BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW: THE IMPACT OF COMMUNAL TRADITIONAL

VALUES AND PRACTICES ON THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF YOUNG AND OLD

BASOTHO

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract
Lesotho, in Southern Africa, has long been neglected in communication research. To address this void, the present study investigates what traditional values and traditional rituals exist in today's Lesotho, how important these are respectively to the young and old generation of Basotho, and how traditional values and practices help the formation of cultural identities of old and young people of Lesotho. The theory behind this study was cultural identity theory by Collier and Thomas (1988), a theory which had mostly been used in the context of ethnic minority research. To expand the use of this theory, through 18 qualitative interviews of both older and younger Basotho, this study found respect, sharing, and gender roles to be the prevalent values. Funeral rituals, marriage customs, and ancestor rites were also important. Through thematic analysis, this study found differences between the old and the young generation in the perception of importance of most traditions, indicating an age-related cultural identity. At the same time, most participants avowed a national cultural identity, which used traditions to stress cohesion. This study shows how fluid cultural identities can be, and, thanks to its novel context, it presents a valuable addition to cultural identity research. Because of the non-generalizability of this study, the results will need to be confirmed by future research.

Asiasanat – Keywords Cultural identity theory, tradition, community, Lesotho
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Time will never remain the same. The world is changing, and with it our values (Grosz-Ngaté, Hanson, & O'Meara, 2014). We can gain a glimpse of our rumored past by talking to our elders, but these changes are not universally held or distributed from one land to another. These changes have affected Africa more than many other places on earth (Grosz-Ngaté et al., 2014). Media, influences from outside, education, and economic changes have all led people to reevaluate their lives, values, and ideals (Grosz-Ngaté et al., 2014). Change of cultural practices and values is not new, neither in Africa nor anywhere else in the world. However, the changes related to globalization have also changed the social structures in Africa (Grosz-Ngaté et al., 2014).

Grosz-Ngaté et al. (2014) found some general values in the family and community applicable to the African continent. Respect for elders is one of these ubiquitous values in communities (Grosz-Ngaté et al., 2014). Children are taught that from an early age, nobody questions if an elder asks a younger person to do something for him or her (Grosz-Ngaté et al., 2014). For example in Lesotho, orientation toward kinship is still shown even in the titles used for addressing others (Grosz-Ngaté et al., 2014; Hoag, 2006; Akindele, 2007). Lesotho is a very good example of that, as no conversation can go without calling the other person father, mother, brother, sister, grandmother, or grandfather, depending on their sex and age, whether the interlocutors are actually related or not (Akindele, 2007). Family and community dynamics across the continent are changing, however, as wars, disease, and changing societal and economic situations leave their mark and leave children more independent of their parents (Grosz-Ngaté et al., 2014). Initiation ceremonies (the details of which are most often kept secret from outsiders) especially create "age-mates" that form close and enduring bonds (Grosz-Ngaté

et al., 2014). Other bonds are formed by profession or associations (Grosz-Ngaté et al., 2014). These are some of the established values and traditions currently in play in Lesotho, but as time changes, so can change this established norm at its own pace.

Traditions and traditional values, as elements from the past, have been passed on for generations, yet they are constantly threatened by new developments and changes (Kratz, 1993). How have these traditions and traditional values fared in Lesotho, an ethnically homogenous country with a unique history and geographical location? As one of the rare African countries located in the mountains, Lesotho is also one of the few African countries that, though a British protectorate for about a century, was allowed to form based on social, cultural, and linguistic unity (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2016). Still today, Lesotho comprises of more than 99% of the population being from one ethnicity (Stoddard, n.d.), called the Basotho (singular: Mosotho). With a population this homogenous, and with a strong sense of their own culture, this study aims to find out in a qualitative case study how the older and the younger generation of Lesotho view communal traditions and traditional values, and how important these are for them today in the formation of their cultural identity.

As we will see, a high amount of research has been done on cultural identity. However, most of the existing literature has been done on ethnic minorities, and mostly in the context of the US. However, a cultural system does not need to be limited to national culture or ethnicity. In this rapidly changing world, the fear of eroding cultural elements is ever-present. Differences in age can shed light on whether this change has reached Lesotho. This study will look at the elderly, as carriers of the traditions, as opposed to the younger generation, the future ones to transmit traditional values to the new generation, but today more than ever influenced by outside forms of education and entertainment.

For a more comprehensive understanding of Basotho's views on their traditional values, it is important to look at individual experiences. This way, both the younger and the older generation of Lesotho are granted a voice to give their own viewpoints and examples without being limited to short answers. Although no generalizations can be made based on a small sample, this study aims to gain a general understanding of communal traditional values in Lesotho as seen by two groups divided by a significant age difference. The purpose is not to make a positive or negative distinction of their viewpoints, but rather to understand their perceptions and experiences better to determine how one part of Basotho cultural identity is formed.

Lesotho may seem like a strange choice for this study. However, just because Lesotho is far away, has not played a major role in international politics, and has not been ravaged by wars, famines, or diseases does not mean one should overlook it. This is especially true once one notices how different Lesotho is from its much bigger, and more often studied, neighbor (South Africa), economically, socially, politically, historically, and culturally.

As of now, there is hardly any data about Basotho culture. The country as a whole has been long neglected, Lesotho being a small and geopolitically relatively unimportant country. However, it does have a distinct culture which is worthy of recognition. This research can help close this scientific gap. There has been little research on Africa in general, but little on Lesotho in particular. Countries and regions of the world should not be ignored just because they are not a part of big business international trading. This study will be a first step toward closing the research gap existing in communication about Lesotho. It will also be of interest in research, if not for being on Lesotho itself, at least for being on one of the few countries in the world that most people know absolutely nothing about. This study will help demystify the country, and it

will make its people seem less exotic and thus more approachable to everybody who reads this study.

On a smaller scale, my research can help future professionals or volunteers from abroad obtain a feel for the new culture into which they are moving. Of course, the results will not be generalizable, but they will provide an excellent first glimpse of the culture, a glimpse that can be widened in the future by more research. Basotho themselves could profit by having elements of their cultural identity put into words. The importance of traditional values for their identity will be articulated, and every one of them will then be able to decide whether conserving older elements of the culture is important to him/her or not. In the best of cases, Basotho reading this study will be able to identify with my results and have a clearer picture of how traditional values contribute to Basotho culture for members of their communities.

Due to the lack of existent research on its culture, though, I must approach this topic by first finding out what communal traditions and values exist and how relevant they are, both to the older and to the younger generation. Only then will I be able to make the connection to cultural identity, to study how their cultural identity is influenced by communal traditions. Because of the lack of data about the culture of Lesotho, which makes forming hypotheses difficult, this paper aims to go in deeper with an open mind, to find recurring themes and possible starting points for later research. To find answers, interviews are necessary because of the lack of data on Basotho people, meaning there are no sample questions available yet about different aspects of their culture. This study can serve as a base for other researchers interested in this country. Perhaps someone will be interested in doing a quantitative study to confirm (or deny) the themes I found on Basotho cultural identity. Alternatively, someone could do another qualitative study with a

different sample, or slightly different research questions. Lesotho being such an unknown territory, it is exciting to observe what research might follow this one study.

This paper focuses on cultural identity of Basotho, the people of the small nation of Lesotho in Southern Africa, by focusing on age identity and intergenerational differences in communal traditions.

1.2 Structure of the study

This study is constructed in the standard five main components: literature review, method, results, discussion, and conclusion. In the literature review, I will discuss the background of this study, Lesotho, the theory guiding this study, and the narrowing concepts to clarify the focus of the study.

The general background being provided for this study consists of geographical information for the reader about Lesotho, assuming no familiarity with this region. Additional information will continue with pertinent facts and other specific pieces of data that may be needed to adequately explain or illustrate topics in this work.

The theory portion of the literature review will go into greater detail as to the theory I chose to guide my study, its original concept, and its development. Before that, I will review the theories in general that preceded or influenced the theory I have applied to my study. Then I will explain the original concept of Cultural Identity Theory as introduced by Collier and Thomas and follow its development over time. Within this portion, I will present research done by scholars to show how this concept has been studied and what gaps can still be covered.

Narrowing concepts is a necessary step in my application of the theory to clarify the focus of the study. Therefore, after discussing the theory, I will look at how all my other key concepts have been studied and explain them, if necessary. First, I will look more specifically

into one of the mentioned gaps in research: age identity. I will include a brief overview of how age and intergenerational value differences have been studied before. I will then narrow down my focus even more to look at traditions. An important question presents itself concerning traditional values: is there a difference in how older and younger Basotho describe and understand traditional values and integrate them into their lives? To understand this better, I will use a simple definition of the term tradition, embedded in context of other understandings and implications of the term, as well as an overview of existing literature on traditional values, mostly set in case studies outside of the US. A last way to narrow down my subject is to focus not on tradition as a whole in Lesotho, but on traditions in their communities, so traditions and traditional values that become visible in communication. Again, I have set up some basic information on the term community and then looked at studies done also in the African context.

Upon the conclusion of the literature review, the method of this study (semi-structured interviews) will be presented and justified, and the research process will be explained. The participants will also be introduced, as well as the method of analysis (thematic analysis). The results of the analysis will then be presented in detail, which leads to the discussion and conclusions. Limitations of this study will be mentioned as well as directions for further research.

2 THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

Lesotho is a small country, about the size and shape of Belgium, in Southern Africa. It is completely landlocked and has just one single neighboring country, South Africa (Department of State, 2012). Lesotho used to be supported by the international community when it served as a neutral place for refugees from South Africa's apartheid regime, but nowadays, most projects have ended and most embassies have left (Department of State, 2012). It is to this day

completely economically dependent on its big neighbor: most of its goods are imported and Lesotho's few natural resources (water and diamonds) go directly to South Africa (Department of State, 2012). Lesotho's form of government is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy (Department of State, 2012). It is currently governed by Prime Minister Bethuel Pakalitha Mosisili (elected in 2015 in snap elections because of political unrest following a coup in August 2014). The king, Letsie III., mostly fulfils representative functions. Due to its natural high elevation (the lowest point is at almost a mile above sea level), Lesotho is also known as the Mountain Kingdom (Lesotho Government online). Lesotho's inhabitants are called Basotho (singular: Mosotho) and its official languages are Sesotho and English (Infoplease, 2016). Lesotho has around 2.1 million inhabitants (World Bank, 2016). More than 99% of the population are ethnic Basotho and 80% Christian (Infoplease, 2016). Beyond this basic data, Lesotho has often been overlooked, even though much can still be learnt from its society.

Relevant research for my area on traditional values in Lesotho is rare. Most scientific studies have been on health-related issues, such as Corno and de Walque's (2013) article on determinants of stigmatization and HIV testing in Lesotho. This of course makes sense, at an HIV/AIDS rate in Lesotho of almost 25% (UNAIDS, 2014). Others are about education, such as Ansel (2004), who did a case study in Lesotho and Zimbabwe on the effects of secondary school on young adults' transition into adulthood, finding among others that marriage and childbirth are delayed, but leaving their families sooner is encouraged. Girls are taught early in household and childrearing chores, but also work in the fields (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2016). Many boys, on the other hand, do not attend school when they are young because of their herding duties, hence there can be quite a big age difference in school classes (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2016). In general, tasks are strictly separated by gender, and women have a lower status than men, also

seen in marriage (Lesotho High Commission, 2011). It is also highly uncommon for women to succeed to chiefs, due to legal questions and customary law, as well as the development of chieftainship in general and today's role of chiefs (Juma, 2013). There is progress in gender equality in Lesotho, even though a lot still needs to be done, mostly because of the slow process to change constitutional law (Juma, 2013). Sexual abuse in unfortunately rather common, too, and often unreported (Everett, 1997). Help is often only sought out after the situation becomes completely intolerable (Everett, 1997). From this limited spectrum of what we can know about the Basotho's values, we can fill in more of a picture with what we generally know about their practices.

Cattle is still considered very important in Lesotho, especially in the rural areas (Ferguson, 1985). Livestock and cows in particular show the wealth of a family, though not as much as in the past (Ferguson, 1985). Traditionally, many men go to South Africa to work in the mines, eroding family structures through their long absences (Boltson Gordon, 1994). The wives of these men are in a rather unfortunate situation, as they are often dependent on the man's income from abroad, but at the same time more independent through their husbands' absence (Boltson Gordon, 1994). It can also be seen as one cause for having multiple sexual partners because women try to receive other men's wages (Turkon, 2009). This is the way things can proceed in Lesotho, not only because it is a way that works, but also because it is a way that is encouraged by the elders.

As indicated earlier, the elderly have very specific and important roles in the family and society as a whole (Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012). Global changes and the new world did not affect the elderly's roles in their society in this study (Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012). The elderly's roles in their societies and immediate families include socialization and education, as

well as "protective and mystical functions", and they are sources of knowledge for health-related matters" (Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012, p. 251). They also provide leadership in society and have some areas and practices reserved to them, like giving sacrifice in order to "appease the gods" (Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012, p. 251). This concept of elderly guidance flourishes because of commonly held beliefs in this ethnically uniform country.

Lesotho's homogeneity excludes studies on culture, ethnicity, or religion (Turkon, 2009). However, Turkon, (2009) found class to be important. A lot of value is placed on wealth and class distinctions (Turkon, 2009). There are distinctions between the rich (barui), the poor (bafutsana), and the pretty undefined middle class (Turkon, 2009). Turkon (2009) found rural Basotho often do not see the middle class and jump straight to rich, this terminology referring to everybody who can feed themselves regularly. They also believed people in rural areas to be more likely to help one another in times of need, but that reciprocity has changed and is not seen the same way (Turkon, 2009). The poor often contribute their plights to their richer neighbors who do not behave in the traditional ways anymore to help them out (Turkon, 2009).

As for immigration into Lesotho, Akokpari's study (2005) found despite an ongoing debate in the country that mostly leans against immigration (for different reasons: foreigners are not relevant for national development, they bring in disease, compromise jobs, raise crime rates, and endanger the homogeneity of the country), the author highlighted the limitations of these arguments and concluded that Lesotho could only profit from immigrants, especially as labor force for work skills.

3 IDENTITY CONCEPTS

3.1 Identity

The questions about one's own identity are probably as old as humanity itself, and almost everybody has wondered about them at some point in their lives. People have also found different answers as to their salient identities. Academically, scholars have also studied this concept under many different angles. As this study aims to uncover the influence of communal traditions on cultural identity, it is imperative to have a good grasp of how this subject has been studied over the years.

These different angles on the study of identity are often related in some way: Social Identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), Identity Negotiation (Ting-Toomey, 1985), and Communication Theory of Identity (Hecht, 1993) are just a few theories worthy of mention. For this thesis, however, I will follow Collier and Thomas's (1988) Cultural Identity Theory. Jameson (2004) distinguished cultural identity from social identity by saying that the latter concerned only the present, while the former also considered what an individual had learnt in the past and how he or she wanted to act in the future.

The following identity theories have influenced the becoming of Cultural Identity Theory, as some elements are common to many concepts of identity. Hecht's theory then evolved from Cultural Identity Theory, adopting some of its aspects. Also coming from the interpretive spectrum, they share some similarities and are thus important to look at when trying to understand Cultural Identity Theory.

Chronologically, the first theory to come out was Ting-Toomey's Identity Negotiation Theory in the 1980s, later reviewed in 2005. Identity, for Ting-Toomey, is flexible self-images that individuals construct according to the culture and the situation (Ting-Toomey, 2005). People

have multiple images of themselves, which are constantly affected by different kinds of identity, like personal, social, and cultural, and can change or be challenged during an interaction (Ting-Toomey, 2005; Toomey et al., 2013). To Ting-Toomey, identity is so important because by understanding it better, we can understand much better who others are and thus communicate better (Ting-Toomey, 2009). According to her, it is only after this understanding that intercultural communication will be successful.

Cultural Identity Theory has then itself been a source for other theories. One example for this is Hecht's Communication Theory of Identity developed in the 1980s and 1990s. It takes into account both the individual and society, as well as performance and relationship (Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2005). Hecht proposed 10 basic assumptions about identities' properties (Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2005). The new element of this theory is that identities, constructed in communication with others, are seen to have four frames: personal (i.e., how a person sees themselves), enactment (identities are acted out in communication), relational (people change their behavior according to who they are communicating with, and are influenced by the other person) and communal (groups that also have identities with particular characteristics) (Hecht, 1993; 2009; Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2005). The frames of identity are not separate entities, but they are interwoven and can all have different levels of importance in a given context.

Hecht's theory borrows from Collier's in that their identities are multiple and dynamic, that communication is important for the concept, the existence of ascription, and identities have a relational aspect. The main difference is that Communication Theory of Identity concentrates more on identity as a whole, moving away from the purely cultural perspective that Collier and Thomas's approach takes.

Many scholars have made identity their field of interest in their studies. These authors do not focus on Collier's approach, but rather make identity issues their theme in their research. Most focus on the cultural identity of minority groups. Most often, their area of interest is an ethnic minority group in the US, and how these groups construct or maintain their cultural identity. Maeda (2005) stated that long repression and the following fight against oppression constituted an important part in forming a distinct cultural identity for Asian Americans (Maeda, 2005). Craft Al-Hazza and Bucher (2008) also looked at cultural identity building of a minority in the US, but at that of Arab Americans, by analyzing children's literature in an elementary school classroom. Other researchers looked at African American cultural identity by analyzing plays (Shannon, 2009) or used an identity theory to explore the preservation of native Aruban cultural identity (Razak, 1995).

Another angle under which to study identity is in the professional context. Slay and Smith (2011) were interested in how cultural stigma affects professional identity construction. Professional identity building in this study is not defined too differently from identity building in general (a self-concept made up of values, beliefs, etc.).

Similar to Ting-Toomey, Collier's cultural identity theory has also undergone significant changes. Due to critiques that mention the dangerous influence of ascription, Collier has made some revisions to change it into Cultural Identity Negotiation Theory (CINT) (Collier, 2009b). It still has interpretive elements, but combines them with critical perspectives, thus focusing more on hierarchical and power issues (Collier, 2009b). Contextual identity negotiation became more important, and a bigger focus was put on finding out and warning against injustice (Collier, 2009b).

Scholars have often done CINT research on opinions of marginalized minority groups; for example, on overt and subjacent racism discourse by personnel in U.S. courtrooms (Myers & Collier, 2005). In 2009, Collier used this new framework in a study analyzing interview discourse from female participants in a US peace-building program in the Middle East. Group membership, explicit or implicit, was important in this study, and avowal and ascription occur both all the time when these groups come together (Collier, 2009a). Critical and interpretive, Collier called for researchers to "uncover their own systems of oppression" (Collier, 2009b, p. 263) and to make changes accordingly, in all areas of life. This also goes for the private life. Together with Thompson, Collier looked at intersecting identities in interracial couples in the U.S. (2006). They found couples' identities changed over time, but the couples always did their utmost to protect their relationship and their partner from discrimination.

Another research focus for CINT is group identity. Collier (2009c) also used her altered framework on a study on group identity of two Northern Ireland intercommunity groups. She found out how these identities are negotiated simultaneously as different kinds of privileged positions, and the importance of tensions and contradictions resulting from being a member of two community groups at once. Another example of the new framework in action is the study done by Chen and Collier (2012) on people involved in some way with two identity-based non-profit organizations. Through interviews, the researchers found that the most frequently avowed and ascribed characteristic was Asianness, and how relationships and hierarchies are negotiated.

