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## **SAMOA'S CULTURE, TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT:**

### **EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ON THE CHANGING FA'A SAMOA**

*"A healthy culture satisfies the problems its people have. It changes to keep up with them. The real question is only, who does the changing?"*

- **Fay G. Calkins, *My Samoan Chief*, 1962:173.  
(University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis explores the interactions between tourism development and cultural values in the South Pacific nation of Samoa. As tourism is likely to remain a key strategy for the development of Samoa, this study explores the impact of such development on the cultural component of *fa'a Samoa*, or Samoa's way of life, which varies quite significantly from Western, capitalist culture. The aim of the study is to shed light on the cultural implications of adopting tourism as a tool for economic development in Samoa, by exploring the cultural values and beliefs of accommodation sector workers. The theoretical concepts that have guided the study include Schein's (2010) definition of culture, commodification of culture, cultural capital and Sen's (1999) Development as Freedom. Qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and participant observation were used to collect data from accommodation workers. The findings indicate that cultural changes are taking place with relation to the meaning ascribed to certain cultural artefacts. Focus is also shifting from the extended family to the immediate family and the individual. Ultimately the tourism industry is perceived to be having a predominantly positive impact on respondents' lives and is not perceived as a threat to living a culturally rich life.

Key Words: Samoa, culture, tourism, fa'a Samoa, cultural change, commodification of culture, cultural capital, development as freedom

## **FOREWORD**

This thesis has not only been an academic journey and learning experience – it has been my life for the last year and as such it has been an enriching, albeit at times very challenging, personal journey.

Many people have helped me find my way on this journey and I wish to extend my gratitude to you all.

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## ACRONYMS

RNFE	Rural Nonfarm Economy
SHA	Samoa Hotel Association
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SNHDR	Samoa National Human Development Report
SSS	Sun, Sand and Surf
STA	Samoa Tourism Authority
VFR	Visiting Friends and Relatives

## SAMOAN VOCABULARY

<i>aiga</i>	the extended family or family group
<i>fa'alavelave</i>	a special occasion such as a funeral or a wedding when family comes together and exchanges gifts
<i>fale</i>	a traditional wall-less, rotund house that consists of a thatched roof supported by wooden beams
<i>fa'a Samoa</i>	a phrase that refers to "the Samoan way of life"
<i>fiafia</i>	a Samoan dance/ entertainment event
<i>fono</i>	village council
<i>matai</i>	person/s holding a chief's title
<i>palagi</i>	a person of European descent
<i>siva</i>	dance
<i>tulafale</i>	the title for a talking chief/ orator
<i>umu</i>	an outdoor oven that uses hot rocks and banana leaves

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# **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCING SAMOA AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

## **Tourism: A Development Tool for Small Island Developing States**

Over the last fifty years, the tourism industry has become a contentious yet undeniable force in the economic development strategies of many Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including Samoa. These states face unique development challenges, which arise due to their limited size, remoteness, and heightened vulnerability to economic and natural shocks beyond their control. Subsequently, SIDS are exposed to a higher risk of marginalisation from the global economy than many other developing countries (UNCTAD, 2002). With limited prospects for economic growth many islands, again including Samoa, have welcomed the development of a tourism industry to boost their cash economies.

Despite the prevalence of government enthusiasm for tourism development, many scholars continue to doubt the industry's capacity to advance development (Harrison, 2008:583). Criticisms of tourism highlight its potential to reinforce Western domination over developing countries and to generate or enhance detrimental social and environmental impacts on host communities (Donyadide, 2010:429). One further critique stipulates that the tourism industry is "especially prone to boom-bust cycles" (Stronza, 2001:269). In addition, the adverse consequences for the environment and local community are not always as immediate or observable as tourism's beneficial economic impact, which can make them difficult to quantify. Ton Van Egmond (2007:2) argues that an understanding of the tourist phenomenon, paired with specific marketing tools, is "critical" to the success of tourism development in developing countries. Successful tourism development hinges on the ability of planners and implementers to ground development in national and local destination perspectives (ibid:150). This is crucial because tourists are not a homogenous group of travellers; their impact on the environment and their interaction with the local community can vary enormously depending on the type of tourism engaged in. Therefore tourism development must be shaped by the needs and desires of the local and national destination community to maximise benefits and minimise adverse consequences for the host community.

The cultural values, needs and desires of the host community should therefore be central considerations in the development planning process, on par with environmental,

economic and political considerations. In Samoa, tourism is becoming increasingly important and it is undoubtedly influencing the cultural lives of communities exposed to the industry. Subsequently, the motivation behind this study is to gain insight into the impact of tourism development on Samoan culture and to explore whether the above-mentioned criticisms hold true according to a Samoan perspective. The study has been conducted on Upolu, the second largest, and most populous island of Samoa. Accommodation workers from resorts, hotels and beach *fales* (traditional Samoan-style houses) participated in interviews and completed questionnaires to provide their viewpoints on, and cultural values surrounding, the interaction between cultural change and tourism development in Samoa.

### **Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to explore the interactions between tourism development and cultural values and practices in Samoa. More specifically this study is an exploration of the consequences unfolding in the cultural lives of Samoans due to participation in the tourism industry. Employees in the accommodation sector have been chosen as the target group because hotels and resorts are among the few places of employment operating on weekends, especially on Sundays, which are traditionally days of rest, family and church according to Samoan culture. Additionally, this target group has been chosen because these workers have a high degree of exposure to tourists. The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

1. How do accommodation workers perceive cultural values and cultural change in Samoa?
2. How do accommodation workers perceive tourism to be impacting upon:
  - a. Cultural values and changes?
  - b. The development of Samoan society?

