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CONTRIBUTION OF MAASAI CIRCUMCISION CULTURE TO FORMAL EDUCATION AMONG UNIVERSITY MAASAI MALE STUDENTS AT ARUSHA REGION

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This study generally explored specific contribution of Maasai circumcision culture towards formal education among university Maasai Male students at Arusha region. The study involved the Maasai male students from three Universities in Arusha region which were Mount Meru University, Tumaini Makumira University and the University of Arusha. The study used primary data which were collected through questionnaires. The study was qualitative and quantitative in nature; therefore, data were analyzed by using qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques, and the researcher used a sample of 90 respondents. The results indicated that there was a clear contribution of Maasai circumcision culture on formal education among the University Maasai male students as supported by the respondents. The Chi-Square technique analysis method indicated that Chi Square value is greater than one which is ranging from 4.101 b critical value to 43.244c to each research tested objectives items as it can be observed in the Chi-Square Test statistics and degree of freedom is 4 which is greater than one which shows the positive relationship of Maasai circumcision culture and the formal education in the Maasai community. Basing on the findings from this study, the researcher recommends that the deliberate effort should be directed towards the extension of public education to Maasai community on the importance of formal education to their children. It is also suggested that the government and other stake holders who are close to Maasai community should promote for harmonization of traditional knowledge teaching and formal education provided to Maasai children in schools and other higher learning institutions. As changing effect may be slow to some areas of community, it is suggested that the Maasai young men who dropped out from primary and secondary school because of participating in moranism should be given the opportunity to go back to school or special program offering basic skills like vocational skills should be designed for them.

Keywords: Maasai circumscion culture, Maasi male students, Formal education, Maasai pastoral community, Moranism

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Introduction

Background of the Study

Education has long been considered as a fundamental human right as it is the key to sustainable development through provision of peace and stability among countries and thus indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of the respective countries (Dy and Ninomiya, 2003).

The Maasai culture has its own training into preparedness for people to participate into society just as the formal education. Taking into consideration the young men who are initiated through circumcision culture, this practice is traditionally done between the ages of 15 to 20. The current Maasai circumcision culture is performed at the age below 15 which is the school going age for most male students. The male students after circumcision become morans, who are community Maasai warriors. The morans are expected to comply with various restrictions but are given privileges that among others include: enjoy the favor and attention of society, in the domain of food consumption, for they cannot eat meat which has been seen by initiated women and can only drink milk or water in the company of age peers" (Galaty, 1982). Subjects offered through moranism are comprehensive and very relevant to life in the Maasai land. Learning through these subjects is all inclusive and strengthens ethnic cohesion, features, which are probably lacking or limited in formal education process.

Male circumcision in the Maasai world goes beyond the usual male foreskin cut; the

nearly three months long passage involves series of informal education including local military training, hunting, and endurance as well as survival skills. Now "Morans" do not just take orders from anybody, but they are answerable only to traditional elders. For the newly graduated "Moran's", who also happen to have attended formal education, hence balancing the spear and a shield with a pen and a book could be tricky (Nkwame, 2012).

This cultural practice initiates belief about the superiority of their culture and the significance of Maasai identity and institutions such as moranism. This cultural activity bolstered negative attitudes toward formal education among Maasai male students. Contrary to expectations, a good number of Maasai male students are attending further studies in the various level of education including university level, despite the rigidity of the culture just after the official circumcision culture. Therefore there is a need to explore more about the contribution of Maasai circumcision to the formal education among University Maasai male students at Arusha region.

Significance of the Study

The study can provide useful insight into our understanding of origins of Maasai people's reluctance to accept change and smoothly acceptance of formal education. It therefore, has issues that can be used by policy makers, government officials, educational stake holders and community to harmonize school curriculum in line with specific society traditional knowledge which is provided through Maasai circumcision culture.

Review of Literature

Theoretical Literature

This paper is based on the theory of human capital. According to this theory, education is considered as an economic good because it is not easily obtainable and thus needs to be apportioned. Economists regard education as both consumer and capital good because it offers utility to a consumer and also serves as an input into the production of other goods and services. As a capital good, education can be used to develop the human resources necessary for economic and social transformation (Almendarez, 2011).