One can clearly see the focus of existing literature on identity in general lies on minority groups. This approach, however, is not likely to come up in this paper because my only goal is to talk about the Basotho's communal traditional values and their connection to cultural identity. If power questions do arise, I will take a closer look on the more critical approach in my

discussion, but I do not expect them to. For my research, I will thus use the original version of the theoretical framework.

3.2 Cultural identity theory

Even though these other concepts of identity and identity theories are all interesting and borrow from one another, this paper will follow Collier and Thomas's approach to cultural identity theory (1988) because its purpose was from the beginning to be about cultural identity. This theoretical framework can be located in the interpretive spectrum. Most researchers use it along with qualitative research methods such as interviews or focus groups, which makes sense because identity in general is not an easy subject to put into words (Collier, 2009b). In the following, I will explain this theory in detail based on their original text on their theory because its different aspects will be linked to my results later on.

Proposed in 1988, Cultural Identity Theory explains the communicative processes in the individual to construct and negotiate their cultural group identity, as well as their identity in relationship with others (Collier, 2009b).

Before Collier and Thomas's theory, cultural identity was often seen as a solid block that then was used to help explain and predict behavior (Collier & Thomas, 1988). According to Collier and Thomas, this led to overgeneralizations, oversimplifications, and stereotyping. To prevent this, they argued for more analyses of actual discourse, as that is where cultural interpretations are revealed most clearly. It is in discourse that interlocutors acknowledge and work around their cultural differences. As opposed to social identity, cultural identity mostly comes into play when intercultural communication takes place, that is with another person or group of people with different cultural identities.

As previous definitions of culture depend on certain sets of behaviors and characteristics, which are problematic according to the authors because one can never be sure of how many of these need to overlap or differ in order for communication to be intercultural, they followed another definition for culture: "a historically transmitted system of symbols and meanings, and norms" (p. 102). It is thus not limited to nation cultures, but does not specifically exclude these either. It can refer to as many things as ethnicity, gender, profession, age etc. This relatively simple yet comprehensive definition works well in the context of my study because it shares characteristics with definitions of traditions. As the two terms are intricately linked, looking at traditions in the context of cultural identity regarding age makes perfect sense. As different age groups have had different experiences in life, they also may have different salient cultural identities, qualifying these groups for analysis in my case study. The original version of this theory focuses on common contextual symbols as signs for culture (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Hence, culture is emergent in communication, when the symbols are being used (Collier & Thomas, 1988). These symbols are subject to change during the course of an interaction (Collier & Thomas, 1988). The authors see them as relatively stable over time, but flexible at the same time during an interaction. Hence, this model does not view culture as a static element, like many older researchers do, and it does not limit culture to nationalities. Culture can mean both background and heritage and emergent behavior in a specific situation, using a specific thematic identity (Collier, 1989).

Norms or rules are here used in the context of which behaviors are encouraged or discouraged in a given cultural group, and refer to actual actions, often important in the institutions of life, such as schools, churches, family, or community. They are defined as "communicative prescriptions that specify when and how actions are to be performed" (p. 108).

Meanings are about the symbolic meaning of these norms, often visible in stories, myths and metaphors.

This theory works based on several epistemological and ontological assumptions. It is an interpretive model, is thus out to explore the specific experiences of individuals, not to confirm hypotheses, and believes realities can be subjective. It often asks for the core knowledge of members of the culture, which at the same time facilitates and restraints behavior. Collier and Thomas assumed people have multiple types of cultural identities, like national, ethnic, or class identities. Identity, once adopted, can be managed and negotiated during an interaction. It would be too easy, they continued, to assume people judge each other based solely on nationality. It is important to note that people negotiate identity all the time and everywhere depending on the context. In one situation, one's identity as a professional soccer player may be more salient, in another, the fact that one is a woman can be more important.

They defined intercultural communication as "contact between persons who identify as distinct from one another in cultural terms" (p. 100). Of course, this is a broad definition. However, it allows me to consider intergenerational communication in Lesotho as intercultural. Especially in this rapidly changing world, the generation of today's grandparents grew up significantly differently than today's youths, possibly resulting in differences in their cultural identities. I expect certain differences to become apparent in my interviews, if they exist. I will see to what extent my interviewees will see themselves as being culturally different or similar to the other group.

Cultural identity is defined as "identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has shared systems of symbols and meanings as well as norms/rules for conduct" (p. 113). In other words, once people identify with cultural groups, they are able to function well in that

group because they know what is expected of them. Cultural identity is a dynamic and fluid concept, however, because it depends on the interaction. At the same time, it is passed from one generation to the next, so it also has a certain amount of continuity.

Cultural identity can be positioned in three dimensions. Scope refers to the breadth and generalizability of an identity, so it is about how many people share it. Nationality, as an example, is a very broad identity and can be applied to many people, whereas other identities, such as an exotic job, may only apply to a handful of people. Salience, the next dimension, is about the relative importance of a certain identity over another in a given context. During a workshop on gender equality, it may be more important that I am a woman, whereas in the university, my identity as a student is more salient. The third dimension is intensity. This refers to how strongly the identities are communicated, in voice tone, the way of talking about them, the strength of language used, or other verbal and nonverbal markers. These dimensions are positioned according to situational context, time, and relationship (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Several identities are listed as examples, like gender, ethnicity, or professional identity. Considering that one individual always has several identities (e.g. gender, ethnicity, cultural), Collier (1989) finds it interesting to study which identity takes precedence over the other, when, and why. I too am interested in this question in this study, whether age can be seen as a distinctive identity marker in my sample of Basotho or if a national cultural identity overshadows intergenerational differences on questions of communal traditions. Collier also found the combination of identities and resulting codes of behavior resulted in a positive overall identity, if the outcome of the interaction is positive (Collier, 1989).

Another very important aspect of this theory is the concepts of avowal and ascription of particular cultural identities. Avowal means how people portray themselves, whereas ascription

refers to the identities and characteristics attributed to a person by others (Collier, 2009b).

According to Collier, these are involved in the process of identity formation. Depending on the

situation, context, relationship between the interacting parties, or the topic, they may vary in

intensity (Collier, 2009b).

The ultimate goal of the cultural identity theory is to understand "why particular conduct

is viewed as appropriate and effective and what can be learned to help individuals improve the

quality of their own experience" (Collier, 1989, p. 295). Communication, according to Collier, is

intercultural, if the participating parties view themselves as culturally different (Collier, 1989).

Intercultural competence, then, is "the demonstrated ability to negotiate mutual meanings, rules,

and positive outcomes" (Collier and Thomas, 1988, p.108). Collier thus defined cultural

competence as the behavior that is appropriate and effective for both partners when interacting

with the identities employed at one given moment, and it is implicitly assumed that people will

know how to behave (Collier, 1989). She said intercultural competence is higher, if there is more

cultural difference between participants, and if the match between avowal and ascription is

higher (Collier, 1989). The participants of an interaction can also negotiate competence, together,

if the researcher asks them to tell which behavior would be appropriate for the chosen cultural

identities (Collier, 1989). To ask about cultural identity, a good method is to ask to describe a

recent conversation or interaction with a member of another culture, and to describe the other

person's behavior.

The idea of culture as transmitted "symbols, meanings, and norms" (Collier, 1989, p.

295) which emerge in communication, the processes of avowal and ascription, and the

assumption all groups have "shared systems of symbols and meanings as well as norms/rules for

conduct" (Collier, 1989, p. 296) will all be essential in my research.

There are a number of studies relying on cultural identity theory. Most of them focus on minority groups, as seen in identity studies above. A first example is Collier's article on ethnic friendships (2003). It is a study on the relationship between friendship values and ethnic background done on Asian, African, Latino, and Anglo Americans, both in and between these groups. She used the cultural identity theory to explain the different background identities (ethnic and others) the participants had. She found several similarities, but also differences, for example that African Americans valued respect and consideration more than the other groups (Collier, 2003).

Other researchers concentrate more on education. Lu (2001), for instance, relied on Collier and Thomas's (1988) model of cultural identity in his study about how communication practices in Chinese schools around Chicago can play a role in the development of a bicultural identity of Chinese immigrants. Participation, observation, and interviews yielded the desire for a bicultural identity in these people (Lu, 2001).

Collier did also some research about South Africa, Lesotho's only neighboring country. It is culturally, historically, socioeconomically different, but it approaches us to the region. She looked at cultural identifications in 1992 and 1999 and found some differences between the times just before the installation of the first freely elected government and three years into the official transformation time (Collier, 2005). Goldschmidt (2003) did the same, looking at ethnicity and cultural identity. She looked at the sense of identity in students in the new South Africa and was interested in the question of whether identity was still mostly based on ethnicity.

Oyeshile (2004) took on the challenge of talking about Africa as a whole in his article about the connection of cultural identity, communal values, and the development of today's Africa. He identified numerous problems of the continent, such as the developmental crisis,

multi-ethnic states, and dictatorship, though most importantly the colonists' arbitrarily drawn borders messing up tribes. He argued that the solution to these problems lay in a return to traditional African communal values (Oyeshile, 2004). He defined these values as providing support for the individual in hard times. At the same time, African leaders should be ready to accept new values and ideas in order to help development in the future (Oyeshile, 2004). As for identity of "the African", he suggests borrowing elements from both indigenous and foreign culture. Oyeshile's article will be of some interest to this study as he explored both identity and traditions in Africa.

Of course, there has been some criticism of Cultural Identity Theory. One example is Jameson's article to reconceptualize cultural identity in the business world (2007). According to her, Collier's approach is too layered and fragmented, one "part" of identity taking over in any given situation, whereas individuals tend to see themselves as whole units. For Jameson, Collier's theory is mainly convenient for researchers because it allows focusing on one specific sub-identity, at the expense of all others. Jameson proposed a different model focusing more on the individual perspective, likened to a pie chart where the different components may vary in importance, but always add up to 100%. The identity then needs to be more than just a sum of the parts. However, Jameson valued some aspects of Collier's theory, such as avowal and ascription, and the fluid negotiation of identity.

Chang (2011) took another approach. Instead of looking at the group level of identity, like Collier and many other researchers, she claimed in her case study about high school teachers communication at a parent-teacher conference in China that the other researchers' viewpoints could lead to group stereotypes. According to her, individual people also find their own styles of communication, in this way forming both cultural and personal identity through their

communication. The teacher's style of communication was influenced by the culture, but also by a more personal element (Chang, 2011). Chang suggested cultural identity could not account for every aspect of communication, that individuality mattered in every culture as well. She called for people to see their counterparts not just as members of a culture, but also as individuals.

Of course, it is important to remember that culture does not define everything. However, it is not the point of my case study to define my interviewed Basotho's cultural identity, let alone the entire people, solely through their communal traditions. I am fully aware that all I can provide is a small piece of an intricate web of identities, values, and even traditions. Nevertheless, my study makes sense in that it tries to find out if traditional communal values and cultural identity are linked, and how.

In conclusion to the use of Collier's theory, one sees that this theory of cultural identity has undergone several changes over the years, both in definition and in literature. Emerged from other identity theories, it later morphed into a more critical theory, although it can still be interpretive.

It becomes evident that saying "cultural identity" does not always mean authors refer to the same idea, as there are many other concepts out there that have not been explored here for reasons of brevity. However, even if they do not directly reference to it, they follow concepts that seem similar to Collier's in many ways and many factors coincide with Collier's theory. This is why I have included them and deem them appropriate for reference, now and later on in my study. However, their approach is, most often, to study cultural minority groups or ethnicities. Those that do refer directly to the old version of Cultural Identity Theory, including Collier herself, seem to focus on the study of cultural identity of ethnic minorities in the US. They do this in multiple contexts, such as friendship or education. Usually, these studies are

either interpretive or critical. Studies on the newer and more critical version of the theory focus on racism, group identity in communities and organizations, or on education. Critique emerges against the fragmented nature of identity in this theory that may endanger real-life applicability, as people can be more entities than layers of identities.

From existing research, it is obvious the method used in studies with this theory is most often qualitative, usually interviews. I found very few articles that even remotely resembled quantitative work, and those were usually not directly mentioning Collier's theory. Even though the topics in research were diverse, researchers put a strong focus on the cultural identity of ethnic minority groups, most often in the US or in South Africa. There, diverse countries of many ethnicities, this makes sense. However, overall, by exploring existing literature, this literature review highlights it is necessary to broaden the scope of research a little bit to include other aspects of identity as well mentioned in the original theory. That is why my study is to focus on an ethnic majority group instead of the minority, and to ignore ethnicity completely. I am interested in whether this theory also applies to intergenerational communication. Therefore, the next subchapter aims to give an overview about intergenerational value changes.

4 NARROWING TOPICS

4.1 Intergenerational values

We have seen that cultural identity can refer to many things. As elaborated by Collier and Thomas, two cultural systems can well mean two different age groups. As the context country of my study is ethnically homogenous, it makes sense to focus on age. As ethnicity has been studied in detail, I want to focus on another variable: age. I am interested in whether age contributes to the forming of a cultural identity of Basotho. As age is not really a concept that needs

explanation, I will look at what research has already provided us with about age and intergenerational studies.

Values, followed by rituals, are at the core of the culture of any group (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). Especially values are often hard to put into words and illusive (Hofstede et al., 2010). This makes them difficult to distinguish when studying any group. However, as these values are at the core of this study, they must be found. There is quite a bit of research on intergenerational differences in values, most often in the US, usually about work values. Twenge (2010), for example, did a quantitative study comparing baby boomers to the two generations born after 1982 in the US, GenX and GenMe. He also did another study asking high school seniors of different years (1976, 1991, and 2006), along with Campbell, Hoffman, and Lance (2010). Both studies found that contrary to popular beliefs, there are no significant differences between the generations on altruistic values. However, the younger generations do value leisure more and the centrality of work declined (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010). These studies have practical implications for companies to interest the newer generations. Smola and Sutton (2002) also found a change in work values across generations. They confirmed the results that a balance between work and free time is more valued among the younger generation. Twenge, Campbell, and Freeman also did a quantitative study on young adult's life goals, concern for others, and civic goals between 1966 and 2009 (2012). Like in the work value study, for the younger two generations, extrinsic values like money, status and fame were more important than to baby boomers, whereas intrinsic values like community and acceptance were more important to the latter. Ahn and Ettner (2014) researched the question of whether leadership values are different across generations. Comparing executives and MBA students, they found integrity, good judgment, leadership by example, decision-making, trust, justice, and

sense of urgency were rated similarly across the groups. The authors concluded that some values may be fundamental and not prone to change across generations (Ahn & Ettner, 2014).

There are also studies comparing the US with other countries, especially in the Asian context. One such study has been done by Yi, Ribbens, Fu, and Cheng (2015) on variances of career and workplace attitudes by generation, gender, and culture. They compared China and the US. They found that culture influences the other two variables, but that intergenerational differences on work values were more pronounced in the US sample, concluding that there is more of a traditional culture in China (Yi, Ribbens, Fu, & Cheng, 2015). This led them to conclude, once more, that people born during the same time cannot necessarily be thrown in the pot of "one generation", as their socialization may have been completely different (Yi, Ribbens, Fu, & Cheng, 2015).

One can see work values make up the bulk of comparative value studies. As for family values, Lackland Sam, Peltzer, and Mayer (2005) did a study on changing values about children and the right family size in South Africa. They looked at emotional, socio-normative, and practical reasons to have children and discovered many women had more children than what they considered to be the ideal family size.

Age identity itself has not been studied a lot. One example is Harwood (1999), who researched the link between age/generational identity and TV viewing preferences. Looking at Tajfel's Social identity theory, he showed that if a young adult had a high level of age identity, he or she was more likely to imagine young characters in an ideal TV show than a young adult with lower age identity (Harwood, 1999). The effect size found was relatively small due to young people's other social identities, but the author still sees potential for research on the use of media and the effects caused by consuming media (Harwood, 1999).

All throughout the literature, authors found subtle or more significant differences in values between generations, be it about work, civic engagement, family, or even TV show character preference. This leads me to expect intergenerational differences in my study as well, differences concerning the young and the old generation's view on traditional values and their importance. In this study's context it will hence be more important to look at traditional values than at civic or work values. In order to do that, one must understand what tradition entails and how it will be used, which the next sub-chapter will cover.

4.2 Tradition

Studies on age or generational differences, as discussed, are often connected to a change in values. According to Collier and Thomas, culture is something handed down and taught by previous generations. Since traditions and values are part of this concept of culture, they are transmitted from parents to children, from the old to the young, to form a new yet similar cultural identity. But are they? In a changing world where influences from other countries increasingly form the youth through the Internet and other media, are there still common views on traditional values in Lesotho? Before I can answer that question, I would like to clarify the concept of tradition, as well as look at how it has come up in other research. I will also present a short basic definition which I will follow for this thesis, before finding out from my interviewees themselves how they understand tradition.

Kratz (1993) did a comprehensive study on the complicated nature of traditional values and cultural practices and the more modern way in contemporary Africa. Her study was on traditional initiation practices of the Okiek, a tribe in Kenya. She looked at the term "tradition" first and then explained what it meant to the Okiek. Kratz found that the Okiek focus on forest

life and ceremony in their accounts of what is traditional. It is also difficult to isolate single aspects of their traditional life because they are all interwoven (Kratz, 1993). She also found a strong link to identity politics, connecting traditions to time, history, and identity, meaning traditions were created according to cultural assumptions and sociopolitical organization (Kratz, 1993). Another very important finding was that traditions do get "updated" to still fit into modern Okiek lifestyle (Kratz, 1993).

According to Kratz (1993), it is important to make use of differing views on traditions that might not be included in scholarly literature, by asking the Okiek, or whoever one's respective study is about. This means paying close attention to the particular people that is the subject of the study, and its own ways, like discourse and actions. It also means connecting its traditions' daily occurrence to the historical context. Also, it is important to remember that the insiders' perspective on tradition will be different depending on gender, age, and personal experiences (Kratz, 1993). Accordingly, when one studies tradition, uniformity and rigidity are not a condition sine qua non. Traditions, like culture, can change and sometimes viewpoints can vary between even two people of similar age and background (Kratz, 1993), which confirms what Yi, Ribbens, Fu, and Cheng (2015) found in China. Explaining this kind of social change, though, can be difficult. Geertz (1973) commented on how the functionalist system approach could often not account for social change, even though it is normal and necessary. To him, the problem lies in the tendency to focus on either culture or social structure, ignoring the other one or treating it like it is just an echo of the first. They are interdependent, but also dependent of each other (Geertz, 1973). His approach is more dynamic and allows for different kinds of integration. Through a Javanese example, he elaborated that culture and social structure can

indeed be independent of one another, and that change to one does not always necessarily mean a change to the other (Geertz, 1973).

Kratz's (1993) article also provided me with an extensive discussion on what the term "tradition" really entails. In her literature review, she brought up several different understandings of the term together and also acknowledged it is by no means a universal term. She first defined it "as a cultural concept, tradition is an attitude towards and way of evaluating and understanding experience and is a concept implicated in the representations and understandings of history and identity through time" (p.31). She emphasized, however, that the term "tradition" carried with it certain associations and assumptions in the English language that might not be the same in other cultures. Categorizing practices as either traditional or modern, colonial or postcolonial without a closer look at local concepts and real-life practice creates a unidimensional picture and robs the researcher of the chance for deeper reflection (Kratz, 1993). The term "tradition" is often an emotionally charged one because it is connected to other terms, such as "custom, tribe, change, non-literacy, progress, modernity, innovation, and development" (p.31). In colonial history, the term has been common to justify domination and discrimination. A good example of this is South Africa (Packard, 1989), where white South Africans diminished the black population by calling their behavior and customs "traditional", thereby justifying their merciless rule.