### **The Disposition of the Thesis**

Before delving into the specific field research that has been conducted for this study, it is necessary to elaborate on the context of both Samoan tourism and Samoan culture. Therefore, the next section of the paper will provide a contextual introduction of Samoa. Following on from this will be a section describing the data collection methods that have been adopted, which will lead into the literature review chapter and then the theoretical framework guiding the study. The paper will then continue onto the data analysis. Finally



the paper will conclude with a summary of and reflection upon this study's contribution to our understanding of tourism development and its cultural implications in Samoa.

## Setting the Social, Political and Economic Scene in Samoa

Samoa (officially Independent Samoa) is a cluster of 10 Polynesian islands in the South Pacific with a population of approximately 194,320 people, of which some 36,000 people live in the capital city, Apia (CIA, 2011). At the turn of the twentieth century the islands of

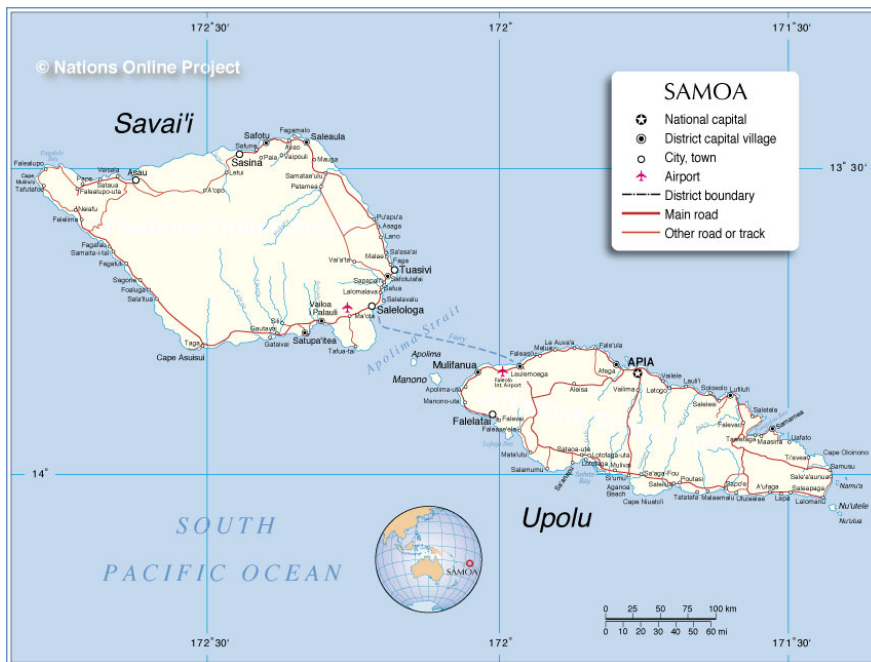


Figure 1: Map of Samoa

(<http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/samoa-map.htm>, accessed 5 April, 2012)

Samoa were divided between the colonial powers of Germany and the US, creating German Samoa (present day Samoa) and American Samoa, which remains to this day an unincorporated territory of the US. The German colony lasted until the end of World War I, at which time New Zealand gained

control over the islands under the auspices of the League of Nations and subsequently a UN-mandated trusteeship (US Dept. of State, 2012). In January 1962 Samoa was the first of the Pacific Islands to gain independence. Since independence, Samoa has proven itself to be a peaceful and politically stable nation; one party – the Human Rights Protection Party – has governed Samoa for the last 28 consecutive years (Government of Samoa, n.d).

Two economies exist simultaneously in Samoa, the cash economy (which is still emerging in villages) and the village economy. The village economy is predominantly a subsistence economy and many within this economy are dependent upon kinship networks to provide material and financial support through a reciprocal gift-giving system (Tavana, 2002:20; Thornton et al, 2010:1,4). Although the village economy exists beyond the confines of the cash economy, it is an important aspect of village life because it contributes to the maintenance of village society, culture and identity, and it also provides considerable food

security for villagers (So’o et al, 2006:18). In the past subsistence farming and fisheries provided the most sustainable livelihoods in Samoa. Nevertheless, the 2006 Samoa National Human Development Report (SNHDR) asserts that subsistence livelihoods are limiting because they do not allow for the accumulation of foreign exchange “necessary to support a modern society” (So’o et al, 2006:18). As is the case with other SIDS, Samoa faces the challenges of having a small economy and limited economic opportunities. According to the figures of the Samoa National Provident Fund, only 11 percent of the population is engaged in formal paid employment (Fruit and Vegetable Steering Committee, 2011).

### ***Fa’a Samoa: the Samoan Way of Life***

In Samoa, people exhibit an undeniable awareness of and appreciation for the nation’s Polynesian heritage. As home to the second largest population of Polynesian people, Samoa has maintained deep ties to its Polynesian roots, which Samoans express through many customs and ceremonies in the *fa’a Samoa*, or the Samoan way of life (STA, 2009:14). Lalo Milo Kamu (1996:36), a Samoan scholar and reverend, considers Samoans to be “tenaciously sensitive” about their culture. While acknowledging that this culture is in no way static or homogenous, it is useful to highlight some general tendencies and values that shape the national cultural identity. The culture in Samoa has historically been centred on a family unit rather than the individual or the community and this is still a pervasive mentality, especially in rural areas. The *fa’a Samoa* is still extremely influential in the realms of society and politics (STA, 2009:14) and is the dominant governing framework for family and village life (Stewart-Withers, 2011:48). Traditionally, *fa’a Samoa* has been patriarchal in nature and placed strong emphasis on respect for elders. This has inevitably resulted in the potential for some members of the community (titled men) to benefit from the *fa’a Samoa* lifestyle disproportionately to others (women and children). There have been instances in which people more concerned with their own personal agendas than the betterment of the family have gained authority in *fa’a Samoa*, only to manipulate the system for personal advancement (Kamu, 1996:179). The dominance of *fa’a Samoa* has nevertheless persevered throughout the islands and assisted in maintaining harmony in Samoan villages.