The focus on education as a capital good relates to the concept of human capital, which emphasizes that the development of skills is an important factor in production activities. It is widely accepted that education creates improved citizens and helps to upgrade the general standard of living in a society (Mulongo, 2012). Therefore, positive social change is likely to be associated with the production of qualitative citizenry. This increasing faith in education as an agent of change in many developing countries including Tanzania, has led to a heavy investment in it.

The pressure for higher education in many developing countries has undoubtedly been motivated by public perception of financial reward from pursuing such education. Generally, this goes with the belief that expanding education promotes economic growth (Schultz, 1971).

The economic prosperity and functioning of a nation depend on its physical and human

capital stock. That is to say, there is clear relationship between the formal training of human resource and economic growth of a country (Barro, 2001) In general terms; human capital represents the investment people make in themselves that enhance their economic productivity.

The human capital theory is relevant in this research paper due to the fact that the researcher considered that provision of basic education among the Maasai community can transform their ways of thinking and belief. The assumption is that the Maasai young men who have got a chance for higher education would find the link between their traditional practices and formal training. In that way they would appreciate circumcision practice and find out how the lessons given aimed at their community prosperity is complemented by formal training. Education can also enhance their capacity to interpret realities and engage in more productive practices. Through education, skills can be promoted and the Maasai can integrate their cultural practices with formal training. In that way, Maasai male students are likely to stay in schools besides being circumcised.

Empirical Literature Review

Researchers such as Gorham (1978), Nkinyangi (1981), Sena (1986) and Ronoh (2008) believe that the pastoral community and life style of Kenya have contributed to that society's resistance to change in general and adoption of formal school education in particular. The irrelevance of formal education schooling to pastoral community lives could have contributed to the society's

resistance to education change (Schneider, 1959; Tignor, 1972; and Sobania, 1979) Writers such as Sifuna (1990) and Bogonko (1992) stated that indigenous learning and training work were meant for holding and survival. Ly (1981) has underscored the utility of this traditional knowledge of which they receive after the circumcision. Otiende *et al.* (1992) observed that a pastoral society related to the Maasai called Samburu of the north central Kenya has intimate knowledge of their physical environment intended for their own survival and that of their livestock. The Maasai enthusiastically demanded formal education while continuing to resist it in favor of their age set system and pastoral value that formed the bedrock of their indigenous learning and training activities.

When the earliest Maasai school was opened in Narok Township of Kenya in 1918, the Maasai warrior (il-murran) violently resisted it. The Maasai and especially the il-Murran (Maasai warrior) exhibited resistance of formal education from colonial era to the present (Ronoh, 2008).

In Tanzania, there is limited understanding amongst education planners of pastoral communities' standpoint on the kind of education they consider to be relevant and that can empower them to live the kind of life they value, particularly for both girls and boys.

Sifuna (1987) argues that education provision during the colonial period was associated with missionary activities which were less prolific in pastoral areas, thus these areas had a very limited number of schools at independence. This affected pastoral communities children, hence made their

enrolments, attendance, academic performance, transition to higher levels of education and gender disparity to remain below average compared to other ethnic groups (Dyer and Kratli, 2006). Following independence, low participation rates in formal and non formal education excluded pastoralists from participation in education planning and decision making.

Two Maasai Head Teachers in Monduli primary school highlighted that " We need both informal and formal education together, because if we do not keep our culture then we will not have the confidence to get involved in formal education" (Crooker and Sanare, 2008). This is because of this Maasai male students when they are circumcised they both develop hatreds to formal education knowledge, because they are contradicting with type of life they live and formal education is not harmonizing their traditional value and custom only that they alienate them and bring unnecessary conflict with their social, economic life and normal relation with their elders and their fellow age mate, who most of them encourage Maasai circumcised male students to quit from studies as they just wasting time.