A problem with research on tradition is that researchers rarely ask their interviewees for their understanding of the term. I will hence make it a special point to do just that, as I agree that concepts might differ very much. As a cultural outsider, it is more than likely that I interpret a cultural practice or behavior as traditional, while Basotho might say this or that practice is modern, or at least they do not see it as traditional.

For this study, tradition should not be associated with negative or even colonist ideas. Like Kratz, I will ask Basotho themselves what they think of as traditional, as a concept and in concrete examples. This is to avoid to unconsciously make positive or negative associations. Traditions are always elements from the past, and as such only present in small doses in today's world, and constantly threatened by new influences and developments (Kratz, 1993). It is often understood as the opposite of the modern or progressive, which leads to either romanticizing or denouncing it, depending on one's stand (Kratz, 1993). Hence, before collecting my actual data, I will go with a more general and value-neutral definition, following Merriam-Webster online (n.d.): "an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (as a religious practice or a social custom)". This study will thus be open for both traditional actions and behavior and traditional beliefs or values, everything that might be important for the identity formation.

There is no lack of research on tradition in today's world, and over a variety of contexts. I have thus put my focus on studies done on countries other than the US and Europe. Traditional objects, knowledge, concepts, practices, and values have all been looked at. Some of this research includes conciliating traditional cultural beliefs with modern practices, like Rahardjo (1994), who looked at the inconsistencies visible in Indonesia, where the state tried to reconcile the rule of law and traditional communal cultural practices. Hilson (2012) looked at how cultural values in Mali may justify child labor in the mines. In addition to poverty and lack of schooling, cultural values, such as the tradition to get children to work as soon as possible, or the viewpoint of household property (children included) being only one's own business, all connect to child labor (Hilson, 2012). These studies are most often located in the critical spectrum.

The traditional and the modern world also clash extremely when it comes to health care. A lot of research has also been done on both traditional and modern health care, and on the junction between the two different systems. Examples come from all over the world. Torri (2011) looked at Mapuche healers in Chile navigating between traditional and modern elements, Agbor and Naidoo (2011) found traditional oral health healers are still preferred over dentists in Cameroun, Raschke and Cheema (2007) found changing nutritional habits in East Africa, and Penn, Watermeyer, MacDonald and Moabelo (2009) explored grandmothers' knowledge on genetic diseases in South Africa.

Some authors explored other traditional elements of Southern African societies which may also come up in this study. Firenzi (2012) looked at the element of traditional dance in Zulu society in South Africa in a historic study from 1830 to the present. Dance has been a central element to African societies for centuries; however, the functions have changed (Firenzi, 2012). From a means of social and political control over a means of nationalist sentiment and spirituality in the colonial times, as a means of distinction between tribes, to finally a modern affirmation of what it means to be a Zulu (Firenzi, 2012). Disele, Tyler, and Power (2011) researched in Botswana how traditional dress serves to reflect and conserve culture. One way to maintain a sense of belonging, national identity and pride, according to the authors, is to reestablish traditional dress, important to ethnic identity to subtly express social functions and cultural value. Other functions can be to illustrate the importance of an occasion or the respect of the self by following cultural norms for dress (Disele, Tyler, and Power, 2011). They found that cultural norms could be very closely linked to material expressions.

Other authors went beyond the description of traditions and instead tried to find causes for a shift in traditional values. Wahab, Odunsi, and Ajiboye (2012) wrote about Nigeria as an

example for causes and consequences of corroding cultural values in traditional African society. This article fits very well into this study because the authors stated culture was a people's identity. They found a link between colonialism, westernization, and erosion of cultural values. They spoke of a "cultural supermarket effect" because of the ease to move around the world nowadays, both for people and for values, meaning that people do not have to adopt the identity of the place they were born in. They found a stronger tendency to erode cultural values in urban areas as opposed to rural areas, which are still defending themselves. They lamented the loss of a living culture that goes into all areas of life. Instead, western values continue to shape the world, and African views and values are often depicted in stereotypes across the world through media (Wahab, Odusi, & Ajiboye, 2012). They conclude by stressing that there are no cultures that are better than others, that the dominant ones on the world scale are nothing but fortunate (Wahab, Odusi, & Ajiboye, 2012). It will be interesting to find out if Basotho feel the same way about their traditional values.

4.3 Concept of community

This paper will look at traditions and traditional values in Lesotho. However, it will focus on communal traditions, traditions that come into effect within the community. Hence, the concept of community needs to be introduced. Becker and Mark (2002) summarized some preconditions for community, namely "the persistence of members' identities, a commonly shared normative basis, the existence and stability of social conventions, a common interest, a collective rationality, being rooted in the same geographical/local place, and the continuity of the group" (p.22). In a study on South Africa, Kepe (1999) found that there is no consensus on the concept of community, but that basic characteristics can be found. They are spatial proximity, common

economic interests, and social interaction (Kepe, 1999). So far, they are in tune with what Becker and Mark (2002) found. In the context of Kepe's study, however, all three characteristics are difficult to define properly (Kepe, 1999). This shows community membership can be hard to define even for the people living together in the general area, which may come into play in this study. Community is firstly a "unified body of individuals" living in the same geographical area but also "the people with common interests living in a particular area" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.; Sociology Guide, n.d.). These people need to interact and have common characteristics, interests, or values (Merriam-Webster, n.d.; Sociology Guide, n.d.). A sense of belonging of the individuals is also included in the list of general characteristics (Sociology Guide, n.d.).

These are some general descriptions mostly made in the western world. Their application for my context in Southern Africa could work in this general context. There is little research on the concept of community even in Africa as a whole. Most community-related research has been done in the realm of health or development communication. Examples include King (2005) on the role of communities on game conservation, Gregson, Terceira, Mushati, Nyamukapa, and Campbell (2004) on how community group participation can prevent young women from catching HIV, and Fotso & Kuate-Defo (2005) on community and socioeconomic influences on childhood malnutrition. Infield (2001) also looked into how cultural values could be of use to encourage support of local communities in preservation and development projects. It is not enough, according to him, to try to attract tourists, the locals must be on the same page, which means providing them with benefits (Infield, 2001). But mostly, these preservation areas must be in sync with local cultural values, for example by acting or even promoting cultural traditional practices (Infield, 2001).

Globalization stands in opposition of the classic concept of local communities. Kaya (2004) examined the effects of globalization on African communities. He conceded to some advantages globalization may have brought, but also noted many African communities rallying to hold on to their belief systems and cultural identity, regardless of existing economic pressures. Especially for multi-ethnic societies, foreign values can cause harm (Kaya, 2004). He named language and religion as examples for cultural values, but explicitly stated that cultural identity is in no way limited to them. Community identities, according to him, "in many ways influence how economic, political and social relations are conducted because they influence the 'network of trust'" (Kaya, 2004, p. 16). Understanding this network is essential in order to navigate successfully in a community, but according to the author, only the local people have that understanding (Kaya, 2004). He concluded by stating that conflicts in the world and group identities are on the rise because globalization creates in people a need for more localization (Kaya, 2004). He supported this argument through several African examples and asked for a policy change to help with this problem, also by battling poverty in the communities.

However, due to the lack of conceptual information on community in the African context, I will go with the simpler definitions from above and let my interviewees talk about the community that comes naturally to them, the one they feel belonging to, without prying too deeply into definitions.

The literature review shows there is very little literature on the context of Lesotho, which offers a vast opportunity to help fill the gap. In a rapidly changing and globalized world, traditions and traditional values are often among the cultural elements to erode in times of rapid change and westernization (Oyeshile, 2004). It was the interest of this study to find out whether

this change had reached Lesotho. Cultural identity theory was chosen to guide this thesis because traditions, as part of a formal system (Hall, 1970), are often held on to tenaciously. When enough change has happened, however, formal systems can tumble down seemingly quickly (Hall, 1970). Cultural identity theory can help find out how important traditions and traditional values are for certain groups of people in Lesotho, and whether they still influence the forming of one or more cultural identities. Previously, the theory has mostly been researched in the context of minority groups and ethnicity. Since it is such an open theory that, according to the authors, can be applied to many other variables besides ethnicity, it is important someone do just that. Lesotho being ethnically homogenous means it is ideally suited to test Collier and Thomas's cultural identity theory in a context completely away from ethnicity. A differentiating variable between groups was still needed, however. Age was chosen because traditions are elements of the past (Kratz, 1993) that need to be passed on from the older generation to the young to survive. As all these changes are a relatively new phenomenon that touches the lives of today's young generation much more than it did the old at a similar age (Grosz-Ngaté et al., 2014), the aim of this study was to find out how the young and the old might differ in terms of how they rate traditions and traditional values in importance in regard to their cultural identity. Restricting the study to communal values was a matter of focusing this thesis on tradition that is visible in communication. This variable also ensures participants do not talk about their individual or family traditions, but give a broader overlook into Basotho communities.

Having presented an overview of existing research on cultural identity and my key concepts of age identity, tradition, and community, and having given a broad overview about the background country of my study, it is now the goal of the study to find out how they all come together in Lesotho. Based on these issues, the following research questions should be posed.

My first research question aims at finding one or more communal traditions or traditional values. Preferable values will be those agreed upon by both the younger and the older Basotho.

RQ$_1$: According to the younger and older generations, what kinds of communal traditions and traditional values exist in Lesotho?

My next two research questions are out to explore the importance of these communal traditions to Basotho and, ultimately, how they tie in with their cultural identity. I seek to find out whether there is a difference between the older and younger generation of Lesotho based on my sample.

RQ$_2$: How important are these communal traditions and traditional values to both the younger and the older generation?

RQ$_3$: How do these communal traditions and traditional values contribute to the formation of young and old Basotho's cultural identity?

According to Collier and Thomas (1988), cultural identity can be very flexible. So, these questions will find out whether the communal traditions are still the same for all Basotho or whether they have changed. It is likely to find changes between the two generations picked in my sample, but it is also possible to find one cultural identity as Basotho. This study is not generalizable and can only serve as a first overview on Basotho culture. One cannot infer from my sample things will be the same all over Lesotho. However, in-depth answers on their own experiences and views will provide this study with a deeper insight in how cultural identity is formed based on my sample.

These research questions are purposefully broad because I do not wish to focus on too narrow a concept at this early stage. Even during the interviews, I will try to gently probe for themes to focus on in the future (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015).

5 METHOD

5.1 Methodology

The participants for this study were members of both the older and the younger generation of Lesotho. This included people between 18 and 25, and people over 50. In many comparative studies, be they in this research field or in another, most researchers agree that the young adult phase is over after the age of 25, or at the latest in the late twenties, and that the older adult phase begins in the sixties (for example Kuhlmann & Touron, 2012; George & Fitzgerald, 2012; Moisala, Salmela, Hietajärvi, Salo, Carlson et al., 2016; and Miegel & Olson, 2012). For this study, I set similar limits to young adulthood: my sample group are young adults, no longer minors. They are old enough to be aware of their cultural identity, but, depending on the case, still finding their place in society.

However, this study chose to set its own age limit for what constitutes an older person based on the unique characteristics of Lesotho. Life expectancy in Lesotho is generally low, at roughly 50 years for a child born in 2014 (World Bank, 2016). It is often due to the HIV/AIDS prevalence in the country, but since it is an average, there are much fewer older people in Lesotho than in many European countries. Being old in Lesotho is considered a good thing because not everybody is expected to reach a certain age. In addition, there is still a general tendency to marry and have children at an earlier age, making many Basotho over 50 easily grandparents. Lastly, there was the practical matter of the true elderly hardly speaking any English. I did use translators for four of my interviews because it became necessary, but I did not want to restrict myself and my study ahead of time.

The location of the study was in Lesotho. Lesotho was chosen as the contextual background of this study for two reasons. Firstly, I had already spent one year there as a

volunteer and had personal interest in the country. Secondly, there is the before-mentioned lack of research on Basotho culture, making this study highly necessary for the academic community.

As a method for this study, semi-structured interviews were used because the focus of the study was to gain in-depth insights to the perceptions and feelings of the participants, and not to quantify, for example, how often traditional values were seen in use. Semi-structured interviews are adequate for researchers who want to learn about specific themes, and they let people describe freely, while following a general thread of questions (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Not being local most of the time, I needed to get my interviews done when I was in Lesotho, so unstructured interviews would have taken too long. At the same time, I wanted my participants to speak as freely as possible about Basotho cultural identity, with room for their own experiences. "If you want to know how people understand their world and their lives, why not talk with them?" as Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) asked (p.1). My main intention of this study was to understand what communal traditional values there are and how Basotho people interpret them and how they use them to form a cultural identity. There is no existing literature specifically looking at Basotho traditional values and cultural identity. This research aims to understand this specific link and their take on whether traditions help them form a cultural identity. The purpose is not to generalize the findings to all Basotho. Through this qualitative approach, the goal was to receive spontaneous, rich, specific, and relevant answers to provide the material needed for thick description (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 192).

Sometimes described as "an uncertain art or skill" (Skinner, 2012, p. 6), interviews have been oftentimes used by researchers in similar projects. In the 1990s, Silverman (2005) did a small study on how many qualitative research articles used interviews for their method. His results were an impressive 55%. Despite the small number of his sample, just based on my own

research, I can say this is probably still true. Nowadays, the use of the method is growing ever more frequent, also because of technological advances for recordings (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Interviews are thus a popular tool among qualitative researchers (for example Collier, 2003, Lu, 2001, Toomey et al., 2013).

However, doing interviews is not as simple as it sounds and "hard to do well" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.4). Without thorough preparation, the interview will not turn out well because it becomes unlikely there will be new discoveries, as the researcher tends to reproduce old stereotypes (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). If learnt thoroughly through preparation and practice, it can be very revealing (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

The researcher must be aware an interview is also an interpersonal situation between interviewer and interviewee, with all the implications (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The researcher must anticipate their race, gender, class, age, and appearance to matter during the interview (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012).

Interviewing people from other cultural backgrounds can be especially challenging because the researcher is usually not familiar with the ways in which they interact (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Language issues can also pose a problem. Not being a member of a specific group can also make the research process harder, as participants may not completely trust the researcher, leading them to purposely give inaccurate answers, or they might misunderstand the researcher's questions (Miller & Glassner, 2011). However, in this case, most of my interviewees understood my situation of being, on the one hand, fairly familiar with Basotho culture, but on the other hand, not a Mosotho myself. According to Fitch (1994), I found myself in a good situation for an etic researcher: I did not come unprepared, already had a good feel for Basotho culture and language, but was not too involved, as a cultural insider might be. I was

hence able to interpret my interviewees' answers much better than an outsider would. For example, I was able to distinguish typical linguistic errors and could make sure not to interpret meaning where there was none. On the other hand, I was not too involved, and certainly did not feel like I already knew the results of my study beforehand. I was able to go in with an open mind and listen to each interviewee separately. Understanding my position, most of my interviewees offered me the kind of thick description of traditions, events, or examples that I was looking for. According to Geertz (1973), thick description offers detailed and insightful knowledge from cultural insiders to be recorded by others.

A frequent critique against interviews is that they can never completely mirror reality, but only to the meanings that people attribute to the world and their experiences (Miller & Glassner, 2011). In this study's case, this is an asset. The focus is not to depict reality as it is, because that would lead to overgeneralizations and simplifications, but as people, in this case my Basotho sample, experience it. I wanted to "understand and document others' understanding" (Miller & Glassner, 2011, p. 133).

5.2 Participants

Participants included individuals between the ages of 18 and 25, and over 50, respectively. The other criteria for this study were (1) possession of the nationality of Lesotho and (2) to have spent the majority of their lives in Lesotho (more than 50% of their life, and no more than three years in formative childhood and teenage years). There was no absolute need to speak English, as a translator was used in necessary cases, but since the study's language was English, English-speaking individuals were naturally more sought out.

In total, 18 interviews were conducted, consisting of nine young Basotho and nine older Basotho. Participants were found based on personal acquaintance, word of mouth, and coincidental meetings, followed by referrals from other interviewees (snowball sampling) (Neumann, 2011). This method of sampling can be justified in the fact the researcher was not a member of society in Lesotho and needed these gatekeepers to contact more likely candidates for the interviews. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 25 (M=23.11, SD=2.15) in the young group, and 52 to 84 in the older group (M=65.00, SD=10.31). 7 were male and 11 female. They come mainly from the districts of Maseru (12) and Qacha's Nek (4), with one each from Mafeteng and Leribe. Participants were originally both from rural and urban areas. 50% (N=9) were married or widowed and 50% (N=9) were single. Five of them had spent some time abroad (average 13 years), four of them in the neighboring South Africa, and one had been to Kenia, Cuba, and Great Britain. Only three were working in a permanent employment position at the time of the interview, the others were retired (5), students (4), or unemployed (6).

5.3 Procedure

Interviews, widely used in research, provide a good qualitative tool to get answers by asking questions (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2014). I chose to go with semi-structured interviews, a type of interview that is known for some structure being provided by a previously thought-of catalogue of questions, but also for its relatively conversational tone and time for digression in practice (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2014). I also had time to meet with each interviewee only once, so there would be no time for going back later, which I would have had to do if I had worked with unstructured interviews instead (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2014).

The interviews were conducted over a period of three months in Lesotho in the summer of 2016. Finding suitable interviewees proved difficult in the beginning, but since I was also volunteering in the area for seven months, contacts were established. Each participant was interviewed separately, except for two friends who insisted to be interviewed together (participants #15 and #16). Interview length ranged from 17 minutes to 66 minutes, while the most common time was about a half hour (M=34.24, SD=13.65). All interviews were conducted face to face. Most interviews were conducted in English, despite varying levels of proficiency from the participants. In four cases, however, a translator's presence was necessary.

Theoretically, you agree upon the interview time and location with your interviewee (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2014). However, many of my interviewees were very willing, but also more than spontaneous in the execution of the interview. Once, I waited outside in the sun for two hours for an interview partner, before finally deciding he was not coming anymore and going back home, where I then got an angry text asking why I had not waited. Another time, I got the name and the general location of potential interviewees, but then the contact person was not there, so I literally had to knock on a stranger's door and explain my business to him. Sometimes a local translator was needed to ensure good understanding with my interviewees. With one of them, I realized during the interview that he must have misunderstood the directions I had given him beforehand, as he was obviously just giving me a summary of what was being said. It took another explanation to make myself clear. A practice interview with him would have been helpful to prevent that.

For interviews, the setting is important to establish a good relationship (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015), so the interviews were conducted in places of the interviewees' choosing to make them feel more comfortable and share more of their thoughts and feelings than in a more formal

setting (Neumann, 2011). This meant most interviews were conducted in the participants' homes, but other took place in gardens, in a church or at participants' workplaces. Before the start of the interview, each participant signed an informed consent form. In addition, brief questions about demographics were asked. They concerned age, occupation, home town, place of residence, general living situation, and time spent abroad. The results relevant for this study can be found in Table 1. The first interviews during this research project were usually very helpful to explore questions (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). No interview went by uninterrupted. As they took place in the participants' homes, workplaces, or public places, other people often came in. Phone calls made up the most frequent interruption.

Interview questions were designed to ask people about their opinions on traditions and traditional values, their personal view on their importance, and their cultural identity. Mostly open-ended yet easy to understand questions guaranteed participants the freedom to select their own themes, depending on what was important to them, and to describe them at their own pace (Neumann, 2011; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

In addition to note taking, tape-recording device was used to record the interviews, which were then transcribed. These transcriptions were searched for themes via a thematic analysis. This type of analysis was used to accommodate the relatively open research questions. I identified themes by reading through each transcript several times and searching for other commonalties. Intensity and frequency were also put into account (Owen, 1984). To make sure to preserve confidentiality, any time a name comes up in the transcripts, it is a pseudonym.

