>	<b>Age (years)</b>
Kisimpol, N.	22.11.2015	Elder	56
Lekutit, T.	9.12.2015	Elder	64
Memusi, L.	11.12.2015	Elder	70
Metian, J.	9.12.2015	Elder	60
Naikuni, G.	8.12.2015	Herbalist	62
Nailantei, L.	21.11.2015	Elder	67
Naipanoi, T.	21.11.2015	Elder	66
Naishoo, S.	23.11.2015	Herbalist	71
Nalamael, M.	11.12.2015	Elder	58
Nkurunah, J.	23.11.2015	Sub-chief	54
Naserian, N.	(9.12.2015	mid-wife	70
Sankok, T.	(22.11.2015)	Retired teacher	63

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I**

#### **LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE INFORMANTS**

My name is Isanda Perista Kerubo. I am a Master's student at the department of educational foundations, School of education, University of Nairobi. I am writing a project. The topic for my study is "THE AFRICAN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AS PRACTICED BY THE MAASAI OF KENYA.

I request that I discuss with you issues related to the above stated topic. I look forward to your support in generating information necessary to compile this report. The finding of my study will be useful to policy makers, implementers, education stakeholders and will otherwise add knowledge to the theory and practice of history of education as an academic discipline in Kenya.

The information you will give will be treated with confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose, other than my masters 'Research Studies'.

It is my request that you discuss freely and openly and ask questions at the end of the discussion. Indeed there is no wrong and right answer as you are free to express your opinion.

## APPENDIX 11

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MALE ELDERS

Name: -----

Age: -----

1. Before the coming of the white man, did young boys who had not reached the age of *moranism* receive any education?
2. If yes, what were the aims of education they received?
3. What were these young boys taught?
4. Who were the teachers involved in transmitting knowledge to those young boys?
5. What methods did the teachers use to teach them?
6. What was the difference between the content of education offered to the young boys and that offered to the *morans*?
7. Was there a difference between the methods used to teach young boys and those used to teach *morans*?
8. What were the methods used to teach young boys who had not attained the age of *moranism*?
9. What were the methods used to teach *morans*?
10. At what age was one expected to join *moranism*?
11. How long did one remain as a *moran* before graduating to adulthood?

## APPENDIX 111

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FEMALE ELDERS

Name: -----

Age: -----

1. In pre-colonial Kenya, did Maasai girls receive any kind of education?
2. Were the girls grouped according to age before being taught?
3. If yes, what were the aims of the kind of education they received at each level?
4. What were these girls taught at each level?
5. Who were the teachers responsible in transmitting knowledge to these young girls among the Maasai community?
6. What methods did the teachers use to teach them?
7. At what age did the girls get married?
8. Is this type of education going on today among the Maasai community?
9. In your view, do you think indigenous education among the Maasai community has any effects on western education?