Olekwallah (1992) shows that the Maasai pupil have real difficult time with unschooled peers who ridicule them, and scorns an idea of formal education. This makes the students hostile towards western school system, arguably to preserve their status quo and grip on the tribe. To them, books and school learning are perceived and disintegrative attribute to the tribal society; also it indicates that majority of Maasai successfully resisted formal schooling for

themselves and their children. Also the schools in pastoral areas are functioning with a bare handful of children.

Apart from that, Olekwallah (1992) expressed that schools in pastoral areas are few and dotted distances apart from home to school and back. The distances that are involved are great. Beside this when those few manage the distance are enrolled at school they encounter a variety of problem related to studying in their home places, peers group pressures from those children who do not attend to school and are just tending the animals at home. Schools withdrawal pupils to herd cattle and also lack of night study facilities for school homework. Also some attend to traditional dances during night hence depressing school attendance, apart from that some parents side with pupils when they run away from school, according to parent complain it is pupil/student who know best what is good or bad in school. In fact parents are not in position to help those who are doing poorly at school because they themselves had no schooling knowledge. This lack of parent concern also can be a source from ignorance and indifference to the advantage of formal schooling.

However Olekwallah (1992) described that at the age of 17-24 the roots of traditionalism are firms from among the pupils/students thus beating which is usual punishment in school is in concurrent to traditional norms where withdrawal of privileges are common sanction for the older youth. The school social situations therefore, create conflict when a teacher punished a Moran pupils/student of his age mate in

every respect, or when a female teacher canes a young Moran pupil/student.

Another study shows that in most part of Maasai land (Olekwallah, 1992) Maasai children are enrolled in school late, it was the time, many are at school at the age of between 14-24 years especially it is a peak time for Maasai circumcision and warrior hood period, then it appear the curriculum expect such grown up children to be involved in young children games and activities, such activities especially in the low grades of primary school would appear to the older children very childish unchallenging. As would be expected, they would ignore school activities; they began to be troublesome with school authority. If it appears to them that they are losing in the struggle, they are simply push out of school.

Curiously, none of researcher above and other educational expert like (Ronoh, 2008) has delved into the learning experiences of Maasai circumcision culture and how it contribute to the formal education among University Maasai male students especially in attending higher learning studies. Nevertheless, Ronoh's work does not provide a comprehensively insightful role of Maasai cultural knowledge (Maasai circumcision) in contribution to formal education (University level). This study therefore investigated into the contribution of Maasai circumcision culture in developing and improving formal education and fill the knowledge gap that is common always that Maasai circumcision is hindering Maasai young man to go for higher learning while there are good number of Maasai circumcised male students into various

universities within this Arusha region and outside of this region.

Research Methodology

Research Design

Descriptive survey design which the researcher used involves describing and interpreting events, conditions, circumstances or situation that are occurring in the present, the research design seeks to engage with and report the complexities of social activity in order to represent the meanings that individual social actors brings to their settings. The study mainly focused on contribution of Maasai circumcision culture to formal education among University male Maasai students at Arusha Region.

Purposive sampling particularly homogeneous sampling was used to pick up a small sample with similar characteristics to describe some particular sub group in depth. In this sample method, the researcher purposely targeted a group of people believed to be reliable for the study. The power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for in depth analysis related to the central issues being studied. It can be used with both quantitative and qualitative studies.

Therefore this method was applied in selecting respondents to be involved in the study such as University Maasai male students in order to obtain rich information about the contribution of Maasai circumcision culture to formal education among University Maasai male students. This sample considered Maasai male students who went through Maasai

circumcision culture practices and joined Universities for their higher studies. The all Maasai male students in University were considered during sampling, the aim was to get accurate representation for the study to be valid.

The researcher distributed questionnaires to the targeted respondents who were expected to read, understand, and answer the questions on their own. The questionnaires contained both open-ended, closed - ended questions, and matrix questions so as to increase the validity of the responses.