Table 1

Participants demographic information

Sex	age	place of residence	Lived abroad

Female	23	Ha Seleso	No
Male	25	Ha Seleso	No
Female	24	Ha Seleso	Yes (one year)
Female	24	Ha Seleso	No
Female	73	Qacha's Nek	No
Male	62	Leribe/Qacha's Nek	Yes (five years)
Male	52	Maseru	Yes (11 years)
Female	24	Lithabaneng	No
Male	70	Qacha's Nek	Yes (23 years)
Female	53	Qacha's Nek	No
Female	18	Ha Seleso	No
Female	22	Ha Pita	No
Female	70	Ha Seleso	No
Female	84	Ha Lutsoa	No
Male	23	Maseru	No
Male	25	Morija	No
Male	63	Ha Lutsoa	Yes (26 years)
Female	58	Ha Seleso	No

5.4 Analysis

This study was guided by cultural identity theory. Accordingly, interview questions were designed to search for answers about or to explore Basotho's cultural identity related to their communal traditional values. The questions were out to bring up different traditions, to rate their

importance to the individual, and to put them in relation to his or her cultural identity. Though the questions had this specific goal, they were phrased very openly in order to allow each individual to address what they felt was important. The three dimensions of cultural identity, scope, salience, and intensity, were all taken into account during analysis. Because one of cultural identity theory's main points is the concept of avowal and ascription, some questions were asked about what the interviewee thought of the older or the younger group, respectively.

During the analysis, I read each transcript several times, jotting down first ideas and associations. I then went through them all in a thematic analysis looking for frequently mentioned traditions and traditional values. The most appearing traditions are summarized in Table 2. Some themes were broken down into sub-themes in order to ensure full coverage of the major theme. All mentions in the transcripts were counted. Then, I coded again for the importance of the mentioned traditions and the relation to their cultural identity by looking at relevant data. Through it all, a thematic analysis was used in order to find recurring themes. In the end, the most relevant traditions could be summed up into three major groups, two of which have sub-themes. The traditions that were mentioned less frequently still have relevance; however, since they did not come up in the majority of interviews, they were deemed to be less imperative to the forming of Basotho cultural identity than the main themes. Importance of the mentioned traditions was found for each one separately, and for traditions in general, before then making the link to cultural identity. When using direct citations from the interviews in this study, fillers (such as "uh,", "um", "yeah," or "well") that were not carrying any meaning have been taken out for easier readability. In addition, participants quotations throughout this thesis will be identified according to the order of the interviews and their age. For example, "participant #4, 24" will stand for the fourth participant who is 24 years old.

6 RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to find out how traditional values and practices contribute to the formation of one or more cultural identities of young and older Basotho. To do this accurately, however, additional research questions had to be posed, as literature on Basotho culture and particularly their values is scant. Accordingly, I first had to answer what traditional values and practices even exist in Lesotho. An overview of these results will be presented in 5.2 and 5.3. Then, I had to clarify the importance of these traditional values and practices to the young and the old, respectively, in order to find out whether there was a difference between the generations (5.5). In this part, cultural identity theory was first used. Finally, cultural identity theory really came into play as I analyzed how the traditions contribute to the formation of one or more cultural identities of Basotho in 5.6. The research questions were purposefully open, as they aimed to have participants talk as freely as possible about their reality. Identity is a fairly fluid concept, which can be hard to grasp or to sum up in a few words. The research questions aimed to find out what communal traditions were prevalent in Lesotho and how they connected to the forming of the cultural identity of its people. As there is not much literature on Basotho culture, it would have been difficult to come up with a more specific research question. Guided by the little literature and my own knowledge from my experience in the country, I also wanted to first give the academic world a more general overview of traditions in Lesotho, instead of picking out a single aspect. One must bear in mind, however, this study cannot be generalized to the entire population due to the small sample size. Instead of a generalizable and broad look on Basotho traditions, I chose to go in deeper and narrow my study by qualitatively interviewing people. This approach would allow me to really get to their reality and their perception on traditions. As the many commonalities emerged, one could dare to hypothesize similar commonalities

surfacing with a larger sample, but, again, this study does not provide in any way certainty of this assumption. The commonalities will have to be proven in the future by quantitative and more specific qualitative work.

After thorough analysis of the data, two themes emerged as the most prevalent (traditional values and traditional rituals), which both could be broken down into sub-themes. Although the original focus of this study was to probe for traditional values, many participants easily moved from values to traditional rites or traditional objects, most often clothing. Even though this was not the intended focus, it was obviously important to the participants. This is why communal traditional rituals were included in this analysis as well as traditional values. These traditional rituals also connect well to the value of being together that emerged. In total, there were also four minor themes identified in this research: traditional dancing, traditional clothing, initiation rituals, and Basotho clans. While clothing, dancing, and other objects can obviously carry meaning and identity to people (Firenzi, 2012, on Zulu dances, or Disele, Tyler, & Power, 2011, on traditional dress and cultural identity), they are not communal objects and thus they did not contribute to the aim of this study (the link between cultural identity and traditional values and practices). In other cases, they did not yield much actual information (initiation rituals, which are kept strictly secret from outsiders). This is why clothing as well as the other minor themes will not be included in this study and why I have decided to only focus on the two other main themes, traditional values and traditional rites.

In the following chapter, I will present the results to my three research questions on the basis of the participants' answers in the interviews. Before beginning, though, I will clarify how the interviewees themselves explained the term "tradition" to ensure good understanding of what is meant when they talked about tradition.

6.1 Concept of tradition

Tradition being such a key term in this thesis, just like Kratz (1993), I asked the participants during the interview to define tradition to understand how they understood the term. Many participants defined it close to the simple definition presented before (Merriam-Webster online, n.d.: "an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (as a religious practice or a social custom)". They thus recognized a behavior came from the past, was passed down to them by their ancestors, and was still in practice today.

> It passes from generation to generation […] We view our elders, how they... We are just copying from them. (Participant #4, 24)

> I think tradition, it's, as the world, back, like, where our forefathers come, tradition means that, I think, I can say tradition as things that were done back then. (Participant #12, 22)

> Many participants linked tradition right away with being Basotho, without really making the connection to the past. This is in tune with what Kratz (1993) found in the Okiek in Kenya. Tradition is just seen as an integral part of the culture or as an important way of practicing the culture. The traditional was directly linked to "culture", which for them meant the traditional way of doing things. It was sometimes even perceived to be synonymous with culture, in both past and present.

> Tradition is just a practice of what our parents or our grandfathers do or did, so in order to go, in order to show our culture, we need to respect, so, a tradition is just a practice of our culture. (Participant #2, 25)

> Tradition means maybe culture, yeah, of a certain place […] sharing beliefs, culture. (Participants #15/16, 23/25)

Based on this understanding of tradition, two major themes emerged from the data as answers to the first research question: traditional values and traditional rituals. Both can be broken down into sub-themes. The traditional values which were mentioned the most frequently were respect (including greeting and veneration of elders), sharing (including hospitality and being together), and gender roles. The most frequently mentioned traditional rituals were funeral rites, marriage rites, and ancestor rites. Of course, nothing can be directly inferred concerning other traditions that were perhaps not mentioned in the data. The emergent sub-themes all correspond to the bigger main theme. All of the major themes came up in at least six interviews.

Table 2

Prevalence of themes

	Frequency of subtheme out of 18
Traditional values	
Respect	*17*
Greeting	13
Veneration of elders	14
Sharing	*15*
Hospitality	6
Being together	12
Gender roles	*8*
Traditional rituals	
Funeral rites	*7*
Wedding rites	*6*

6.2 Traditional values

6.2.1 Respect

Respect was the major main theme, a theme that was mentioned in 17 of the 18 interviews and seeming to be the glue of every community. Even in interviews where it was not mentioned as a specific traditional value when asked for them, it usually did come up later during the interview at least once. More often it was a main theme identified in the transcripts. Even though two sub-themes were found, respect in general was mentioned by all 17 participants who brought it up. The remaining participant did not disagree with the value of respect being important, however, the subject just did not come up at all during the interview.

Living in a community does not just mean living close to other people, it means interacting with these other people (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). With globalization bringing many changes to societies all over the world, many African communities have also rallied back to some of their traditional values, such as respect (Kaya, 2004). Everybody has the desire to be treated respectfully by these other people, whether they are family, friends, or complete strangers. Respect makes people feel valued in who they are, seen by their peers and accepted by them. All of these make sure people live together in harmony. Many participants agreed people in general are due respect, as human beings, whether they belong to the same community or not. How to show respect in a community, however, can vary across communities. The participants of this study agreed on a few ideas of what respect meant in Lesotho: greeting everyone in the community, veneration of elders, general politeness, and good manners. The idea of "living a good life", for example, meant not molesting anyone by your own behavior. While general

politeness and good manners seem obvious to any community anywhere in the world, greetings and veneration of elders does not, which is why they will be given a closer look.

According to the sub-themes which emerged in the interviews, respect is mostly shown through greetings and veneration for elders.

6.2.1.1 Greetings

Greetings were evoked by 13 participants, both young and old, as an important tool to express respect in the community, showing it as a behavior that goes beyond age borders. Greetings are thus a very common, everyday kind of way to show respect to other members of the community. Greetings in Lesotho classically consist of a greeting word, meaning hello (usually "lumela", which literally translates to "believe," or "khotso", which means "peace"), plus a mutual "how are you" and answers. After that, the greeting can go on to asking about the families' wellbeing or where a person is going to or coming from, but it is not necessary (Akindele, 2007).

Some people in this sample classified it mostly as a habit: they were taught by their parents and other adults of the community, so much that the behavior ultimately became a natural part of their being. It is a routine taught to children from an early age, which they grow up seeing all around them (Akindele, 2007).

> It is easy, we are used to it. Yes, we are used to it, because we, when we grew up, we saw it, and we are living that, and, you know that, if you don't do it... there is something that I can say, you feel somehow small, that you didn't respect, give the due respect to that person. (Participant #4, 24)

Many participants said greetings were really just a small thing, though tremendously important. A good greeting will not guarantee a good interaction, but a bad greeting, or worse, no

greeting will always be detrimental to positive communication. Many participants agreed it was simply a way of showing the other person you perceive and acknowledge them. It shows friendliness and helps to establish rapport (Akindele, 2007). If you do not greet, especially if it is a person that knows you by sight, at the least you could be scolded, but more likely the other person is going to inform your parents about your misconduct. People who do not greet can also be seen as badly raised or of bad character (Nwoye, 1993). It is seen as a courtesy to a fellow human being to enquire after their wellbeing in that moment.

It is a human being. In our culture, you have to respect, I have to know, how to do things, even it's in my country, I should know whether you're good or bad, so I have to do. In that short period of time, I have to see to it, you see, "are you OK?" That is our tradition. (Participant #6, 62)

There are certain norms for greeting in Lesotho, but they are fairly flexible. After a greeting word, it is usually also expected to ask how the other person is doing. In groups, the newcomer greets first, then everybody is expected to answer for themselves, and then also to ask the question in return (Akindele, 2007). But there is no really set procedure. For example, there are also informal greetings that go by much quicker (Akindele, 2007). In addition, many people explained the younger person is expected to greet the older person first. However, it was also conceded if a younger person does not greet first, the participants of this study would greet anyway as a way of showing they cared for their follow human being, and of teaching the younger person the right way.

Participants also mentioned the mutual respect a greeting establishes. If you do not greet, you are generally not a respectable person yourself because you know you should be doing it. Not greeting shows your disinterest in establishing rapport or plain rudeness (Akindele, 2007). It

is generally expected of everybody, whether you enter a house, or just on the street, whether you

know the other person or not (Akindele, 2007).

> I have to greet everybody. Even the... the one who are younger than me. I do have to
>
> greet them. Just to show a respect. In order for them to respect me, too […] People will
>
> be thinking that I'm rude or something, so. Or, I don't like them. Things like that.
>
> (Participant #11, 18)
>
> You cannot just pass a grownup, like, on the road and not greet, so... Expecting that
>
> greeting and ... the respect, you know. Because you... we... we do a lot of things that are
>
> disrespectful, but then... I think we demand respect. (Participant #1, 23)

Another social function of greetings came up: greetings as a necessity for service and

help. Many Basotho are very willing to help other people, even strangers, but if any plea is not

started out by a formal greeting, many will refuse because they do not feel respected. The same

is true for public services in offices or stores. The greeting establishes the mutual respect, and

only then can the customer really be served. Barging in and coming straight to the point is

considered rude. This may be because Basotho value an interpersonal relationship for any kind

of interaction, which the greeting helps establish (Akindele, 2007). Of course you will usually

still receive service in public offices, but the quality may well be inferior and the time it takes to

get it may well be exceedingly long.

> I usually see it in town, like, I'm going to offices, like if you don't greet, people don't
>
> answer you properly, they don't, they are like, "you are disrespectful, so why should we
>
> help you?" (Participant #1, 23)

Greetings as a sign of respect were considered tremendously important by the

participants. While quick and easy to do, they open doors to successful and satisfactory

communication between people. Other than a means for good communication, greetings state much more than just a mere social convention. They signify true seeing, true perception of the other person, and for a brief moment, you state explicitly you recognize them as a fellow human being.

While this applies to all human beings, regardless of age, participants have also widely mentioned age as an important factor when generally showing respect. Everybody deserves respect, but it seems the elders deserve it even more. That is why the next big theme is the veneration of elders.

6.2.1.2 Veneration of elders

Another important sub-theme to respect is the respect of elders. This was mentioned by 14 participants, across age borders. Many sub-Saharan African societies can be considered gerontocratic, where people hold on to and even gain status as they age (Lagacé, Charmakeh, & Grandena, 2012). Being old is considered a good thing in Lesotho as well (Hoag, 2006). This even shows in the language, where the elderly are described in revering ways, like "the old one" (Thomas, 1983). This respect for the old is also due to the fact the elderly have very specific roles cut out for them: teaching of the younger generation about behavior and good character, protecting them from immoral behavior and from witchcraft, passing on and administering traditional healing methods, performing rituals, and social leadership and advice, especially of kin (Thomas, 1983; Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012). Elders also teach children about their country's history and thus help in maintaining traditional values and practices as well as identity (Rosenberg, 2008). In the neighboring South Africa as well, grandmothers' knowledge on traditional medicine and genetic diseases is considered very important by families (Penn,

Watermeyer, MacDonald & Moabelo, 2009). Due to all these essential roles in society, most people agree the elderly deserve special treatment and more respect than other Basotho. The participants of this study say this respect comes naturally to them.

> When I get to my communities, and I greet people, I don't greet them the same way. There are those that I will have to sit down and, you know, and listen to them, not only the "hello, how are you", no, no, no. I sit down and say "how are you grandma?" They'll say "we are fine, and how are you?" and they'll start telling a story, "e, you know, so and so has passed away, so and so is sick, last time, this, the rainfall and..." They'll tell about all the circumstances. Then […], they release you. You don't just come to an elder's house and say "hello, how are you?" and then go out. If you don't have time, you'd rather not go there. (Participant #7, 52)

Respecting the elderly or even just older people came up in more than half of the interviews and is considered essential. This goes for one's own parents, grandparents, and other older members of the family, as well as for any older person in the community. As mentioned above, age is a variable that is often considered in the greeting process with the younger person usually greeting first (Akindele, 2007). In the past, any person starting at the age of a parent could naturally discipline any child in the community for misbehaving, whether they were related or not. Their educative role in society extended thus beyond mere family ties. Children and youth knew there would be consequences if any adult saw them doing mischief, and adjusted accordingly (Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012). To some degree, this was still true for my participants; some older people held on to this educative power in the community.

> In our time, when I get a boyfriend, when seeing the, the mother, any mother coming, I'm afraid, I run away. While, by now, these girls and boys, we old ones, we have to run away

from them. They don't mind […] I was afraid of this old mme because sometimes she knows my mother. Now will tell her that "oh, your child." (Participant #5, 73)

When I hear [children] shouting some insults, I don't care whose child is there, I just ask him or her to stop that. Because you don't want to hear that vulgar language. (Participant #18, 58)

Nowadays, this study's participants said this was most often not the case anymore, especially in the more urban areas. There may still be scolding, but the young people of today know there will be no physical punishment from people other than their parents and teachers. In the more urban areas, the educative role of the elderly is restricted to their own family, not the other village children.

I think, they, the older people, in the last days, you and, our grandparents knew that when they did something wrong, they would be punished by any parent. But now, when you're punished by someone else's parent, you'll be like, "oh, who are you? And what reason?" (Participant #11, 18)

Despite this development, elders are still highly respected. When an old person asks a favor of a younger one, most often, that person will do it and has little to no leeway to refuse. If you do have to refuse, you have to do it in a respectful way, present a good excuse, and propose another time. Participants reported making more time for the elderly in their village and revering them as being closer to the gods, in tune with Obioha and T'soeunyane's findings (2012). Again, it does not matter whether it is an actual relative or not.

If my parents send me somewhere, then I'll go. Or any other parent, not exactly my parent. Then I will go there and do whatever she or he want me to do. (Participant #15, 23)

According to the participants of this study, age-related hierarchies and respect in the family are still much more observed in Lesotho than, for example, in Europe. Especially the elders of the family perform a protective role aiming to prevent any harm to come to the family (Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012). This respect extends to who should be served and eat first at getherings or in the family. The word of the parents is the law for the young ones, and even once they leave their original family through marriage, many still consult their parents as a sign of respect. Some participants considered this a bit oppressive, while others really enjoyed it.

> Here, where I live, it's either you do things the mom's or the dad's way. If you try to tell them otherwise, then, you are being disrespectful. (Participant #1, 23)

> I as a Mosotho boy, regardless the age, if I want to do anything, it has to go through parents first. Then, then I can get a green light from them, go ahead with whatever I want to do. (Participant #2, 25)

This respect includes a certain behavior that children adopt with their parents and elders. While the parent-child relationships in Europe often become less asymmetrical and more balanced as the child grows up (Tabak, del Carmen Granado Alcón, Örkenyi, Zaborskis, Aasvee, & Moreno, 2011), in Lesotho, people deem it disrespectful to talk to one's parents or elders as if they were age mates. This also goes for elders in the community. The young and the old are not considered to be on the same level, and elders carry a natural authority with them wherever they go, although, again, some participants report a change in the rigidity of this value in urban areas.

> During our time, we knew that there are some things that you cannot say to the old people. But, these days, they just don't care, they can just shout whatever comes in their mouth. They don't care whether it is good or it is bad […] During our time, we knew that every parent needed to be respected. Whether it was your own parent, your biological

parent. But these ones are just brave enough to tell you that "you cannot say that I should do this because you are not my mother, you are not my father". We couldn't say that during our time. We just wouldn't do that. (Participant #18, 58)

These hierarchies also extend past family structures to the whole community. Every community has a leader, a chief, whose responsibilities include confirmation of a birth or a death, and confirmation of residence of someone in his area. These documents are necessary for many official processes, so it is quite common for Basotho to have to go see the chief. Sometimes, however, the chief can be choosy as to the dress code of people coming to see him.

They're very strict. In May this year, I was in Mafeteng. […] My bank account was having a problem, I had to fix it. So, they wanted me to go and get a letter from a chief […] I was wearing a trouser. And then, he didn't help me, he was very strict, even he said, and I was very humble, […] and then he was like, "you go to Maseru, you go back to Maseru and wear a dress and come for me, so that I can provide you help." (Participant #8, 24)

Some people wanted social change, a change of traditions, because they felt oppressed, discriminated against, or hindered by the existing traditions and traditional values. However, they said they would never push for it or even make small changes to an established process, out of respect for their ancestors and elders. Others did feel strongly enough about resisting, but described feelings of conflict and distress doing so. Resisting a Basotho tradition called for a talk with the elders, which can put strong pressure on the youngster, especially if the family adds pressure on their child.