In the SNHDR, *fa’a Samoa* is described as the “invisible resin that is thus far keeping Samoan society intact and its governing systems functional” (So’o et al, 2006:11). In

addition, this report defines *fa'a Samoa* as an “unmistakably” conservative culture, which is founded on an attachment to the following key notions: the traditional lands and villages of the *aiga* (the extended family group); the church and pastor; the *matai* (chiefs) and the *aiga*; the Samoan language; and a wide variety of cultural ceremonies (ibid:114). The *matai* (titled community leaders, historically exclusively male family members, although female *matai* are emerging) rule over families and villages and adhere to a system of rights and obligations that “ensures that family members have rights to family resources (such as land), as well as having the opportunity to be the family chief” (Stewart-Withers, 2011:48).

Although Samoa has a colonial history, this does not seem to have diminished the strength of traditional Polynesian Samoan values throughout the community. The central focus of religion and the Church in *fa'a Samoa* is a rare example of how interactions with the West have made a mark on Samoan society. Christianity is one of the few Western influences to be whole-heartedly embraced by Samoans and accepted into *fa'a Samoa* (STA, 2009:14). Kamu (1996) argues that the history of Samoa is intrinsically tied to the history of Christianity in Samoa. The *matai* played a critical role in the society's adoption of Christianity: this acculturation of the Church and Christianity only occurred after missionaries consulted with and gained the acceptance of the high chiefs (Thornton et al, 2010:8). Once high chiefs embraced Christianity it flourished to the extent that the 2001 Samoan census reported 99.9 percent of Samoans have at least nominal adherence to a Christian denomination (Macpherson and Macpherson, 2011:304).

### **Tourism in Samoa**

In the early nineteenth century, the Samoan islands were first known to European explorers and missionaries as the Navigator Islands due to the impressive sea-faring and navigational skills of the Samoans (Lefale, 2010:323). This suggests that Samoa's ancestors, as actively mobile people, are unlikely to have been isolated from other groups of people and foreign cultures. In addition, this curiosity and skill for travel suggests that Samoans have their own long tradition of *being* explorers and maybe even tourists – much longer than the history of hosting modern tourism within Samoa.

Prior to expanding on the specifics of tourism in Samoa, it is prudent to clarify the nature of the social phenomenon of tourism. Tourism can be defined as the movement of travellers from a tourist-generating site to a tourist destination. Much of the literature on

tourism overlooks the fact that tourist-generating sites are often Western countries, especially North America and northern Europe (Van Egmond, 2007:5). Furthermore, the vast majority of the world's population are unable to travel as tourists (ibid). These facts have ramifications for the nature of tourism and the power relationships that are generated in tourism exchanges. They also necessarily have implications for the culture of the tourist and the culture of the host community receiving tourists. This brief and generalist picture of global tourism does not fully capture the nature of tourism in Samoa. There is an expansive population of Samoans living abroad who are participating in a growing trend to return to Samoa periodically for holidays. This group of tourists, known as Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) is becoming progressively important to Samoa's tourism industry as they continue to increase their consumption of mainstream tourism products (STA, 2009:5). The VFR tourists as a group consist of Samoans who have immigrated predominantly to New Zealand, Australia or the United States and have over time accumulated enough wealth to return to their home country as tourists.

One push factor contributing to the large number of Samoans living abroad (and hence the VFR market) is the limited employment opportunities within Samoa. This lack of economic opportunities accessible to Samoan communities has undoubtedly contributed to development planners demonstrating increased interest in expanding the tourism industry over recent years. Developing the tourism industry in the rural nonfarm economies (RNFE) of Samoa's villages could potentially generate jobs in the service sector, strengthen markets for agricultural products as well as bolster marketing services to ensure accommodation sites receive their products (Haggblade et al, 2007:238). Although the Samoan Tourism Authority (a government body, hereafter referred to as STA) describes the industry as being in its infancy, it is becoming increasingly important for the generation of employment and foreign exchange (STA, 2009:17). The CIA defines Samoa's tourism as an expanding industry and cites the industry as being responsible for 25 percent of GDP (CIA, 2011). The importance of tourism development is evidenced in the Samoan Government's development strategy: the *Strategy for the Development of Samoa (2008-2012)* report defines tourism as both a "key sector" and as a "leading sector in the future growth process" of Samoa (Ministry of Finance, 2006:26). The STA (2009:11) more specifically defines tourism in their current sector strategic plan as:

*The temporary short term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they would normally live and work, together with their*

*activities and experiences during those trips which include pleasure, entertainment, culture, business, conferences, visiting friends and relatives, adventure, shopping, dining, sports, education, health, challenge and self-development, or a combination of these reasons.*

The cultural considerations necessary during the planning of Samoa's tourism development are myriad. The STA (2009:5) envisions a tourism industry that strategically focuses on providing a genuine "Samoan Experience" underpinned by, among other things, cultural appreciation. In conjunction with the Government's conscious economic elevation of Samoan culture as a tourism product, tourism planning also has to identify and minimise any potential detrimental cultural consequences of tourism development. Furthermore, tourism development in both rural and metropolitan Samoa may take on a new direction in the near future due to the Government's recent approval of the development of casinos in Samoa. The Government passed the Casino and Gambling Control Act 2010, which authorises a newly established government body – the Gambling Control Authority – to licence up to two casinos within the first ten years of enacting the law, and to regulate their operation (Office of the Attorney General of Samoa, 2010:4). This could have a number of ramifications for the local community because the casinos could attract tourists that are not particularly interested in the local environment and also because the Act discriminates against locals by only permitting international passport holders to enter the casinos (ibid).