Results and Discussion

The Contribution of the Maasai Circumcision Culture to Formal Education among University Maasai Male Student

The researcher asked the respondents to answer the research question which was guiding them in providing data about the contribution of the Maasai circumcision culture on formal education among University Maasai male students. The findings had been summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1 above provides the summary of statistical test for the research question sought to determine the contribution of the Maasai circumcision to formal education. This indicated that observation of respondents to each research items questions is greater than one using the Chi Square value as frequencies appearances show that respondents from research objectives items appeared less than 5 which is the expected frequency of which the

Table 1: Contribution of the Maasai Circumcision Culture to Formal Education

S. No.	Item	SD		D	N	A	SA	Total
1	Culture Raise Awareness	F	12	14	15	20	20	81
		%	14.5	16.9	18.1	24.1	24.1	97.6
2	Culture makes them hard worker	F	8	11	15	20	26	80
		%	9.6	13.3	18.1	24.1	31.3	96.4
3	Culture makes Obedient	F	8	8	15	29	22	82
		%	9.6	9.6	18.1	34.9	26.5	98.8
4	Culture Makes responsible in education	F	6	9	17	24	26	82
		%	7.2	10.8	20.8	28.9	31.3	98.2
5	Culture makes males independent	F	8	12	18	22	23	83
		%	9.6	14.5	21	26.5	27.7	100
6	Culture makes confidence and courageous	F	4	9	14	26	30	83
		%	4.8	10.8	16.9	31.3	36.1	100
7	Culture improve Behaviour	F	8	6	14	31	24	83
		%	9.6	7.2	16.9	37.3	28.9	100
8	Culture makes punctual in school daily routine	F	5	11	16	20	30	82
		%	6	13.3	19.3	24.1	36.1	98.8

Note: SD: Strong Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agree, SA: Strong Agree.

Table 2: Statistical Test for Question on the Contribution of Maasai Circumcision to Formal Education

	Culture Raise Awareness	Culture makes them Hard Worker	Culture makes them Obedient	Culture makes them Responsible in Education	Culture makes Males Independent	Culture Makes them Confident and Courageous	Culture Improve Behaviour	Culture makes them Punctual in School Daily Routine
Chi-Square	3.259 ^a	12.875 ^b	20.317 ^c	19.098 ^c	10.072 ^d	29.590 ^d	27.422 ^d	21.780 ^c
Df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp-Sig	0.515	0.12	0	0.001	0.039	0	0	0

Note: ^a 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.2. ^b 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.0. ^c 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.4.

minimum expected frequency is 16.2 according to the Chi-Square value interpretation that degree of freedom and critical value is greater than one which rejected null hypothesis hence concur with research question that Maasai circumcision

culture contribute positively to formal education among the Maasai male students.

The Role of Maasai Circumcision Culture to the Formal Education

among University Maasai Male Students

The researcher provided the research question to the respondents sought to explored facts about the specific role of Maasai circumcision culture on the development of formal education using Maasai male university students in Arusha region as the case study. The respondents responded by answering and giving the feedback to each specific objective item which was given by the researcher as one of ways of getting actual facts and information about the Maasai circumcision culture position in supporting the formal education. The data analysis presented in Table 3 below shows the frequencies of respondents in their

response about the role of Maasai circumcision culture to formal education.

The observation in frequency Table 3 and statistical Table 4 above show that the Maasai male students who were taken as sample from this study about circumcision culture accepted that their cultural teaching enhanced their ability to cope with formal education from different parameters. This has been supported by Crooker and Crooker & Sanare, (2008) who highlighted that, the Maasai community needs both informal and formal education. That is to say, they need their traditional teaching because it gives them confidence and courage to get involved in formal education. Thus, the instructions given during circumcision practices play an

Table 3: The Role of Maasai Circumcision to Formal Education

S. No.	Item	SD		D	N	A	SA	Total
1	Direct males to be more specific	F	6	21	14	20	22	83
		%	7.2	25.3	16.9	24.1	26.5	100
2	No time waste in non academic issues	F	10	20	14	16	19	79
		%	12	24.1	16.9	19.3	22.9	95.2
3	make self driven	F	1	17	19	28	17	82
		%	1.2	20.5	22.9	33.7	20.5	98
4	Separate from bad groups	F	4	5	19	19	32	79
		%	4.8	6	22.9	22.9	38.6	95.2
5	Harmonize tradional knowledge from formal	F	8	6	10	23	32	79
		%	9.6	7.2	12	27.7	38.6	95.2
6	Searching for new knowledge	F	7	14	25	17	20	83
		%	8.4	16.9	30.1	20.5	24.1	100
7	Promote excel in academic	F	7	13	16	23	21	80
		%	8.4	15.7	19.3	27.7	25.3	96.4
8	Male student being role model	F	8	10	13	11	40	82
		%	9.6	12	15.7	13.3	48.2	98