They wanted me to do those things that we used to do together. And then, I was put before them, just to explain why I no longer do them. The elders were very sad at me.

They were very angry. They be like, "oh, so now you are that child of rights. You are telling us of freedom of religion […]" Very emotional. But then, I have no choice. I just related myself and then I told them that "this is my choice, please accept it and me, that I no longer do those things." (Participant #8, 24)

Elders still command a lot of respect in Basotho communities. There may be changes in urban areas, especially when rebellious youth get together in groups, but both young and old participants agree the elders need to be given special consideration. This applies to both the community and the family level. Their special roles in both family and community along with their natural leadership guarantees them respect even today (Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012).

6.2.2 Sharing

Another important value with 15 total mentions is sharing. This includes the sub-themes of hospitality and being together. Many Basotho communities are more tightly knit than European communities. Especially in the rural areas, it is common for everyone to know everyone else and to emphasize their belonging together. This has suffered some decline in recent years, but as one participant described, even in his youth, 40 years ago, there was only one radio in the entire village, and every night, all the men would come and gather at the radio's owner's house to listen to the news together. Being a peaceful and hospitable nation was also mentioned often, and being together often and for long hours was stressed as an expected behavior.

[The people in the community] feel that we are one thing, they always take... care or what, they feel that I'm part of them. They don't see me, they'll come, "where have you been, how are you now?" (Participant #6, 62)

Sharing is an interesting concept in Basotho culture. While European countries often use the concept of borrowing, Basotho share. In Finland, for example, one could ask to borrow an umbrella from a friend because it is raining outside and one needs to walk home. The friend would then expect to be returned the umbrella at the earliest convenience. Basotho might also ask for an umbrella, but the return time is much more fluid. If it rains again the next day, they will need the umbrella again. The friend also does usually not expect to be returned the umbrella very soon. In another situation, if one person has a chocolate bar, it is expected of him to share that bar with as many people as are around, even with a full group of friends. If that means everyone will get only a tiny bit of chocolate that is accepted. Of course, sharing includes sharing resources and helping each other on projects, such as building houses and gardens:

> They build some, maybe it's a garden, but they build it with stone. Yeah, together. […] Maybe they go to one, and they finish up, when they finish, to other person, then they move to other one, then they move to other one. (Participant #14, 84)

> Their hut and houses are easy to be built because they are just collecting grass or wood […] And then, […] you may ask maybe five […]. Just to help from someone else who is in need of somewhere to shelter. Then, there will be someone who knows how to, how to roof, and you say "after summer, would you please come and help me roofing this house." After summer, after a week, it's finished. It's very simple to have a house at home. (Participant #10, 53)

The traditional way of the Basotho in villages seems to be just like that: every resource is shared, everybody pitches in to his/her abilities, and the project at hand gets done very quickly. As for some other themes, this has suffered a decline, especially in the cities (Turkon, 2009). Nowadays, as many Basotho gather in cities rather than their home villages, the contacts and

relations are just not strong enough to command as strong a pull as the village ties used to. However, in villages, one can still find this broad concept of sharing today.

6.2.2.1 Hospitality

Tightly connected to the value of sharing, hospitality was also mentioned by several participants, mostly the older ones. Basotho pride themselves on being a hospitable country whose inhabitants share whatever few resources they have with others. It is not considered too much to ask for a place to sleep, if you are in a strange village and were unable to connect with the person you came to see. Having greeted someone properly, it is very likely they will consent to giving you a safe space to sleep for the night, including dinner with the family.

> In our tradition, it's bad not to, if somebody comes to your own house, if you can't just give her something to eat. You have to see to it that, whenever somebody comes to your house, you have to give him something to eat. If you don't, you even say, "I'm sorry, today, we don't have, we don't have something for you to eat." (Participant #6, 62)

Much as some participants treasured this traditional value, some of its interpretation is changing. Children, especially in the urban areas, in particular in the capital Maseru, are raised differently nowadays and are often not used to sharing everything anymore. While their parents still shared, not only with siblings and friends, but also other relatives and members of the community, the younger generation can sometimes grow up differently and seem downright inhospitable to the older generation.

> [My daughter] wouldn't share a bed with anyone, she wouldn't, I don't, when I grew up in my home, my house, we're like ten or so, boys, but not from my father's, from other relatives, neighbors, then we would sleep in one room and share same blankets. But, that

would not be, that would not be the case in my child. She would not even share a single, a single blanket. […] Because she didn't grow up like that. (Participant #7, 52)

They're the early ages, the old ages, they don't take care of our old ages. They... They see their age, the one who's feeding them. (Participant #5, 73)

Sharing can also refer to sharing knowledge. Basotho choose their own leaders in terms of information. Just because a stranger comes to their village and tells them about good governance, or disease control, or anything else, they will not blindly believe it. Most of them will always check and confirm this new information with someone of their own, somebody they know and trust, preferably from their village. With the younger generation, it is a little bit different due to advances in technology, but the older ones still have many such stories to tell. Members of the village expect to be given information on just about any subject by one who they consider to be well educated. They ask for everyday advice, for information about political happenings, or for what the person thinks the weather will be like in the coming weeks, for example.

They expect guidance from you, they expect advice from you, they expect information from you, they expect you to be part, a bit of knowledge from you. […] Everybody wanted to know "hey, we hear that there's going to be rainy, and very snowy, very cold, oh, tell us", and I say, "yes, yes, yes, that is true. That is what the television, the experts on the television and on the radio tell us, please be on your guard." […] So, they always look to, up to me as... as their, as their brain tank, as their, as the person who can really provide them with the LAST answer. […] So, it's like that, and most places in every community, there will be somebody who... whom the community trusts. Especially if they believe, OK, this person now is one of our children here, and has gone to school, has

got ALL this knowledge that we don't have, we are looking up to him to give us guidance on these things. (Participant #7, 52)

6.2.2.2 Being together

Being together often and for a long time is another habit Basotho treasure. 12 of the participants brought up this sub-theme during the interviews. Unity and communal work are highly valued, and division is considered one of the major evils of the modern world. Participants, young and old, agreed that spending a lot of time together was seen as the normal way and was expected of them in the community. However, several of the younger generation said they were not spending so much time with members of the community anymore, excepting their close friends. Maybe there is a change happening right now in Lesotho, as most of the older participants still brought examples of working together or just sitting together as pleasurable and important. Just like in the neighboring South Africa, communal events like funerals can fulfill important social and bonding functions (Ainslie, 2014).

Many things, like maybe when there are some funerals or some gatherings in the village, maybe like the feasts, the ceremonies. We celebrate together. They come, they get some food, they dance, if there's some music, and then go to their places. And it's so nice. (Participant #18, 58)

Some other people just think that I'm a mean woman. […] Just because [I'm not] always near them. Because sometimes they don't talk things that are progressive. So they just think that I don't like our people. […] But I just see that, I can't just waste my time, because there are so many things that I should think in life, so they just think, "oh, mme Ntsoaki is not good". Or, "mme Ntsoaki, it's just because she's got money, that's why

she's always..." Like, for instance, when I'm in the house, doing some things that I'm just thinking, writing or, maybe working on plastics, they just think that I don't want to be with them. But, it's just, not really what they thought. (Participant #13, 70)

6.2.3 Gender roles

Gender roles did not come up in all interviews, with only eight participants reporting. However, when they did bring up the topic, they were often brought forth with a vehemence that makes it necessary to include them in this study. Participants who commented on these issues all agreed there were traditional roles to play by each of the sexes. Men and boys were expected to tend to the animals (herd, care for, and finally slaughter the livestock), and to work in the field to feed the family (Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012). Only men are supposed to slaughter the animals for ancestral feasts (Ainslie, 2014). Women and girls were especially forbidden from coming too close to cows, especially, but were instead expected to manage all the work in the house like cooking and cleaning (Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012). As opposed to a country like Finland, this also means very hard physical labor. As most people in the rural areas do not have electricity or running water, resources have to be collected first. There were other taboos for women as well, with, most often, women not becoming chiefs or obtaining prestigious roles in society. In order to be a respectable woman, a certain knowledge of what you can and cannot do also comes into play. It concerns things such as the dress code; a married woman should not be wearing a mini-skirt.

In general, women were considered to be the passive one of the two sexes. When marrying, even the language distinguishes between men and women (a man marries a woman, but a woman only gets married). It is also a common tradition for the woman to receive a

completely new name when she marries. Not only does she change her last name, but she is also given a new first name by the new husband's family. In the past, arranged marriages were also very common, most often at the expense of young girls:

> In our culture, back then, when you have to get married, you had to be forced to be married to a man that you don't even know his behavior, you're just being chosen and man, you're going to be married to that man which stays there, and there I am, "I know nothing about the guy". […] I have to be married to someone that I love, not someone I'm forced to be with. So, that's the part I don't like with our culture. But, mostly, nowadays, it doesn't happen a lot. But there are still situations where you are forced to get married to someone that you don't even know. (Participant #12, 22)

Some people commented on current social change. Especially in urban and educated areas, the roles were not as defined anymore. In fact, in the course of the Millennium Development Goals, Lesotho has adopted many laws to bridge the gender divide (Miller, 2014). What women can or cannot do has become more flexible and can depend on many circumstances. In secondary and tertiary education, girls are actually more numerous than boys due to boys' roles in tending animals and livestock (Miller, 2014). Accordingly, the literacy rate of male and female Basotho has a gap of more than 10% (male: 87.4%, female: 98.2%) (UNDP, 2012). This education was mostly brought forth as a reason for the change in the interviews as well. Women can now succeed their husbands as chiefs, whereas in the past, the title would only go to a son, or, if there was none or if he was too young, to an uncle or a brother of the deceased chief.

> For instance, I'm a Roman Catholic. My wife is a Protestant. I didn't say she shouldn't go to the Protestant church because I'm a head of the family, no, because nobody is the head.

We are equal […] So, we are just moving on. But, when we grew up, we knew that, bontate ba rona, were the ones to do the heavy work for the family and the mother should cook for the family and so forth. But these days, we got to help each other. Even if we don't like it, we do it. Just bend our heads, and go. (Participant #9, 70)

They work differently because, I think, my grandma and grandpa, they didn't live together. My grandfather used to work far away from home, he will come back after three to four months, and then stays for only two days, gone. When he's home, it's all about his cattles, his neighbors, "where's that grandfather, my friend?" That, they didn't have much time for their family. Like, nowadays, I can't let my future husband to be gone for so long and then come back for few days, no, no, no. So, that's the difference between my, our grandfathers and our parents now. (Participant #12, 22)

However, most of these mentions were brought forth by male participants. Many of the female participants still lamented blatant inequality, especially in the rural areas. They admitted things had gotten better since the days of their grandparents, but many men still expected their wives to behave a certain way and to serve them, the husbands, to their heart's desire. One participant in particular commented, unprompted, that there seemed to be a double standard between men and women. Men can do and say anything they want, but if a woman did the same, society, her family and her very husband would all descend down on her and she would be chastised.

I am worried about the issue of marriage. […] I [think] men are oppressors. We have been oppressed, firstly, by our culture, telling us, there are just too many don'ts in our culture for us as females. […] So, to us, it's like the style of life that we have to live, even when you are hurt, you shouldn't shout out at your man and show him that he has done

rubbish. But he's just free to say that, to do it to you, to berate you, in front of everybody. Which you, as a woman, cannot do to a man […] Even though it's maybe dying away a little by little, but it won't die away to the last, to the core, I [think]. Because men are men. They take themselves to be superior to the women. And when you try to, to stop them from saying that, they will quote the Bible verses for you […] I would like it to change. For the men to treat us like human beings. Because they like to be treated like that, too. (Participant #18, 58)

She would say if it were by her, she would want things to be changed […] So, somebody saying she would wish things to be changed because it's the women that do most of the work. You know, not males, hence why. (Participant #3, 24)

It seems like in this case, traditional values are protecting the existing gender roles to continue even today. Just like Hilson (2012) found traditional values protected child labor practices in Mali, this may be the case here, too. But change seems to be getting closer as well, which will require conciliating traditional cultural beliefs with modern practices, similar to what Rahardjo (1994) found when looking at inconsistencies in the state rule in Indonesia. Looking at the Millennium Development Goals, on many levels of education and politics, this is already happening, as more and more girls and women become educated and take on important positions in employment, and even take more seats in parliament (Miller, 2014).

6.3 Traditional rituals

Even though the focus of this study was on traditional values, many participants also brought up communal traditional activities, mostly rituals. Since they also take place in the community and can even be connected to the traditional value of sharing and being together, they were deemed

appropriate to be included in this study as traditional communal rituals. However, their analysis will be a little bit shorter.

Communal traditional rituals can mean anything that includes the community and having a ritualized character. In the interviews, rituals brought up the most often were funeral rites, marriage rites, and rites connected to the ancestors. All the information used to describe the rituals comes from the participants, if not indicated otherwise.

6.3.1 Funeral rites

Funerals, by definition, cannot be well planned out in advance. They sadly occur almost on a weekly basis in many communities in Lesotho. Consequently, they command several rules for correct conduct, rules whose roots can often be found in the past. These rules are considered traditional by many interviewees. Interestingly, nobody really seemed to care strongly about them. The opposite was more common, that people wanted reforms, either for practical or principal reasons.

Funerals always take place on Saturdays. But there is a lot of work leading up to it, which is mostly done by the women. It includes sending invitations to all relatives, who can come from all over the country, and informing the elders.

Especially from the husband's side. If it's the husband who's lost a parent, then you have to invite his or her uncles, I mean, his uncles, they should come. For, on the girl's side, it's ... not much of a problem if they don't even show up. (Participant #3, 24)

On the day of the funeral itself, women prepare the food all day while men dig the grave. Women are expected to wear long-sleeved dresses and cover their heads. Sometimes a cow's skin or, more recently, a blanket is put on the coffin as a "goodbye gesture" (participant #3, 24).

Traditionally, the dead person will be facing towards the east in the grave, with the face upward. A cow is usually slaughtered to feed the relatives, but also to symbolically accompany the deceased. In the past, when coffins were not yet used, they also placed the skin of the cow around the deceased. This tradition has been criticized in the interviews of this study. In the modern world, where only few families even own one cow, never mind enough to be able to afford killing one, having to buy a cow is impossible to afford for most families. In 2010, 57.1% of Basotho lived below the poverty line (World Bank, 2016), meaning if they do want to stick to their tradition, they have to take a loan.

> That's what [I] really, don't really like. Because, you know, that somebody is already dead. And then, if they just take the last few cents that they've got, just to please the gatherings […] To have a cow, it's just like having a diamond. (Participant #13, 70)

This is in line with Ainslie's (2014) study about South African ancestral rituals. In changing times, it becomes necessary to either take a loan for the funeral, or to rely on friends' and neighbors' financial and actual support to make it a communal effort (Ainslie, 2014). Change seems impossible to achieve, however, as long as the general opinion is still in support of the custom. Even though several interviewees mentioned their displeasure with this practice, the tradition is too deeply rooted in the conscience of too many Basotho.

> I'm not the one who can make a decision. But […] sometimes they just, people just press […] the things that they are not able to do. So, and after that, maybe they are in debts, so they don't know what to do. […] But, that I cannot control because it's the custom of the Basotho, the Basotho people […] When you see things that are, in the old days, long long time ago, with their ancestors, they had so many cattles, so that's why they were slaughtering. But this, in this life, the life has changed. (Participant #13, 70)

They would also give the deceased some seeds to plant and some weapons to defend himself with, because there is a traditional belief in resurrection and the dead need to be prepared for it. With the seeds, they will be able to plant crops for themselves, and the weapons were for defense.

After the burial, when people come back from the cemetery, people wash their hands in water diluted with herbs. While the participants could not tell me of the direct explanation for that, it is certainly a way to clean your hands after touching the earth.

The next day, the families of the deceased get together. There is a strict protocol as to who does what and in what order, according to the family size and the rank in the family, which is mostly determined by age and sometimes by status. This is the correct time for the shaving of the hair for the close relatives. The timing of this is very sensitive. It cannot happen before the burial, it has to be after in the family setting, the day after the burial, even if the person has been dead for a couple of weeks. The mourning will only be apparent to outsiders after the burial, after the hair is cut because "they consider as we are in darkness at that moment." (Participant #8, 24).

For at least a month after the burial, the direct victims, especially children of the deceased, are supposed to stay indoors when the sun is set, never mind sleeping somewhere else.

6.3.2 Marriage rites

Marriages are a much happier traditional ritual than funerals. Traditionally, the family of the groom has to pay the dowry, or lebolla, to the wife's family. Traditionally, this was paid in cattle. The families come together and agree on the appropriate amount of cows for the marriage to be allowed. After the payment of the lebolla, it was a sign that people had agreed. Participant #7

(52) said, however, "that is kind of dying a natural death," mostly because modern day Basotho simply do not own as many cattle as was custom in the past, so it is becoming less practical. Nowadays, the young people just come together and agree between themselves, and get married. This may, however, depend on the region you are in.

> In the mountainous parts here, they're still doing, drag the girls over to their... without consent sometimes. Sometimes they're through the consent of the parent. The parent will just say, "such and such a girl is good. I think she can be a good wife for you, she can be a good wife for you. Drag her." (Participant #9, 70)

Women used to be considered very passive, as even the language, Sesotho, portrays it. It is grammatically incorrect, in Sesotho, to say a woman marries. Only the man marries, the woman gets married to the man, who is traditionally the responsible one, the one who takes care of the wife and secures the family's income. It also implies the man's active role and dominant position in the marriage and family. This also shows in the concept of names. Where in Europe, it is common for the woman to change her last name to her husband's, or to take on a double last name, in Lesotho, the woman also traditionally is given a new first name by her new family. It signifies the start of a new life in a new family. Oftentimes, the woman's first name changes yet again when she has her first child, to express she is the mother of someone. For example, if ausi Palesa gets married, she may be given the new name of mme Relebohile. When she has her first child, perhaps she will name her son Thabo. She will henceforth be known as mme Mathabo, Mother of Thabo.

Nowadays, all of this is changing. The words in the language are still the same, but the emphasis is not as strong as it used to be.

It's kind of shifting from its strength […] It's not as strong as it used to be when it says, man marries the wife, and the wife gets married to a man. (Participant #7, 52)

This is because the change is also in society. Women take on a more active role in their relationships and in society as a whole. They contribute to the relationship and they make their own decisions, for example concerning the number of children they want to have, the wedding date, and the place of the new family's home. The passive role when it comes to names has become more flexible as well. It is no longer a must for the woman to accept a new first name given to her by the new family, and she no longer has to change her name even for the first child.

They still get a new name, some get new name, but they would use both. […] It's more flexible. Maybe half Basotho women, half Basotho girls now will still change names completely. But half, especially those who have gone to schools, have come to Maseru, they've met other cultures. They would still retain their surnames and their other names. And that also depends on the, the nature of the family and the level, the level of education of the family, the husband... (Participant #7, 52)

As participant #7 (52) noted, this does depend on the level of education of both husband and wife and their respective families. If the family follows most traditions in general, it seems unlikely, even today, change is going to really appear. This is mostly due to outside pressure and expectation within the community. As Lackland Sam, Peltzer, and Mayer (2005) found, this social pressure does not halt when it comes to major life choices, such as how many children a family wants to have, or in this case, how a couple wants to get married.