Although Samoa is one of a number of island destinations promoting a sun, sand and surf (SSS) style of tourism, the Samoan tourism industry is rather unique because of the way it has developed. Samoan land is still predominantly (over 80 percent) held under customary ownership, which has placed inhibitions on international investment in tourism development (STA, 2009:65). Therefore, unlike the situation in the neighbouring island nations Fiji, Tonga and the Cook Islands, Samoa's accommodation products are predominantly owned and operated by Samoans (ibid). Customary land ownership also allows profit to be shared around among the villagers. Often, for example, there are small fees charged to tourists for visiting natural sites such as beaches and waterfalls, which are collected by villagers. This may assist with a more even distribution of wealth and fight the widely accepted trend for tourism development (even pro-poor tourism development) to benefit the non-poor residents of a host community disproportionately to the poor (Harrison, 2008:857). This study is concerned with three types of

accommodation sites in Samoa: resorts, hotels and beach *fales*. Although readers will in all probability be familiar with the nature of hotels and resorts, the same cannot be guaranteed for beach *fales*. This type of accommodation site is commonly family-owned and operated, and there are many inexpensive beach *fales* scattered along the coast of Samoa's two largest islands. A night's accommodation at a beach *fale* often includes a substantial breakfast and dinner and sometimes also a *fiafia* night (a performance of Samoan dance and song).

There is a marked difference between tourism in Apia, the only city in Samoa, and the rest of the country. Tourism in Apia extends past accommodation to include restaurants, gift shops, clothing stores, and cafes. Beyond Apia the heart of the tourism industry lies within natural attractions and accommodation sites. Tourists do interact with villagers when they venture out to attend church services or other village activities, although my experience travelling around Samoa suggested that travellers had the most interaction with Samoans at accommodation sites. The RNFE consists of few other business ventures in the villages, apart from a few roadside general convenience stores. This observation of accommodation sites being central to the tourism industry in rural villages helped shape the research focus of this study, and pinpoint staff members of accommodation sites as the most suitable target population.

### **Delineation**

This study is limited to an examination of the interaction between tourism development and the cultural values of workers within the accommodation sector. It does not seek to provide a holistic overview of tourism development and its cultural consequences; the intention herein is to delve deeper into the specific experiences of accommodation workers and the impact tourism is having on their lives.

## **CHAPTER 2. METHODOLOGY**

The data collection for this study was conducted between August and December 2011 in Samoa and this section outlines the methods used and approach taken in the research process.

## **Research Approach**

As a researcher interested in human interactions and social and cultural events or activities, I am predisposed to view the human subject as unique to the subject of natural sciences. I also hold the assumption that humans are active participants in the formulation and development of society, organisation and culture. These beliefs result in my epistemological stance being interpretivist and my ontological view being constructivist.

As the sole researcher for this study, my biases and particular frame of reference – Caucasian female in my mid-twenties, with an academic background in humanities – have undoubtedly influenced every stage of the research process, from planning through to research collection, analysis and reporting. Even while being aware that this background shapes the lens through which I view the world, and actively trying to minimise its impact on the research, it is impossible to eliminate all elements of subjectivity from the study.

Qualitative methods have been adopted for this study because they emphasise in-depth knowledge, and enable a refinement and elaboration of images and concepts (Ragin, 1994:83). This allowed for a dynamic data collection process, in which the focus of the research evolved as collection progressed from one interview to the next and the issues raised by participants directed further research. The initial questions developed for this study's research proposal were only a starting point for this inquiry. As Agee (2009:432) notes, good qualitative research questions are "usually developed or refined in all stages of a reflexive and interactive inquiry journey". This was definitely true in my case. The tweaking process for my research questions has been ongoing from the first day in Samoa and similarly the interview guide has been a fluid document.

Alongside the data collection methods detailed below, this study has also been informed by an array of documents including government reports, tourism pamphlets, weekly STA newsletters, newspaper articles, as well as published and unpublished journal articles and dissertations on Samoa and tourism.

## **Methods**

This study has taken the shape of an interview study. Interviews have been the dominant data collection method, although participant observation and questionnaires were also used in an attempt to triangulate methods and produce well-rounded data (Bryman,

2008:379). To collect background information, informal interviews and conversations were held with a number of people in and around Apia. These included two government officials working at STA, an officer at the Samoan Hotel Association (SHA) and a lecturer of tourism at the National University of Samoa.

### **Semi-structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were the primary source of data collection and were conducted in English and predominantly took place at the accommodation sites<sup>1</sup> (see appendix I for the interview guide and appendix II for the participant consent form). In total, 27 interviews were conducted, although six early interviews were eliminated from the analysis because they were not conducted with accommodation sector workers<sup>2</sup>. After these first interviews, the necessity to refine the focus became evident. Of the 21 interviews (see Appendix IV) considered in this analysis, nine respondents work at urban accommodation sites, and twelve at rural sites. Furthermore, 15 of the interviewees are employees, although often related in some way to the owners, and six are owners, or managers operating a site on behalf of other family members.