Table 4: Statistical test for Question on Role of Maasai Circumcision Culture to Formal Education

	Direct Males to be More Specific	No Time Waste in Non-academic Issues	Make Self Driven	Separate from Bad Groups	Harmonize Traditional Knowledge from Formal	Searching for New Knowledge	Promote Excel in Academic	Male Student Being Role Model
Chi-Square	10.795 ^a	4.101 ^b	23.122 ^c	34.101 ^b	31.949 ^b	10.916 ^a	10.250 ^d	43.244 ^c
Df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp-Sig	0.029	0.392	0	0	0	0.028	0.036	0

Note: ^a 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.6. ^b 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.8. ^c 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.4. ^d 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.0.

inspirational role for acquisition of formal education by the Maasai young men.

As opposed to opinions given by several researchers such as Sena (1986) who believed that pastoral community have contributed to the resistance to change in general and adoption of formal school education in particular, data analysis in frequency Table 3 and statistics test table number 4 above revealed that Maasai circumcision culture have a role to play in promoting and encouraging Maasai students to pursue higher education studies and for preparing them to work hard towards achieving their goals in academic field. This indicates some degree of change in Maasai's perception on formal education.

Summary of Major Findings

The results of this research show that Maasai circumcision culture has a clear contribution to the formal education. This generalization is supported by the responses from the Maasai male students who are pursuing formal learning from universities in Arusha Region.

The statistical analysis using the Chi Square method indicated that the Chi Square

value is greater than one of which it is ranging from 4.101^b critical value to 43.244^c to each research tested objectives items as it has been indicated in the data analysis (see Table 4).

The research findings are very meaningful to the Tanzania government in planning for improvement of education to Maasai pastoral community which is always lagging behind in formal education investment. Other educational stake holders, individuals and Non government organization can also use the research findings for coming up with new strategies of eradicating some cultural values which are normally hindering education to both girls and boys from the Maasai community.

Conclusion

In this study, the researcher concluded that Maasai circumcision culture contributes to the formal education among Maasai male students. Specifically, the Maasai male students enrolled in Arusha Region universities were able to integrate their informal learning to formal schooling. This is the indication that Maasai community is changing attitude

toward education which in turn is changing other aspects of their culture. Therefore, the study on Maasai culture, particularly on male circumcision rites is very important as it enables to understand which aspects undermine or promote their participation in formal education. Hence the government of Tanzania would be able to formulate policy and guidelines which facilitate the harmonization of good part of Maasai culture and formal education.

Recommendations

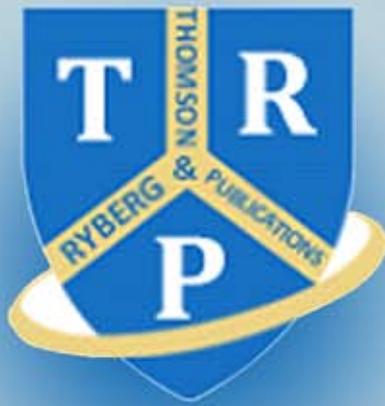
The purpose of this study was to explore and bring out complicated issues from Maasai circumcision culture and highlight on importance of modern education and how it affects Maasai culture. Based on the results from this research, the following should put into consideration:

- Extending further public education to Maasai community on the importance of formal education to their children.
- The government and other stake holders who are close to Maasai community should promote for harmonization of traditional knowledge teaching and formal education provided to Maasai children in schools and other higher learning institutions.
- Maasai young men who dropped out from primary and secondary school because of participating in moranism should be given the opportunity to go back to school and special program offering basic skills like vocational skills should be designed for them.

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