If it were by her, if the husband could not be able to pay lebolla, she would just say no, let's just get married and forget everything else. Even when the child is born, she wouldn't say, let's call him by your surname, let's just choose a surname on our own that pleases

us, if it were by her. But because she is simply following tradition, what has been done to

death, she'll still continue doing it. (Participant #3, 24)

For some, both the modern and the traditional way of getting married involve the

payment of lebolla to the family of the wife, the only change being whether lebolla is negotiated

before or after the marriage takes place.

6.3.3 Ancestor rites

Ancestors (balimo) were the traditional ritual that was mentioned the most, both by old and

young participants. It was also the one most vehemently both defended and attacked, depending

on their stance. Only three people openly stated believing in the ancestors, but their shadow must

be large indeed if so many others found them important enough to describe to me. Some truly

believe in them, others not at all. The majority seems to be somewhere in the middle: not really

believing the ancestors can cause trouble for oneself, but better to be safe than sorry, as the

ancestors are said to have great power.

Maybe, they can even threaten you that if you don't do it, you are going to die. Or if you

can, if you don't do it, your son or your daughter, won't have a child. (Participant #8, 24)

The concept of the ancestors is easy to understand. Traditionally, Basotho believe their

loved ones, their ancestors, never completely go away. They will send messages to their

descendants, either through dreams, where they speak to them directly, or through events in the

environment. If, for example, one wakes up one morning and finds hundreds of ants in his house,

this may be interpreted as a sign the ancestors are displeased with him, possibly for ignoring

them earlier.

Let's say, my father is dead, and then in the next two years, he comes in my dreams being

like, "my son" or "my daughter, I want you to cook for me, I'm cold." […] So, in

tradition, in our tradition, Basotho believe that, there are, that the forefathers can come in your dreams while you're sleeping. And then ask you to do something for them. Ask you to, maybe to, actually, they ask people to make that ceremony party particularly for them. (Participant #8, 24)

This practice is linked to the veneration of elders. Ancestors have to be revered for those who believe in them. Their wishes need to be satisfied. Usually, what they wish for is food in the form of a feast. The ancestors call for food, which is then prepared for them during a feast, or a gathering. The labor and resources needed are oftentimes shared with other members of the family or community (Ainslie, 2014). The family or community members come together and pray. They sacrifice the food, call the name of the ancestor for him or her to come get the food.

We need to prepare some meals to feed them, even though we don't see them. We need, we need to give them something so that they shouldn't, they SHOULDN'T think that we have abandoned them. So, it is important for us to believe in such things in my culture. (Participant #2, 25)

Other times, they may ask for something else, for example for a cow's skin as a blanket: He said they are cold, he need blanket, so we had to kill a cow and use the […] And pray, "here is your blanket, don't bother us anymore." (Participant #17, 63)

People who believe in the ancestors believe in them very strongly. They almost fear their power for revenge. Those who do not believe in them feel like the entire thing is fairly far-fetched and unnecessary to keep up in today's world. Those people who believe in the ancestors and the need to appease them mentioned a conflict in the community between those who believe and those who do not. People who do not believe are often devout Christians, even though there are also Christians who also perform ancestral rituals (US Department of State, n.d.).

Ainslie (2014) concluded in his study about ancestor rituals in South Africa that the two "cultural scripts" (p. 530), which are performed through the rituals, are building the home and helping one another in the community. Like marriage and funeral rituals, the ancestral feasts may also fulfill the function to help in unifying the community by bringing people together and encouraging them to help one another (Ainslie, 2014).

All of these traditional values and rituals contribute to the answer of my first research question. According to this sample of young and old Basotho, traditional values are respect, sharing, and gender roles. Important traditional rituals are funeral rites, marriage rites, and ancestor rites. To connect these to cultural identity theory, one must first analyze how important these traditional values and practices are to the old and the young generation of Basotho, respectively. This is what will be done in the next chapter.

6.4 Importance of traditional values and rituals

After finding a focus of traditional values and traditional rituals, and thus answering the first research question, I then took a closer look at the second research question: how important are traditional values and practices to the young and the old generations of Basotho? Consequently, another thematic analysis was conducted to find out the importance of these traditional values and rituals to the younger and the older generations, respectively. On one hand, this was done tradition-theme based, as in I looked at a specific tradition and then looked for the importance mentioned. On the other hand, participants were asked about their opinion on the importance of traditions in general, which also gives interesting ideas about their importance in more general terms.

Respect has proven to be the one most important traditional value from the data. Almost all participants brought it up in their interview, and all of them rated it as important even today. The only person who did not rate respect as important came from the older generation and went a different direction in her interview. As for the sub-themes, both greeting and respecting elders were deemed important by many people, both of the younger and the older generation, showing relative equality between the young and the old.

When asked about traditional values, some participants of this study often did not like the traditional practices the values implied. However, they all dissociated the values, especially respect, from that dislike. Respect, even when asked for it as a traditional value, was always described as something both old and new, as something still relevant today, even though some interpretations of it were not universally liked (too much expectation to greet, for instance). This seems to go hand in hand with what Kratz (1993) found in the Okiek in Kenya. She found the Okiek focused on specific ceremonies in their accounts of what is traditional, just like the Basotho in my sample often connected the traditional to old specific rituals.

> You have to [greet]. […] In this thing of greetings, it's not greeting, but it's to find out, how that person feels. (Participant #6, 62)

Compared to the value of respect, the value of sharing seems to be much less universally accepted. While all but one older person brought up at least one theme or sub-theme on the value of sharing, and many of them judged this set of values to be very important, this theme and its sub-themes were not as prevalent in the young generation mentioned. The most common theme for the youngsters was being together, with hospitality and sharing in general falling into the same trend of being less important. In the older generation, this trend seemed reversed, as people found sharing and helping one another important. This confirms what Twenge, Campbell, and

Freeman found in their study: the older generation of that study also valued community and acceptance in the group more than the younger one (Twenge, Campbell, & Freeman, 2012).

> The tradition that I like? You see, but although it has changed, Basotho people seem to be peaceful people, they welcome people. That's why they say, in their greetings, khotso, that means peace. (Participant #13, 70)

Similarly, the older participants also talked much more about traditional rituals than the younger generation, even though less importance was attached than for sharing values. The elderly were not much more persistent in mentioning traditional rituals than the younger generation. However, one must know that many of the young generation only brought up ancestors, while the old generation often mentioned at least two different traditional rituals. This could indicate that the older generation in this sample is more rooted in these traditional practices, that they still feel more connected to them, whereas the younger generation often saw them as old-fashioned and in need of modernization. Some of the older people lamented this in their interviews.

> A day after the burial, you start shaving. And before, before the deceased is buried, you can't shave your hair. But now, these kids, they just don't care. They shave, then, during the day, when we have to do the shaving, while they, they don't have. And they'll tell you "no, we are wasting our time, we can mourn in a different way". […] The entire family will come together and start shaving. So, we find that they have already shaved, say, maybe two, three days back, we are agreeing, just as if we are doing the thing. […] So, if we don't do that, if we don't maintain that, they won't know who they are. […] So there's a conflict. (Participant #6, 62)

In those traditional marriages, divorces were very rare. I should think it's because parents wouldn't just go and take anyone from the street and so forth. They were looking for proper people for their children. So... They, they were not harsh on these […] makotiya... daughters in law. They couldn't be hard because they were their choice. But, of late, our kids marry today and they divorce tomorrow. (Participant #9, 70)

When it comes to gender roles, nobody insisted they were important or not important. It was mostly a mere matter of describing the situation and possibly hoping for change. Nobody openly advocated for them. Some participants described rules for conduct between adolescent boys and girls or mentioned specific tasks for each of them, but no real value was attached one way or another, and it most often came up in the context of being respectful to your parents and elders.

Values are at the very center of the cultural onion (Hofstede et al., 2010). Followed by rituals, these two make up the most elusive, but also the most important parts of what makes a culture (Hofstede et al., 2010). Values are elusive because they represent broad inclinations to prefer one thing over the other, while rituals can be rituals per se, as in this study, or habitual practices like greeting (Hofstede et al., 2010). In this study, we are moving between these two core areas, which enables us to catch a glimpse of two of the most deeply engrained systems of a group, in this case communities in Lesotho. While not generalizable, these results are still valid because they depict the reality of my interviewees.

When asked generally, most participants, especially of the older generation, were very happy with their traditions, be they traditional values or practices. In addition, participants were consistent in saying traditions were important or very important. Only two participants found them completely unimportant. However, once again, respect is excluded from this statistic. Even

if people said they did not appreciate their traditions at all, it was not respect they were talking about. In all but one cases, even if traditions in general were denounced, respect came up again later as a positive and important characteristic of community life. Most people, however, listed mostly positive functions of their traditions in general. They fulfill functions such as pleasing the elders, and making life in the community more harmonious. Traditions also represent the culture by differentiating Basotho from other tribes, and help groom young people into responsible, disciplined human beings.

> I like them very much. I like them because it shows our culture. They represent our culture. (Participant #10, 53)

> I feel like they are important. They develop a person. When you follow tradition, values, you become a disciplined person. (Participant #11, 18)

Only a few of the younger generation in this sample were not entirely happy with all the aspects of traditional values and traditional rituals. This was mostly because they felt a bit oppressed from behaviors like them being strictly expected to greet or participate in group events, respecting people who did not earn their respect, or regarding the old, rigid ways of traditional rituals as outdated. This feeling of necessity and of slight pressure can be confirmed, as participants across the generation gap said it was expected of them to partake in traditional values and practices, be it in showing their respect in the ways mentioned above or in participating fully in social events with all the traditional activities that can imply. Feeling a certain social pressure is thus natural, and will probably occur in any cohesive society or minority group in order to keep the group close together. Some other participants, also older ones, conceded there was a certain pressure to conform to the traditional norms, but did not think it was a bad thing, just describing how the situation was in their community. All of these answers

show, from the point of view of these participants, traditional values still get enforced in community life, if only through peer pressure.

> For instance, in my, in my clan, we no more practice most of the things, but, because of, because you want to appear part of the community, and you want to appear belonging to the community, some of the things we practice, just for, just to accommodate... these, those other guys. But yes, as a family, we really don't have much of a belief in those other things. (Participant #7, 52)

> She would say if it were by her, she would want things to be changed. […] She says she's so, she's so rooted in tradition, in... It's not even funny. She would still like, do it like that. Because she is afraid of, also being judged by the society. (Participant #3, 24)

Even if people did not care for most traditional values and practices, they mostly agreed that they would/did pass them on to their children, indicating the idea that participants think people will still need tradition in the future. The younger participants who said they would not pass on traditional values and practices conceded they would tell their children about the old ways, if not encourage them to practice them themselves, showing they value the past and think it culturally important to know of the old ways.

> Some things, not everything, because, for example, in our culture, back then, when you have to get married, you had to be forced to be married to a man that you don't even know his behavior, you're just being chosen. […] But, now, I don't think I can teach my children that. […] Ah, the tradition I can pass on to my children is respect. They should respect themselves, they should not go out for parties. (Participant #12, 22)

Participants of the both the older and the younger generation argued for traditions to be upheld, even though it may sometimes seem unduly difficult or even like unnecessary decorum.

Some participants even opted for traditions above all other things, while others would allow small changes and influence from other cultures. This makes it clear that while there may be different interpretations of traditions between the old and the young, there is still a consensus they are useful and should help guide future generations as well.

I don't think there should be balance. The modern things should be somehow, not more than... there shouldn't be any balance. Culture and tradition should come first. (Participant #4, 24)

They're still very important, very, very important. […] Important as they are, there are so many challenges and so many external factors, so... They may have to shift […] I think we have to take what is best for, what is best for us, what is best for us as individuals and us as a community and as a nation. And raise the best culture and cultural values and lift those up so that it helps us move forward. I think that's what I believe in. Like I told you about the issue of the initiation. It was meant to model boys, to make, to initiate boys into manhood, but if there are modern schools and modern formations to do that, why bother? Why waste time to take these boys into the mountains? (Participant #7, 52)

They are happy about it. They feel happy about it, these traditions. […] They say they are, it is important because they make people to avoid maybe some drugs, drinking alcohol, and stealing. […] All of them. (Participant #17, 63)

It is obvious communal traditional values and practices can help the community to live in harmony and order (Oyeshile, 2004). This was evident in this study, as there were no vehement voices against traditions as a whole. The participants generally liked their traditions, and some brought up both positive and negative aspects. The critical points that came up were mostly against rituals, which are sometimes seen as too expensive or otherwise impractical, such as

preparing feasts for the ancestors or slaughtering a cow for a funeral. Values, with the exception

of gender roles, were left largely untouched and seemed to not even be considered by my

participants:

> I should just think that people should just be advanced in life, and be modernized.
>
> Because living in the old, old age, as the world is just a small village, so they should just
>
> be encouraged to be modernized. (Participant #13, 70)
>
> Taking into account the concepts of avowal (how you see yourself) and ascription (how

others see you) from cultural identity theory, participants were also asked about who they

thought the traditional values and practices that came up in the interviews were more important

for, the older or the younger generation, thus including the concept of ascription. This led to a

clearer picture when later talking about their cultural identities because a match between avowal

and ascription makes communication easier because people feel better understood. Older

participants tended to argue traditions are more important for the young generation, as a tool to

learn to be a good citizen:

> They are very important for the young people […] Because it's the, they tend to mold up
>
> someone who is... If you are honest, if you respect, if you behave well, you become a
>
> valuable citizen, in the community. You are the most kind, wanted kind of person.
>
> (Participant #18, 58)
>
> Just to teach our generations to, to know how, how were we before. Or what are the
>
> culture again, or the culture, dances, we are doing. They must know their culture. And it
>
> will proceed to their, to their generations. (Participant #10, 53)
>
> On the other hand, the opposite opinion dominated in the young generation: that

traditions were more important for the older generation. Participants argued the older people

placed more value on them than the younger ones, and were thus the ones practicing them more than the younger ones.

> I think they are more important for the older, because they're the ones who always talk about them, even though they rarely practice them. For the younger ones, ah. Most like, the ones that come after us, the like, the generation that comes after us, they can just pass here and not greet and they will be okay with it, but sometimes, they're kinda harsh but... (Participant #1, 23)

> I think they were important in the last years. For elders, for those elders in the last, past years. Not now. Now, these young, as young people, young people are not living in a technological world. So, they have to comply with technology, and those things are not helping them with anything. (Participant #8, 24)

Some participants of both generations answered that traditions and traditional practices were important for both generations, as they teach and encourage people to keep up a good lifestyle, which is useful throughout life. In addition, due to the social pressure to continue living according to traditional values and practices, some participants mentioned following the traditional way of life because it is expected of them.

> Well... it's good for him. Just because he grew up in it. But he does it for the elders. Because that is expected of him. (Participant #2, 25)

> I think both are still important. Because, at my age, I have to be in the house, I have to do household duties, and for my mom, as the elder, she does the same as well, so, she still behaves in a very good way that, I don't want to see such people in the community to see me doing such things. If I have to go out, to party, or I have to make some party at home,

it'd have to be inside the house, not... so that everyone can see that. You have to do it respectfully and behave very well. (Participant #12, 22)

This picture shows an almost polar opposite of who the young and the old think the traditions are more important for. It indicates there may be some identity issues. According to Collier and Thomas (1988), avowal and ascription are both involved in the identity formation of any individual. The higher the match between one person's ascription about the other's cultural identity and the other's avowed cultural identity, the higher the intercultural competence (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Thus, the higher this match between ascribed and avowed cultural identities, the more likely the communication between two individuals will have a positive outcome for both interlocutors. In this case, however, more young people think traditions are more important to the older generation, whereas more older participants say traditions are more important for the younger generation. However, other questions showed a majority of both the young and the old generally appreciated their traditions. There may be differences, but they do not seem to be as important as the participants themselves think. The image the two generations have of each other clearly does not match the image they have of themselves. This makes successful communication between the two generations of this sample more difficult and more prone to misunderstandings.

There may also be a difference in the young and old generation when it comes to traditional values and traditional practices, either in their interpretation or in how they practice them. This was observed and expressed by interviewees of both generations. This is in tune with other researchers' findings about other tribes, such as Lagacé et al. (2012) about aging Somali Canadians. In China, Mjelde-Mossey (2007) found the elderly may not be receiving as much attention as they used to, due to demographic and cultural changes. The older Basotho in this study also mentioned changes. They commented mostly on the lack of respect and work

discipline they observe in the younger ones, which was a result of a more open world with other cultures' examples and modern education, according to them.

When I was growing up, you can find people doing some of the things that are done today. For instance, it was true that people should not drink in the streets here. But, today, it's different. We still advise them on that, "you know, don't drink during the day." Ah, yet after, at lunch, they go for drinking, I don't like that, I don't understand. So, the things that were good that we have dropped. (Participant #9, 70)

I don't think [my children] would say the same thing. […] And they are resisting some of the things that I did while I was as young as they are. We used to wake up in the morning, work hard, the whole day, do all sorts of things, without having rest. But now, they don't like that style of life. They hope they have to do some work, during a certain time, and at a certain time, they have to take a rest. (Participant #18, 58)

Some, however, were more neutral, commenting on natural change coming with time and a changing world. Technology and influence from other cultures were the most common themes to explain why today's children are different from those born 50 years ago. Education and Christianity were also brought up, though not as frequently. The children of the modern days just add something to the traditional way of life, while at the same time taking other elements away, thereby adapting to a changing world.

Tradition, I think it goes with time. There will be some spices. They're spicing it in their, in their way because I think, I do it, but not in the same way that my parents used to. Because of time, hey? Because of the period I'm living in. And I think, in their time, the way they are doing it, it will be, at least a little, differ. (Participant #6, 62)

But, in general, the children of nowadays wouldn't not be like us. Really. Their lives are changing very, very, completely. They are changing completely, are not the same as we are before. Rona, we were not watching the TVs. We were not riding the [autos]. So, bona, they are going everywhere with the vehicles. Whereas, rona, we are no more, we are traveling with our own foot. In the past. […] Because, bona, their life is very easy. And it's going to be easier than before. (Participant #10, 53)

The young participants, in turn, say they know the older ones think they have become undisciplined and disrespectful, but they defend themselves by pointing to the change in lifestyle conditions. They, too, refer to new technologies making life easier and other cultures' influence as reasons for the change. They do not always see this as a negative direction. However, one can see a shift in values, also when it comes to attitude toward work. While many of the older participants worked all day, the younger ones, especially in the urban areas, have more commodities with machines helping them with their chores. As Twenge et al. (2010) found, leisure time is valued higher in the younger generation, making work less of a central part of their lives. This also makes them strive for more balance between work and free time (Smola & Sutton, 2002).

I think [the older people] are somehow negative towards the modernized things that... […] They say they're the ones that changed our tradition and all the stuff, because we copied other people's behavior and lifestyle. (Participant #4, 24)

Our grandparents, […] they like to say like, our, people, children from nowadays don't respect, they don't have respect, that's what they always say. They don't do household duties like them used to do. You find that I will wake up at ten, but them used to wake up at four. By ten, they are done with everything. But they just can't see, then, watch TVs,

they didn't have TVs back then. If you were done with your household duties, you go to the cattle, see after the cattles, collect wood... You know, they used to work morning till late, then sleep. But now, I wake up at ten, I clean, after that, after 12, I watch TV. I go to town. I don't do... simple life, what they used to do back then. So they are like, "ah, you guys from nowadays don't respect the culture." (Participant #12, 22)

Many, both old and young, commented on how the young generation had changed and did not care about traditional values and traditional practices anymore. However, as can be seen by their answers to earlier questions, many of the actual young participants of this study did emphasize their connection to tradition, sometimes positively denouncing the changes technology had brought. They stressed their importance even today and in the generation to come, their children's generation. This is another example of an avowal/ascription discrepancy between the old and the young. The elders' perception may be based on the way they themselves learnt about traditional values and traditional rituals at a young age and throughout their lives. In a rapidly changing world, the circumstances have indeed changed, but it appears traditions are still valued. The young who said their generation had changed and did not value traditions anymore were frequently referring to only certain traditions, most often to traditional rituals. The value of respect is concerned by this especially, and while considered a traditional value by my participants, it was seen as very important by all. Reluctance to comply with some other traditional rules that were seen as not applicable in today's world made some of the participants introduce or at least accept small changes, which may one day become the norm. This confirms what Kratz found in the Okiek in Kenya: traditions do get "updated" to still fit into modern Okiek lifestyle (Kratz, 1993). This seems to be true for Basotho traditions as well.