Semi-structured interviews have been well suited to this study because of the need to place an emphasis on the interviewee's frame of reference and understanding of issues and events (Bryman, 2008:438). There are rich complexities and a multitude of lived experiences in any given context, and the interview can be a method of learning on a number of levels, through the conversation, language, context, interrelatedness of the interviewee and interviewer (Kvale, 1996:42-45). This was particularly important for understanding how cultural change is being perceived and experienced by accommodation workers in Samoa; it would be difficult to gain a thorough understanding of these points of view without in-depth interviews.

As suggested in Bryman (2008:444), as soon as possible after conducting an interview I would write down first thoughts regarding the interview and how it went, contextualising the environment, any feelings about what worked or didn't work, the mood of the interviewee, and anything of particular interest about the interview itself. This method

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<sup>1</sup> Two interviews were conducted at venues in Apia, which were unrelated to the accommodation sites.

<sup>2</sup> At the outset of the research process my focus was broader: I was interested in Samoan perceptions of social or cultural sustainability in tourism.



was a useful way to reflect on the progress of the research and process the new knowledge that had been received during each interview. These comments were jotted down in a small notebook as soon after the interview had concluded as was possible, and then in the evening before transcribing the interview, I would type up the comments and elaborate on them. The resultant text was then attached to the beginning of the interview transcript. All interviewees except for two gave their consent to be recorded. The two participants who did not wish to be recorded allowed me to take notes during our interview instead.

### **Participant Observation**

In addition to the semi-structured interviews, I decided to conduct participant observation because this form of qualitative data collection compliments semi-structured interviewing. Interviews and participant observation are interconnected and “share a core of epistemological assumptions” (May, 2002:3). I stayed at accommodation sites on four of Samoa’s ten islands and conducted participant observation. Gaining access to participants was challenging and limited access was possibly a limitation of the extent and quality of the participant observation. As Bryman suggests (2008:403) access is one of the key considerations and challenges of participant observation or ethnography. A researcher is faced with the decision to take on either a covert or an overt role as researcher in a particular setting. I opted for an overt role where possible, although there were situations – for example when I was in the audience of an event – where this was inappropriate and I took on the role as a covert observer.

Participant observation not only requires collecting the data in front of you, it also involves a degree of analysis in the process of describing the observations that have been made (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002:149). The participant observation for this research did not require the use a formal guide; I used a small notebook, which I carried around at all times, and attempted to capture as much detail in the observations through jotting down free-flowing thoughts.

### **Questionnaires**

Although an uncommon method for qualitative research, I attempted to utilise bilingual (Samoan/ English) questionnaires at four accommodation sites on Upolu to increase the chances of reaching more respondents (refer to appendix III for the questionnaire). I

considered questionnaires to be appropriate in this specific context because they minimise the impact of language barriers and power relationships between the respondent and the researcher. I have been told on a number of occasions that Samoans can have a tendency to respond in interview situations in a manner they feel desirable to the interviewer. A questionnaire can eliminate this tendency by giving the participant the power to consider their answers: to “control the shape and emphasis of information given” (Beckett and Clegg, 2007:316). The intention behind using questionnaires was therefore to allow participants to engage in the research, regardless of their English skills, and to eliminate some of the researcher/ researched power dynamic that exists in one-on-one interviews. Ultimately four completed questionnaires were collected from one rural site on Upolu. Respondents at the other three sites did not wish to complete questionnaires, possibly because of the time commitment this required. A colleague assisted with the translations of the questionnaires that were completed and throughout the process participants’ confidentiality was maintained (names were removed prior to translation).

### **Sampling**

The goal in choosing a sample is to choose “respondents who are strategically located to shed light on the larger forces and processes under investigation” (May, 2002:9). In accordance with this statement, the sample within this study – employees of beach *fales*, hotels and resorts – was chosen because the accommodation sector is the biggest employer in the tourism industry in Samoa and because this area could see continued growth into the future (STA, 2009:52).

Given the time constraints, limited network and limited funding for this research project, purposive sampling was the most appropriate way to recruit participants, which allowed me to seek out interviewees relevant to the questions being asked (Bryman, 2008:458). Snowball sampling, a method involving contacting a small number of suitable participants and then recruiting additional participants through the initial participants, was also employed (ibid:184). In the initial stages of the research convenience sampling was used, which as its name suggests allowed me to interview those people that were accessible (ibid:183). Although this form of sampling is criticised as being unrepresentative of and ungeneralisable to the sample population (ibid), it was a valuable sampling method in this

study because it allowed me to kick-start data collection and establish networks which helped locate participants in the later, more focused, data collection.

These sampling techniques resulted in participation of accommodation sites from Apia as well as rural areas. I recognise that this could be considered problematic because the nature of tourism in rural and urban locations varies considerably. Nonetheless, the intention of the study is to understand how accommodation workers perceive culture and tourism's impact on cultural values, regardless of where they live and work. Therefore, I argue that the data is enriched by the diverse circumstances of respondents.

### **Data Analysis**

Analysing my data has been an ongoing task throughout the various stages of this study. Data Analysis ultimately involves summarising an inordinate amount of data to make them more manageable and then rearranging them in a way that brings out the patterns and themes in the data (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002:163). I meticulously combed the data for patterns and themes and generated my coding. The coding and subsequent analysis of the data has been conducted manually, without the aid of any software as I felt this provided the greatest control to me as the analyser.

### **Ethical Considerations**

An important ethical consideration, which I have grappled with, is whether privileged outsiders from developed countries should conduct research in developing countries at all. This is a widely acknowledged and much debated issue (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003:3); many share my doubts about the power relationships inherent in field research, and many share apprehension about whether the good of field research study will outweigh any unintended detrimental consequences of foreign researchers' presence in the field.