However, one can clearly see in the younger generation that there seems to be a dividing line between those youngsters who still appreciate traditions and those who generally do not. This once again excludes the value of respect. This shows traditions, like culture, can change and sometimes viewpoints can vary between even two people of similar age and background (Kratz, 1993). Except for one elder, all older participants had at least fairly positive views on tradition. Traditions are always elements from the past, and as such only present in small doses in today's world (Kratz, 1993). These traditions are constantly threatened by new influences and developments (Kratz, 1993). Traditions, like culture, are historically transmitted, but they are not static elements that never change (Collier & Thomas, 1988). On the contrary, they are constantly evolving in interaction (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Without being prompted, many participants attempted an explanation of where the social change they described was coming from and which traditions it affected. The participants most commonly blamed technology, influence from other cultures, modern education, and Christianity as reasons for change. Tradition is often understood as the opposite of the modern or progressive, which leads to either romanticizing or denouncing it, depending on one's stand (Kratz, 1993). In this study, there were examples of both, plus everything in between. One has to bear in mind, however, most negative stances are shot at traditional rituals, not traditional values. Nevertheless, the only value almost completely safe from attack in these interviews seemed to be respect.

The analysis has shown traditional values and traditional rituals are still important today across generations, according to this study's sample. Respect is clearly the single most important value for both the old and the young, confirming Ahn & Ettner's (2014) finding that some values may be so fundamental to a society that they do not change as quickly as generations do. Even those participants who disagreed with many traditions still valued respect. Other values were also still

important, though in varying degrees. Sharing and its sub-themes seem to be more important to the older generation. Traditional rituals found the least amount of consensus. The older generation tended to support them more, but also had representatives who would do away with many of the old ways. The old and the young hence had different opinions on the importance of traditional values, especially of traditional rituals.

In a changing world, perceptions and interpretations of traditional values and traditional rituals are also changing rapidly (Grosz-Ngaté, et al., 2014). This could be seen in some differences in perception or in interpretation of traditions in these interviews. The question now is whether this has affected identity formation in the old and the young generations of Lesotho. Kratz (1993) discovered a strong link between traditions and identity in the Okiek tribe in Kenya. It remains now to be shown whether traditional values and traditional rituals also contribute to the formation of a cultural identity in the Basotho, based on my sample, as my third research question commands. This is why the next part will analyze the participants' concepts of cultural identity. Their cultural identities that have become salient in the interviews will be put in relation to traditional values and traditional rituals and their relative importance to find out whether traditional values and rituals do contribute to forming one or more cultural identities of young and old Basotho, and which identities the traditions concern. This is the part where cultural identity theory really comes into play, as previously unknown factors (what are traditions and traditional values of Basotho, and how great is their importance to the young and the old generation, respectively) have been clarified.

6.5 Traditional values and cultural identity

After finding out what traditional values and traditional rituals exist in Lesotho and how important these are to the old and the young generation of my sample, respectively, the next step is to explore the third research question, how these communal traditional values and rituals contribute to the forming of one or more cultural identities of Basotho or the young and the old generation. Hence, the previous results will be put into the larger context cultural identity theory provides, and in this context it will be analyzed which cultural identity or identities come into play for young and old Basotho in this study.

When asked about their cultural identity, it was a persistent opinion by participants of both the older and the younger generation that they identified as Basotho first and foremost. This high number may be due to the fact that I, as the researcher, am obviously not a Mosotho, but the question was asked neutrally and naturally in the course of the interview, and unless so prompted, no explanations of the concept were given. On the contrary, participants were asked to explain what they thought cultural identity was. Many explained the concept as a means of recognizing where a person comes from, of determining his or her heritage. This can become visible in behavior and habits, such as eating habits, but also in the language.

> I think, for culture, it's, I mean, culture, when I say I'm Mosotho, I'm Mosotho, and my culture is, let's say, the way, how I do things, how I live, what I eat, […] which culture you belong to. Because, as for Basotho, Basotho people have their own food, as in their culture. You won't eat with Mosotho and expect him or her to eat pasta or rice, the, no, the Mosotho eats papa. You know that. So, that's the culture. Identity, I think it's the way we portray ourselves to the public. (Participant #8, 24)

> I think, cultural identity to me can be that, as what I should be known of. The identity I have with my culture, like when they say, I'm Mosotho girl, you have to be like some,

you have to, to be seen in this, in a particular way […]You have to represent that culture that is known. […] I feel good. I feel good with my cultural identity. (Participant #12, 22)

The few people who did not identify as Basotho mentioned their religion, or their clan, or they highlighted economic hardships of life. Being a Mosotho can refer to both the nationality and the main population of the country, as there are some small minority tribes within the country (Rosenberg, 2008). All of the respondents testified they were happy about this cultural identity.

It's good to be, maybe a Mosotho because you can be identified from other people and, and can be proud of, to be a Mosotho because of our labor resource. […] She said she's proud to be Mosotho. (Participant #14, 84)

As described in the literature review, cultural identity theory aims to examine the communicative processes in the individual to construct their cultural group identity and their relationship with others (Collier, 2009b). This can best be done by analyzing the actual discourse (Collier & Thomas, 1988). Cultural identity is mostly visible when intercultural communication takes place. To find out whether this is the case in this study, I analyzed participants' answers to questions related to both the second and the third research questions. This was done to cover the importance of traditional values, to find the necessity of the practices, and to direct questions about their cultural identity. Cultural identity theory guides this part of the study the most, as it can help explain the formation of two cultural identities that seem to have been at play in this study.

On the one hand, both age groups mainly identified as Basotho for their cultural identity. This could mean different things to the different age groups, but there was a consensus among the two groups to pass/have passed on the traditions to their children, as well as an agreement

across the generations that traditions, generally speaking, should be upheld in the future for their important functions. Very often, this referred to the value of respect. This was the one value almost everybody in my sample agreed upon as important, from the past, present, and to the future.

On the other hand, despite this national cultural identity being brought to the forefront by my participants, another cultural identity emerged from their answers and descriptions: age identity. It may not be at the top of the participants' minds, but their answers clearly show they see their age group as distinct from the other age group participating in this study. From the results presented above, it can be shown many participants see a difference between the young and the old generation when it comes to traditional values and practices. They say, for instance, the young are not as respectful and disciplined anymore as the old once were, and that the young add to the traditions to slowly change them to make them applicable to the modern world. Even in the question pertaining to whom the traditions are more important for, there was no general agreement between the old and the young: only one young participant said they pertain the young, whereas only two elders answered they pertain to the old. It could also be seen that of the few participants who did not feel positive about their traditions, all of them were part of the younger generation. The only people who mentioned really being unhappy with their tradition came from the younger generation, who also felt more restricted by a traditional lifestyle than the older generation. From all this, it could be inferred that the young and the old in Lesotho constitute indeed two different cultural identities. Questions probing for avowal and ascription showed clear perceived differences between the generations. Differences in values between the young and the old also emerged when it comes to sharing values and traditional rituals, which both tended to be more important to the older generation. But especially the perceived

differences between the two interview groups of participants, both old and young, indicates more than just the national cultural identity:

> She said, most of the children here, they, they lose the, some traditions. They learn some, they learn, they are modernized, in short. They lose their traditions and there is a big difference between them and the children in these days. (Participant #14, 84)
>
> I think [the older people] are somehow negative towards the modernized things that... […] They say they're the ones that changed our tradition and all the stuff, because we copied other people's behavior and lifestyle. (Participant #4, 24)
>
> We are too different because the grandparents, they were more disciplined than this generation. And, we don't follow the tradition as our grandparent did before. With, my understanding is that, ha ke re, as people, we are different, so we don't take things in the same way. (Participant #11, 18)

Since Collier and Thomas assumed people have more than just one type of cultural identity that can be negotiated and adjusted during an interaction, it follows in this study, two different identities may have been at play. On the one hand, there is the participants' age identity. It became more salient and intense when asked about the other group (ascription) as compared to one's own group (avowal), highlighting possible differences between generations. On the other hand, there is another, more national type of cultural identity which hints at a culturally cohesive nation, especially displayed toward outsiders such myself (Rosenberg, 2008). Avowal and ascription are both involved in the identity formation process, but may vary in intensity depending on the context, situation, and relationship between the two parties (Collier, 2009b). In this case, it seems that intensity of both avowal and ascription is higher when it comes to age identity of my interviewees. When the conversation moved from age to national cultural identity,

differences between generations were not highlighted as much even when specifically asked for, and the focus lay on the national identity as Basotho. This identity covered up most intergenerational differences.

Intercultural communication is defined, by Collier and Thomas (1988), as "contact between persons distinct from one another in cultural terms" (p. 100). This has been the case in this study. Hardly anybody in the interviews did not mention even a single difference in behavior and/or interpretation of values between the young and the old generation, with many participants commenting on rapid changes in technology and influences from outside the country as possible causes. When talking about their national cultural identity as Basotho, the intercultural part of their interaction may have been me, as the foreign researcher (Rosenberg, 2008).

Values and rituals are important elements of any culture or group (Hofstede et al., 2010). Traditions, like culture, are passed down from one generation to the next (Collier & Thomas, 1988), so it makes sense one's identity and traditional values would be connected to people. Participants did comment on the connection between their cultural identity and traditional values. For many, they go hand in hand, for traditional values and rituals are engrained in their personality and in their identity as Basotho.

My cultural identity and the values? Yeah, I think those are connected somehow […] I think of, the values, we have, we still have thought respectful things and in my identity still, the respect still stands out. I do think, those are connected. (Participant #12, 22)

Because, if you want to keep your cultural identity and, that's how you want to portray the values that you have raised as a human person. That's how you want to present yourself as a human person. And that's how you want people to, to, you know, people to

feel you. That's how you want to present yourself. And that will go together with the values that embrace, the values that you live by as an individual. (Participant #7, 52)

Sometimes, however, this connection between traditional values and their cultural identity causes a conflict in people, as they feel restricted by their culture, by the traditional way of doing things, which is, however, part of their identity. This mostly concerned the younger generation, who presented it as a constraint between their cultural identity and their individual personality.

I do feel that conflict because here, it's all about respect. Sometimes, you want to do... You want to be your own person, do your own things, but culture doesn't allow you to do that. And the way you were brought up, well, the way I was brought up doesn't allow me to do... that or answer in a certain way or do things that I want to do, HOW I want them to do. So there's that conflict. (Participant #1, 23)

People are always, like you are going to talk to those people who are already dead. They are seeing the ancestors, say "do this, do this, do this!" But we're not, it's not much important among us. Just a waste of time and a waste of money. Because, the way they are doing that, expenses […] We have to follow Christian things. (Participants #15/16, 23/25)

Others only comply with the traditional ways because it is expected of them and they do not want to be the odd one out or be ostracized by the community. Especially in the past, this was a very real concern, and even nowadays, certain behaviors will be frowned upon. Other times, people use threats based on superstition to make youngsters comply with the traditional way of doing things. So people do feel restricted by traditional values.

But I just did. Just because people were doing it. And they'll be like, if you don't do it, you will suffer. Something bad will happen to you […] Yeah, they promote of some bad lucks for you, if you don't do that traditions with them. They be like, "you're rejecting Sesotho". […] For that, that one for funeral, I just did it because people were doing it, you know? (Participant #8, 24)

The traditional way of life, it's a little bit oppressive. While modern life, it's a free way of life. People feel free in the modern world, they [think] I'm a woman, I can wear a pair of pants, not only the dress. I can go to parties. […] Which one, we couldn't do during our times. That was a very bad example. It was a very bad thing to do. […] These are the things which were not done during the, our tradition did not allow it. But now, the modern world allows. (Participant #18, 58)

Communication, according to Collier, is intercultural, if the participating parties view themselves as culturally different (Collier, 1989). This is also true in this study. The young and the old see each other as living in different worlds when communicating about their age identity. Growing up nowadays is seen as significantly different from growing up 50 years ago. Intercultural competence, then, is "the demonstrated ability to negotiate mutual meanings, rules, and positive outcomes" (Collier and Thomas, 1988, p.108). She thus defined cultural competence as the behavior that is appropriate and effective for both partners when interacting with the identities employed at one given moment, and it is implicitly assumed that people will know how to behave (Collier, 1989). Collier and Thomas defined cultural identity as "identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has shared systems of symbols and meanings as well as norms/rules for conduct" (p. 113). In this case, the participants seem to be able to function in two different cultural identities, on the age and the national level. The young function most

naturally in their own age identity group, but are also mostly able to transfer to the national identity level when dealing with traditional values and practices that they may personally not agree with anymore. However, since they believe, for the most part, traditions are still important today, they are able to overlook specifics, which would possibly make them feel oppressed by the old rules. The old generation may be a little less flexible when it comes to identity switching, but as the value of respect commands the younger ones to respect the older ones, they may be more protected from the need to accommodate the other group.

Culture is defined as "a historically transmitted system of symbols and meanings, and norms" (p. 102, Collier & Thomas, 1988). Traditions are also historically transmitted, they are thus part of the system that comes from the past. Since culture can mean both long-term heritage and emergent behavior in a specific situation or interaction, each individual having several cultural identities is not only possible but imperative (Collier, 1989). Cultural identity theory sees common contextual symbols as signs for culture, thus including traditions (Collier & Thomas, 1988). They are seen as relatively stable over time, but flexible in interactions (Collier & Thomas, 1988).

In these cultures, norms and rules govern behavior. They, at the same time, restrict and encourage actions. They are often only found in the core knowledge of members of a given culture, and only visible in stories, myths, and metaphors. This is probably true for Basotho on both the national culture level and the age group level. Behavioral restrictions that existed for the older generation (and continue to exist for them) were found to not always be the same restrictions the younger generation could feel. What was a taboo 50 years ago has sometimes become the norm today, especially in more urban areas. It is understandable older people mostly denounce this behavioral change, as it seems to work against everything they value. However, as

the value of respect shows, some values and guidelines for good behavior can overlap even 66 years of an age gap.

The conflict does not only concern one person in themselves, however. Some people mentioned different interpretations of rituals within the family or the community. This mostly concerned the ancestral feasts or other rituals. Members of the communities all agree on general procedures, for example having a funeral for a deceased person, but do not necessarily comply with all the little rules traditionally associated with mourning. Worshipping the ancestors is probably the most discussed ritual because Christianity is the most important religion in Lesotho (US Department of State, n.d.). Christian teachings say nothing about preparing feasts for ancestors, so depending on the strictness of the church, it may discourage its members from the old ways. Other churches have included some of the indigenous beliefs into their services (US Department of State, n.d.). However, there will still be adherence to the old way, people who strongly believe in placating their ancestors above all else.

> At the moment, there's a, there's a debate between churches, so in other churches, you are not allowed to perform certain chores because they do believe that, for example, I'm talking about ancestors, they say, those are false gods. So, it brings a bad situation between the society. We are not doing things the good way. (Participant #2, 25)
>
> Say, one member of the family passes away, we mourn, how? You'll find that day, a day after the burial, you start shaving. And before, before the deceased is buried, you can't shave your hair. But now, these kids, they just don't care. They shave, then, during the day, when we have to do the shaving, while they, they don't have. And they'll tell you "no, we are wasting our time, we can mourn in a different way". […] But after, you see, if we bury the deceased today, tomorrow all, the entire family will come together and start

shaving. So, we find that they have already shaved, say, maybe two, three days back, we are agreeing, just as if we are doing the thing. And it's bad. So remember, we lost somehow our family member two weeks bad, and when they, all of them had shaved their heads. I had to talk to the people, "don't behave, it's the only thing that we have, and that shows" […] So that thing, we are trying to, it show us how we are one thing, and we are trying to maintain that. (Participant #6, 62)

Some younger individuals only identify with the value of respect of everything that came up in the interviews. These younger participants may also construct their identity through the new things: technology, other cultures' influence, education, and Christianity (cf. Rosenberg, 2008). Wahab, Odusi, and Ajiboye (2012) found a link between westernization and erosion of cultural values. Because of the ease with which western culture moves around the world, mostly inspired from the US, they found what they called a "cultural supermarket effect" (Wahab, Odusi, & Ajiboye, 2012). Seeing a different world on the television screen allows people to adopt a different cultural identity from the place they were born at (Wahab, Odusi, & Ajiboye, 2012). This effect seemed stronger in urban areas, which is congruent with what I found in Lesotho. Many participants mentioned differences between rural and urban areas, most often in the sense cultural values and rituals being practiced more and interpreted more strictly in the rural areas of the country.

Most things we are doing are coming from South Africa or any other countries. Even the way we adjusted, technology, whatever. So, we started having technology, […] go to copy them abroad. […] [Traditional values] are still important. […] No, that doesn't mean we lost our tradition, we still go with it. (Participants #15/16, 23/25)

The sheer number of participants judging all these traditional values and practices as important to the point of being essential to their culture leads to the assumption that the values and practices do help the forming of a cultural identity, that of being a Mosotho. This attests to the fact Lesotho is a very homogeneous country. Despite older clans' survival to this day, after being united by Moshoeshoe I., the different tribes assimilated more and more into one big group that had common values and beliefs (Rampeta, 2012). To be a Mosotho, according to the majority of these participants, one has to know about the traditional values and practices, not necessarily practice them.

> I'm a Mosotho man, I do, I do, I do, I do, I do respect some elders, even younger people, and my culture speaks the same. So I think I practice those two equally. (Participant #2, 25)

> She said, to be a Mosotho, it's... she said you have to learn and knows the traditions of Basotho, as she is Mosotho. (Participant #14, 84)

Taking into account all the above results on traditional values and practices, their relative importance, and what participants shared about their cultural identity, it can be concluded that although both old and young participants identify mainly as Basotho, what it meant to them in the traditional context could be vastly different. While some participants argued knowing about the old ways was enough, others insisted on the central role traditions carry even today. Some argued for an adoption of foreign practices into their culture, a modernization, while others' main point was to avoid borrowing from abroad as the new practices dissipated their culture.

This study found two different cultural identities among the participants. One was the cohesion-based national identity, often presented to outsiders, of being Basotho (Rosenberg, 2008). When operating in this cultural identity, traditional values and rituals were used to stress

unity of the group, stressing the similarities. The other identity found was an age-related identity. In this identity, participants stressed perceived differences between the generations more and emphasized their own understanding of traditional values and rituals. According to the three dimensions of cultural identity (scope, salience, and intensity), these two identities can be classified. The national cultural identity is obviously much wider in scope, as it refers to an entire people. However, its salience is significantly lower, since it is unlikely to be of importance in most of Basotho's daily life. This identity, however, may only have been brought up as often as it has because of my being a cultural outsider. Finally, intensity was deemed moderately high for national identity, but again, my own identity may have influenced that. Age identity scores lower on scope. While the groups can still be considered big, they do not cover the entire nation. However, in daily communication, age identity is much more likely to be salient than national identity. Age identity was not communicated with a lot of intensity; it mostly became relevant in the processes of avowal and ascription. This description of the dimensions only refers to this one context of the interview, while everything else must be a presumption and should be verified in future research.

Finding these two distinct identities in this study has made it interesting to muse as to which identity takes precedence over the other, when it takes precedence, and why. It has certainly been shown that age is a distinctive identity marker for Basotho on communal traditional values and rituals, even while many participants described the overlying national cultural identity. In simple terms, on the national level, everybody is part of the group (Basotho), but when asked about their own opinion on traditional values and practices, most described clear differences between age identities.

Traditional values and rituals have been found to help contribute to a national cultural identity of both young and old Basotho. The majority of participants pointed to these values and rituals as important to their cultural identity as Basotho. At the same time, an age identity emerged in conversation, which pointed out perceived differences between the two generations.

As for the age identity, traditions mentioned in this study contributed less to the forming of a cultural identity, but they still had an influence. To define their age identity, many participants used their views on traditional values to set boundaries between themselves and their generation as opposed to the younger/older generation, respectively. However, at least in this sample, while people ascribed clear differences between the young and the old generation, when comparing the two groups numerically, the differences are not as pronounced as one might think. In both generations, there were participants who really liked and denounced their traditions, who supported them at all costs, and who wanted to do away at least with parts of them; those who felt conflicted between the traditional and the modern aspects of life; those who felt social pressure to comply with traditions, and those who saw them as important for the old, for the young, or for both. Traditional values thus seem to be used as an example for separation between the generations, without actually separating them, based on this study's sample group.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Implications of the study

The results have shown several important communal traditional values and connected traditions in Basotho life. This study was a first when it comes to Basotho traditional values, and as such, it offers valuable insight into the topic. Even though the results cannot be generalized, they do provide a first orientation on where young and old Basotho stand on the issue. The first research question uncovered the traditional values and practices relevant to the participants. Respect reigns above them all, which shows in the practice of greeting and veneration of elders. This could be supported by Collier's (2003) study on what was important to several different ethnic groups in America, where African Americans mostly valued respect and consideration the most. Perhaps in a more relevant study for this thesis, she also did a study on core characteristics in intercultural friendships in South Africa (1999). The black respondents focused on honor and compassion (Collier, 1999), which also supports the important position respect is given in this study. Greetings, an almost automatic routine to most interviewees, perform numerous social functions from creating stronger bonds between members of the community, thus serving as the glue of society, to preparing any social interaction. This is consistent with findings in other studies about greetings in other African tribes (Agyekum, 2008, about the Akan in Senegal, and Nwoye, 1993, about the Igbo in Nigeria) and in Lesotho itself (Akindele, 2007). The elders are revered for their social functions and for the wisdom and advice they can offer (see also Obioha & T'soeunyane, 2012). This is in tune with what other researchers have found about aging in sub-Saharan Africa, which is viewed as a positive process that enhances one's social status instead of diminishing it (Thomas, 1983; Lagacé et al., 2012). Sharing was also found to be an important value, consisting of the two sub-themes of hospitality and togetherness. Gender roles

are ingrained in the traditional way of life in Lesotho as well. Finally, communal rituals were discovered, notably funeral rites, wedding rites, and feasts for the ancestors. These are in tune with what Kratz found with the Okiek in Kenya, that rituals tend to be among the first elements described when talking about tradition (Kratz, 1993). They may all fulfill unifying roles in the community by bringing people together, strengthening relationships, and inspiring people to help out one another (Ainslie, 2014).

The second research question addressed the importance of the traditions and traditional values mentioned by the participants. Across generations, traditions as a whole were considered to be still important today, and were rated positively. However, the vast majority felt there was a difference, either in perception or in practice, between the younger and the older generation. Respect topped the list of importance throughout generations. Values of sharing were deemed more important by the older generation, which seems to imply these values are receding. Gender roles were divided equally, though most people did not have a favorable opinion on the rigidity and double standard that exist here. Concerning the rituals, more of the older people found them important, whereas more of the younger participants reported knowing and fulfilling them, but often only because it was expected of them. Some reported even a clear break from what they consider the most visible part of traditional culture in order to be more modern. Some young participants reported following some traditions, but not all, or followed them in different ways than the elders. This shows traditions and their meanings can change with the times (Kratz, 1993; Disele et al., 2011).

The third research question combined the results of the first two and addressed the formation of cultural identity on the basis of traditions and traditional values. It could be concluded that traditions do contribute to the forming of two cultural identities of my

participants, most of whom identified as Basotho. Firstly, they contribute to the forming of a

national cultural identity. Even those who did not care for the traditional activities themselves

anymore replied they would at least tell their children about them, if not encourage them to

pursue them. Respect, as it came up both from the younger and from the older participants,

seems to be the glue to forming Basotho traditional identity. Respect was often spoken of as

though it were timeless, as it came up as a traditional value, but it was described in the present

tense by all interviewees who mentioned it, making it one of the fundamental values of society

(Ahn & Ettner, 2014). Traditions were perceived to be clearly connected to being Basotho, to the

point where participants reported feeling a conflict between the traditional and the modern way

of life. This could be due to the fact traditions are so close to one of their cultural identities

(national) that they feel they need to comply with the traditions as much as possible. In a

cohesive and ethnically homogenous nation such as Lesotho, the existing social pressure, which

show how essential traditions are to the nation even today, helps to maintain this traditional part

of their identity.

On the other hand, an age-related cultural identity emerged. Most participants commented

on the differences between generations, they differed in their judgment of for whom traditions

were more important, and it was only among the young participants one could find examples of

true unhappiness with parts of the traditional lifestyle. The other values and practices, besides

respect, received many mentions, but the rate of their importance was much lower and confined

to singular interviewees here and there. These values and practices are probably important for the

cultural identity formation of some individuals, but not to all, according to my sample. For

example, all themes of sharing was cited as being important by eight of my nine older

participants, while only five younger ones mentioned any of them in total. It may be concluded that the values of sharing are more important to the older generation of Basotho.

Traditional values and practices contributed less to the formation of an age identity than to the forming of a national cultural identity, but one could still discern their use in the former. The young and the old alike use them to set boundaries between themselves and the other group. The question of whether these boundaries are real or exist only in the heads of my participants needs to be examined, as there were fewer differences than expected between the two groups. In any case, through the processes of avowal and ascription, my participants all use tradition to separate themselves from the other generation.

Respectively, these two cultural identities were analyzed in their scope, salience, and intensity. It was shown intercultural communication is taking place between the groups, as they both assume the other to be different from themselves. This also makes them interculturally competent.

While many people using mobile phones (109.1 subscriptions per 100 inhabitants), only an estimated 11% had access to the Internet in 2014 (UNSD, 2016). Only 37.3% of Basotho in urban areas use improved sanitation facilities (UNSD, 2016). Cattle is less important than it used to be, but still a sign for wealth (Ferguson, 1985). These are only some of the statistics which show Lesotho is a developing country, but the differences between people of the same nation in wealth or resources can be great. Lesotho is a country in constant motion and changes are rapid. This can explain in part the wide spectrum of answers especially young participants gave in this study. Traditions were important to some of them, completely unnecessary to others. Kratz (1993) and Yi, Ribbens, Fu, & Cheng (2015) emphasized views on the same issue can be vastly different even between people of the same age and background because their socialization may

have been completely different. With so much to consider for the young ones, from their own developing country, the appeal of South Africa and the US (Rosenberg, 2008), to Christianity and technology, it is clear there will be different opinions.

Even though not applicable in my first research question, the cultural identity theory worked well with this study. It gave direction for my research and embedded my results into a larger context. As most participants identified as Basotho and questions were asked specifically to find out how important the knowledge and/or the practice of traditional values are for the younger and the older generation, a direct link between the traditions and the cultural identity was found as well as another, if weaker, link between traditions and age identity. Both young and old people identified mainly as Basotho and referred back to traditions, among others. However, aside from the value of respect, which was brought up both by the old and the young, the values and traditions referred to differed, which was especially noticeable for the value of sharing and the rituals. In addition, more old people than young people from my interviews said it was important to stick to the traditions. These results prove that there is indeed a link between traditional values and cultural identity, and that age identity may play an implicit role. However, since people always have multiple cultural identities (Collier & Thomas, 1988), finding two in my interviews alone that related to traditions beautifully shows this theory's assumption in real life. Participants navigated through these identities and shifted from one to the other without any problem.

This study contributes to filling a gap in research. Cultural identity theory is, as explained above, a broad theory that can apply to any group in any culture, from national culture or gender identity to the smallest sub-group in society. However, in the past and also by Collier herself, it has mostly been applied to ethnic minority groups (Collier, 2003; Lu. 2001; Moss & Faux,

2006). While it is certainly important to research cultural identity specifics of minority groups, one should not forget the majority groups or other categories of groups over the ethnic minority groups. Members of a majority group too form a cultural identity, they too see themselves as different from other groups, and they too are proud of their heritage. This is what my study has contributed to. It identified two cultural identities, which were given little attention before, national cultural identity and age cultural identity. Basotho are in the large majority in their country, yet on a world scale, they are but a small speck. Even though most of my participants identified as Basotho, first and foremost, when asked, an age identity could also be identified, asserting cultural identities are fluid and constantly negotiated in interaction. Hence, this study confirmed cultural identity theory is also applicable to other types of cultural identity, thus widening the scope of research. It will hopefully be an encouragement to other researchers to go beyond the beaten paths of a theory and to try testing it in another environment that the theory theoretically includes, but that has been neglected in practice.

7.2 Limitations of the study

Given the fact Basotho communal traditional values and their connection to the formation of a cultural identity have never been studied before, using the qualitative method best serves to address the exploratory nature of this study. The lack of literature on the niche I chose to study in general and on my Lesotho context in particular made it difficult to narrow down research questions, so my study can only provide a first possible glimpse into the culture, which by no means can be generalized due to the small size of the sample of 18 participants. I received a fairly wide range of answers from my participants, but the main themes kept coming up, so data saturation was reached. However, another limitation could be the broad range of answers given

to the same questions. Some participants, even when asked directly for traditional values, kept talking about objects or rituals for part of the interview. A follow-up interview at a later time could have helped to steer them back to what was really intended with this study.

Most of my participants were very happy to help me out with this study and were very open answering my questions. The fact that I had been to Lesotho before, spoke some of their language and was familiar with their culture was also helpful. At the same time, this may have prompted some participants to think I already knew about all specific exemplary situations for traditional values that I asked for. Some participants found it difficult to come up with examples, which may be due to the fact they thought I already knew them. However, I was obviously still an outsider, which may have affected participants' responses to my questions as well, especially when asked about their cultural identities. Being Basotho may have been overemphasized because of my otherness (Rosenberg, 2008). The researcher's role in any study is even more pronounced when conducting interviews (Neumann, 2011). This could also be another direction for further research: for a Mosotho to conduct similar interviews. This would allow him/her to speak to the participants in their mother tongue and possibly induce more trust and more unfiltered answers.

Another limitation of this study could be the fact I had to use an interpreter in four cases, who were not professionals, and thus some data may have been lost in translation. Other times my participants' English skills were not quite high enough for a complex interview, which may have simplified some of their answers. Some possibly did not completely understand the concept of traditional values, even though the concept was introduced and developed together during the interview. Of course this was taken into account during the analyzing process, and parts of these interviews were not included in the analysis. Additionally, the fact that the study was mainly

conducted in English limited my participant selection, excluding a large part of the rural population especially. The same exclusion is due to simple accessibility of the participants, with the result being most participants ended up living in the same general areas which were more easily accessible for me.

Finally, because of the broad nature of this study, it was impossible to include in this thesis all answers participants gave. Minor themes, themes unrelated to the original research questions, and new directions for research all came up in the interviews. Additionally, most interviews were set up spontaneously, or without the interviewee knowing much about the questions. This may have affected their answers in the sense that some possibly important traditional values and practices may not have come up because the participants were put on the spot. The picture is thus not complete, and it was necessary to include some answers to the expense of others.

7.3 Directions for further research

Even though this study seems to cover a lot of untrodden ground in research on Basotho traditional values and practices, there is still a lot of research directions still open to other researchers concerning Lesotho. For example, as indicated in the results section, almost all participants commented on social change, a difference between generations concerning either interpretation or practice of traditional values. Many mused about the origin of this change, naming sources as different as technology, influence from other cultures, Christianity, and education. While all of these probably contribute to a changing society, it would be interesting to research social change in Lesotho specifically. Lesotho is a perfect setting for research of this kind because, as my study shows, both tradition and modernity are present there. While

traditional values and practices were found to be important to both generations still, there was a trend, both in the old and the young generation, to welcome the new lifestyle at least partly. This period of social change in Lesotho is an ideal situation for researching reasons and origins of social change.

Theoretically, as indicated above, this study shows cultural identity theory can be applied in many other contexts. In this case, they were age identity and national identity. This study hence broadened the scope of this theory. At the same time, it opens doors to other researchers, who are also interested in cultural identity theory. The current literature situation shows there is dire need for more research on cultural identity theory in different contexts than just ethnic identity. Whether one focuses on gender, profession, age, majority culture, or significant hobby, all of these should work in the framework of cultural identity theory. This should now be done by other researchers, in as many different contexts as possible. My study shows the theory is applicable for age and national cultural identity, so it is now necessary to test it in other contexts.

In addition, most participants offered a lot of information and examples. However, there is still a lot of room for further research on Basotho traditions and traditional values. As indicated in the results section, there were at least four minor themes (traditional clothing, clans, traditional dances, and traditional initiation rites) that could not be included in this thesis for different reasons. However, these could serve as directions for more research, either on the same topic with a different focus, or for a different study with a more direct focus on one of these minor themes. Lesotho is still largely unexplored territory in culture and communication studies, so any contribution would be welcome. In addition, a few participants mentioned traditions and traditional values which were important to them, but which were not mentioned by other participants. It would be interesting to find out, using a larger sample, whether these minor

themes would emerge more often in the general population. A larger sample would also be useful to confirm or deny the results which were presented in this thesis. While qualitative interviews allowed me to ask more detailed questions, they were limited in number. Doing a quantitative study with a larger sample and across all generations and regions in Lesotho could add more validity to these results by making them more generalizable. So, even though a lot of data has been found in this study, there is still a lot of room for further research concerning Lesotho or the Basotho.

8 CONCLUSION

The major aim of this study was the find out how traditional values and rituals contribute to the formation of one or more cultural identities in young and old Basotho. Semi-structured interviews were used to answer this question. However, these traditional values and practices had to first become verbalized, as very little literature exists on this topic, and then, questions of importance were asked.

This study closes a gap in cultural identity research. As opposed to other research, which mostly focuses on ethnic minorities, the ethnically homogeneous background in this study allowed for a focus on other variables. Because of the scant literature on this topic, the qualitative nature of this study ensured a good understanding of the interviewees, which gave them time to elaborate their thoughts without the feeling of being put into boxes. They could put their thoughts and feelings into words without restraints.

It became apparent from the presentation of the results and the discussion of the material that traditional values and traditional rituals do contribute to the formation of cultural identities in young and old Basotho. Respect, sharing, and gender roles all contribute, whereas respect was found to be the most universal value between generations. Sharing and rituals such as funeral rites, marriage rites, and ancestor rites were favored by the older generation. It was interesting to see the opposite ends toward which the means (traditional values and ritual) led the participants. Most participants avowed to a national cultural identity, that of being a Mosotho. Traditional values and rituals have a unifying role for this identity, which keeps the nation cohesive. However, differences in interpretation or in practice of the traditions between generations were admitted to, by members of both generations, and often lamented. This indicates a second prominent cultural identity: age identity. In this case, traditional values and rituals are utilized to

separate one's own age group from the other and to emphasize differences between the groups. This means traditional values and rituals can be one factor in building both an inclusive and cohesive national identity and a more distinct and much less inclusive age identity.

The differences between generations concerning certain traditional values and most of the rituals were expected to be as such. While not all youngsters denounced rituals or values like sharing, the majority of them did tend to lean toward a more modern lifestyle. This comes as no surprise, with as much as 66 years between the oldest and the youngest participant, lifestyles have most definitely changed. The old generation grew up significantly differently from most of the young generation today. This rapid and vast change could be stemming from several changes: globalization, Christianity, influences from other cultures, technology, education, and agglomeration in cities. This change could be interesting to explore in further research.

The values themselves were also anticipated. While one cannot say this research covers all traditional values and rituals possible in Lesotho, they were the most prevalent ones I had already observed in practice myself. However, the fact there were many values and practices, less frequently mentioned than other traditional elements of Basotho culture, leads to the assumption they are also important to identity construction. This provides another interesting direction for research in the future.

An interesting finding of this study was the fact young Basotho do not usually speak up against their elders, even when they do not like certain aspects of the traditional way of life. There was also one counterexample of this, where participant #8 (24) did turn away from most traditional rituals against her elders' wishes, but for most youngsters, the pressure to conform against their will and the desire to show respect to their elders are so strong even small changes seem slow or unlikely to happen. On the other hand, many elders commented on how differently

the young generation acted when it comes to traditions. This is a clear example of avowal/ascription misconceptions, just like the bigger question of whether, and for whom, traditional values and practices were still important today. This answer is where the most striking differences emerged between the young and the old generation.

This research is useful to many readers. As indicated in the introduction, visitors and expats of Lesotho alike can find some good preliminary, though not generalizable, information about their new home country. In addition, Basotho themselves can see on which part of the spectrum they would place themselves. Some of their traditional values and rituals have been put into words, which can be an incentive to reflect upon their own opinions and behaviors, and on whether they want to preserve traditions or not. Mostly, however, this study is interesting to other researchers, whether interested in Lesotho or not, providing a good recent look on Basotho traditions. It also uses cultural identity theory in a new way to expand the possibilities researchers have with that theory. In addition, the study attempts to talk about traditional values as a whole, unrelated to work values, as was done in many previous studies (Twenge, 2010; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Ahn & Ettner, 2014). Because of this novelty value, this study can help in many research fields in the future.

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APPENDIX

Interview questions

1. Preliminaries:

   What is your age?

   What is your current occupation?

   Where are you from?

   Where do you live now?

   Have you ever lived abroad? If so, where and for how long?

   What is your general living situation (rural vs. urban, family members, etc.)?

2. What is your community to you? Is it important for you to belong to this community?

3. What is your community like?

4. When you are in this community, do people expect a certain behavior of you?

5. What does the term "tradition" mean to you? You can give examples.

6. What communal traditional values can you think of from your community? Please explain.

7. How do you feel toward them?

8. How important are traditional values for you? For the rest of your community? Do you think they are more important for the young or for the elderly?

9. Do you think these values are still important today? For what purpose(s)? Did you/are you going to pass them on to your children?

10. Think of your grandparents/grandkids. Can you think of a situation when they acted significantly differently than you would have?

11. What do you think a Mosotho should be like in this modern world?

12. Do you think all Basotho honor these traditional values?

13. Do you think you interpret these traditional values the same way as your grandparents/ grandchildren? If no, what is the difference?

14. What does cultural identity mean to you? What would you say your main cultural identity is? How do you think your grandparents/grandchildren will respond to this question?

15. How do you feel about your cultural identity? Do you ever feel conflicted between traditional and modern identity? What do you do when that happens?

16. In your opinion, is there a connection between your cultural identity and traditional values? How so?

17. Is there anything else you want to tell me about your traditional values or cultural identity?

18. Do you have any questions to ask me?