Beyond this overarching ethical dilemma, the research process has been fraught with ethical decisions. Every effort has been made to minimise any potentially negative consequences for participants of the study. For example, I have attempted to maintain a degree of anonymity for the accommodation sites and participants involved by excluding the names of participating sites and people throughout the study. In addition, I have been conscious not to take up too much of participants' time outside of their sometimes very long working hours. I have also been mindful of the potential power relationships at play

between workers and management when approaching hotel or resort management and asking them to introduce me to staff. At every available opportunity an attempt has been made to reiterate the voluntary nature of participation in the research to both management and individual staff.

### **Quality Control**

Unlike quantitative research, there is no widely accepted measure of quality for qualitative research. Alternatively, there are a variety of ways that different academics suggest the quality of social research should be assessed. The most prominent assessments have been appropriated from quantitative measurements of quality and include reliability, validity and generalisability. As Kvale (1996:229) posits, these three concepts have “reached the status of a scientific holy trinity”. As this study has a narrow and specific focus, the findings are not generalisable across the whole Samoan population, but relate specifically to the experiences of a small group within the wider population.

There is much debate surrounding the applicability of concepts such as reliability and validity, as well as replicability, to qualitative research, due to the concepts being grounded in quantitative research (Bryman, 2008:34). An alternate concept that has been suggested to gauge the merit of qualitative research, which is given more weight within this study, is trustworthiness. This takes into account notions of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (ibid). I have tried to conduct this study in a manner that reflects these notions of trustworthiness by presenting a transparent and honest depiction of the various stages of the research process. Triangulation of the research methods – that is using participant observation and questionnaires as well as semi-structured interviews – was also enlisted to improve the trustworthiness of this research. It is also critical to acknowledge that a substantial difference exists between the trustworthiness and generalisability of a study. Therefore, regardless of the extent to which the study has achieved trustworthiness, I am not suggesting the findings are generalisable to the wider Samoan community: the findings relate to the specific target group of accommodation workers.

### **Limitations**

As with any field research, the data collection process undertaken for this study has not been flawless. It is important to identify and disclose the limitations that exist in the

research so as to provide a deeper understanding of the data collected, and also so that these limitations can be taken contemplated for similar studies in the future. One genuine limitation occurring during the data collection was a language barrier that existed between a few interview participants and myself. The richness and depth of answers in some interviews suffered because of this. The greatest limitation may have arisen because I am a *palagi* (someone of European descent), which meant I was often considered a foreigner and on occasion I found it difficult to gain trust during interviews. This challenge was deepened by the fact that I had limited time to spend with respondents.

### **CHAPTER 3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature that has provided a backdrop to this study has been numerous and varying. Although all attempts have been made to prioritise literature specifically relating to Samoa, there are limited sources that specifically focus on Samoa and tourism and therefore it has also been useful to consider material that extends beyond Samoa to other Pacific Islands, and to SIDS in general.

#### **Tourism and its Development in SIDS**

Tourism is a well-established industry that has left few locations around the world (along with their inhabitants) untouched. Ton Van Egmond (2007) argues for the necessity of improved understanding of the phenomenon in order to maximise the benefits of participation for developing countries. He claims that 50 percent of international arrivals are generated by the 8 percent of the global population living in the West – North and Central Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand (Van Egmond, 2007:7-8). This obviously has implications for the way developing countries promote and package their tourism products. Van Egmond (2007:10) argues that the dichotomy created by the Western tourist venturing out to explore the lives of ‘the other’ should be viewed through the lens of modernism to be understood. This does not necessarily shed a positive light on tourism as a development tool. As David Harrison (2004:6) argues, for instance, the more developed – read modernised – the tourism industry in the Pacific, the more it is inclined towards big spenders and mass tourism, and the more likely the owners and operators are not local. Furthermore, Amanda Stronza (2001:268) asserts that although many modernists in the 1970s praised tourism as a development tool, in reality it became a “vanguard of neocolonialism”.

Developing countries have a huge stake in the tourism industry; as Van Egmond (2007:1) asserts, they represent the vast majority of countries using tourism as a tool to generate foreign exchange. Despite many governments embracing the industry, Joseph M. Cheer (2010:152) claims that it is unclear whether tourism development is having a positive impact on poverty reduction. Cheer (2010:159) acknowledges the importance of tourism to Pacific Island countries, but he warns that these countries should adhere to a pro-poor focus when planning and developing their tourism industries. Additional concerns regarding tourism development in SIDS are raised by Jerome L. McElroy (2003:232) who claims that, unlike the visible economic benefits accruing through tourism development, the social and environmental costs of such development are often less immediately visible.

### **The Cultural Implications of Tourism for Host Communities**

Anthropologists have studied tourism from a multitude of angles, and while recognising this, Stronza (2001:268) argues that this has rarely resulted in the perception of positive impacts on host communities. One study of tourism and its impact on the local community's sense of place in Fiji warns that a lack of diligence in understanding the value and meaning of place when developing tourism may consequently destroy the cultural and natural assets the tourism industry depends upon (Kerstetter and Bricker, 2009:692). Regina Scheyvens and Janet Momsen (2008) take a more positive stance on the development potential afforded by tourism in SIDS. Through the example of a Samoan tourist beach, which is closed on Sundays to observe the Christian values of the village, Scheyvens and Momsen (2008:500-502) suggest that tourism development and non-capitalist socio-cultural values can coexist. Their discussion suggests that a focus on culture and social capital can help to "gain insights into how many small island states have managed to enhance their standard of living despite the challenges facing them" (ibid:500). Scheyvens and Momsen nonetheless recognise that it is necessary to conduct a holistic examination of social, environmental and economic dimensions to fully appreciate the possibilities and limitations of tourism development.

### **Sustainable Tourism Development**

This review of tourism development literature would be incomplete if it overlooked the exhaustive literature on the nature, benefits and pitfalls of sustainable tourism

development. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) defines sustainable tourism as establishing a suitable balance between the three dimensions of tourism development – environmental, economic and socio-cultural – so as to guarantee the long-term sustainability of the industry (UNWTO, n.d.). Many academics are wary of the notion of sustainable tourism development because the “rhetoric of sustainability is often not followed through in practice or, at worst, is used to obscure rather unsustainable development practices” (Scheyvens, 2011:148). However, there are alternative arguments claiming that when livelihood assets, traditional knowledge and biological diversity are taken into consideration in the planning of tourism, the industry could contribute to both conservation and development (Cater, 2008:333).

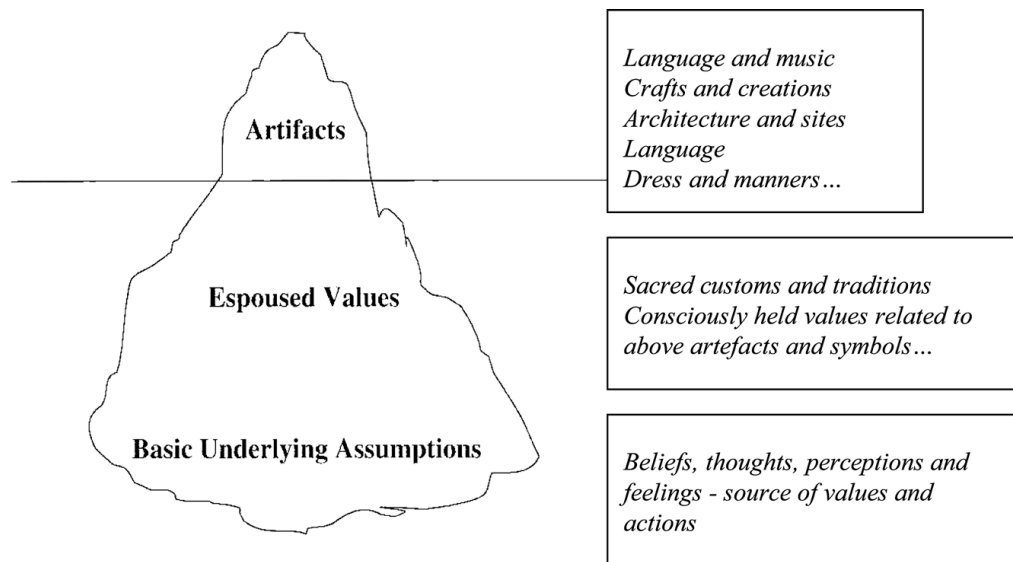
Ultimately, I resolved to exclude sustainable tourism development from my study, largely to avoid the study becoming burdened by the profuse, complex and varying understandings of sustainability in circulation today. Additionally, a discussion on sustainability could draw attention away from the study’s primary focus – which is to examine the impact of tourism on the lived cultural experience of Samoans. Nevertheless, sustainability is prolific in the literature on tourism and development, and although environmental sustainability has historically dominated the literature, the focus on social and cultural sustainability is increasing (see Cohen, 2002; Douglas; 2006; Scheyvens, 2011; Twinning-Ward and Butler, 2002).

## **CHAPTER 4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The following section details the theories that have influenced this study. The study adopts a number of theoretical concepts, which are herein defined and will subsequently assist with guiding the study’s analysis.

### **Conceptualising Culture**

Culture is a notoriously challenging concept to capture in any one definition. Attempting to do so can threaten to oversimplify the concept to a point where the rich, expansive and dynamic elements of the concept become degraded or even lost. It is with this cautionary preface in mind that I present the following definition of culture as a tool for analysing the interplay between tourism development and cultural change in Samoa. The concept is by no means an exhaustive explanation of the workings of culture; it is rather a useful conceptual framework to assist with my analysis.



**Figure 2: Levels of Culture**  
(Schein, 1985 adapted by Thomas, 2002 and cited in George and Reid, 2005:89)

The concept of culture adopted for this study is based on the work of Edgar H. Schein (2010) and his analysis of organisational culture. His definition, although focused on organisations, is highly applicable to the wider community culture. A visual conceptualisation of culture is presented in Figure 2. This definition breaks the notion of culture down into layers of meaning of differing depth and visibility to the observer (and indeed to the participant). The most superficial layer of culture is that of *artefacts* – those aspects of a culture that are “very tangible overt manifestations” and easily observable through the senses (Schein, 2010:23). An important characteristic of the artefacts layer is that although easily observable, the items belonging in this layer are challenging to decipher (ibid:24). Beyond the *artefacts* layer is the *espoused beliefs and values* layer of a culture. This layer consists of the ideologies, values, ideas, goals, aspirations and rationalisations within a culture (ibid). These beliefs and values are taken for granted in a culture after becoming the dominant shared social experience of the people living within a culture (ibid:26).

The deepest layer of culture – the *underlying assumptions* layer – consists of values and beliefs that are so firmly engrained in a culture that for a person to hold contrary views would seem inconceivable (ibid:28). Understanding the patterns in this layer of *underlying assumptions* is crucial for a thorough understanding of a culture (ibid:32).



## **Developing Capabilities and Freedoms**

Throughout this analysis, the guiding theory of development is that of Amartya Sen's theory on Development as Freedom (1999). This theory highlights the need for a multidimensional approach to development that nurtures social opportunities alongside economic opportunities (Sen, 1999:126-7). Sen promotes the concept of instrumental freedoms, which include political freedoms, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security (ibid:38). For the purposes of this thesis, the pertinent instrumental freedoms include social opportunities and economic facilities. Social opportunities relate to a society's education, health and welfare systems and the degree to which these systems provide individuals with freedom to participate in the society at their peak potential. Economic facilities refer to the access to and distribution of economic resources within a society.

While Sen acknowledges that the economic benefits attained by entering into the global economy can be great, he also cautions that the inescapable globalisation of trade and economies threatens alternative lifestyles in non-western countries. Societies themselves must balance their desire to preserve their traditions against the economic cost that preservation might entail and move forward accordingly (Sen, 1999:240-2). That is to say, the people living within a culture should have the ultimate say regarding which aspects of their cultural heritage are kept and lost. Cultural change is inevitable in all cultures and from this theoretical perspective, a critical factor in positive cultural change is that it needs to be instigated and owned by the community that is experiencing the change. The resultant control over the change will assist in nurturing a positive cultural environment for the community. Sen's theory attempts to reconcile collective cultural decisions with universal access to individual freedoms. Development as freedom is a useful backdrop for my study because it can assist in analysing the respondents' perceptions of the role of the collective and the role of the individual, which will provide insight into the cultural values and changes taking place in Samoa.

## **Commodification of Culture**

This paper's introduction has presented tourism as a potential economic development tool for Samoa, a nation with an eager work force and limited access to foreign exchange-generating markets. While income generation is a driving force behind tourism development, the industry's impact on Samoa reaches beyond its economic contribution;

tourism necessarily influences the nature of cultural change on the island. It has been argued that anything that can be sold assumes the form of a commodity, even a culture (Shephard, 2002:187). Therefore, this theory asserts that even the commodification of culture can occur when a local community develops an awareness of the potential to gain a monetary reward from sharing certain aspects of their culture with non-locals. When this occurs, locals proceed to consciously tailor their cultural presentations to the desires and expectations of the audience. This cultural commodification can potentially cause cultural objects, events or activities to become static, due the economic benefits of that particular aspect of culture overtaking the cultural significance within the community. Discussions on tourism and its propensity to commodify culture often lead to problematic discussions of authenticity, and the tourists' search for the authentic. Authenticity is a completely subjective notion because it "depends on the cultural lens of the seeker, which in turn guides the direction in which authenticity is sought" (Shepherd, 2002:191). So, regardless of whether or not commodification is occurring, it is problematic to point to a period in time when a culture, or a society, or an experience has been unequivocally authentic.

Much of the discussion of cultural commodification and tourism development has pitted one against the other. The dominant response of development economists and commodification critics alike has been to "reduce questions about tourism to a cost vs. benefits paradigm/.../ as if culture and tourism are opposites in a zero sum game" (Shephard, 2002:188). This is not my intention. The depth and richness of a local culture does not necessarily recede because the tourism industry in that particular location expands; every destination is unique and has a specific history and environment that will dictate the nature of the interaction between commodification and culture when tourism development occurs. I argue that when destinations develop cultural tourism and invite tourists to share in a host's culture in exchange for financial capital, as is the case in Samoa, cultural commodification is highly likely to occur. In accepting cultural commodification can occur, my intention is not to "embrace the rhetoric of the global market or romanticise resistance against a global hegemonic order" (Shepherd, 2002:196). My intention is rather to accept and move beyond the existence of commodification to explore the meaning of the commodification of culture in the lives of those who may be experiencing it.

Despite intentions to move beyond qualifying cultural commodification in this study, it is necessary to highlight that there are many who express concerns about the impact of cultural commodification. One negative impact of cultural commodification, as Shelly Errington (1998) has conceptualised it, is a form of *New Age Primitivism* (cited in Shepherd, 2002:184). This situation occurs when objects or artefacts come to represent a “purely imaginary Other, one no longer tied to any specific context, geographical, historical or otherwise” (ibid). The Frankfurt School<sup>3</sup> espouses a similarly incriminating critique of capitalism’s impact on culture, claiming culture has been transformed into an industry that “churns out cultural products characterised by predictability and homogeneity” and furthermore “designed to support social conformity and control” (Shepherd, 2002:193). A further criticism is that cultural commodification can cause a culture to stagnate and lose its ability to live, change and adapt according to the needs of the locals (George and Reid, 2005:93). Although these criticisms warrant diligent consideration, cultural tourism – and the cultural commodification that it arguably entails – can also be a catalyst not only for economic growth but also for the social and political empowerment of a host population (Debes, 2011:235).

Serena Williams (2008:99) reflects on tourism and the commodification of culture when she states that “the toured have often shifted from being the unknowing culture on display to the ones mediating their own culture and presenting it for profit as tourism has become more of a commodity”. This theoretical concept will be applied to the data herein to explore the extent to which cultural commodification is occurring as a result of tourism development in Samoa. Furthermore, the theory can also be utilised to analyse the subsequent impact of any observed commodification on accommodation workers’ cultural values and beliefs.

## **Cultural Capital**

Alongside Schein’s conceptualisation of culture and the theories of Development as freedom and cultural commodification, this study has also been guided by the theoretical concept of cultural capital. The French academic Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) was the first person to coin the phrase *cultural capital*. He did so in the 1960s when he was

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<sup>3</sup> A group of German intellectuals formed this School in 1923 and established a line of Marxist thought that merged with Freudian thought and bourgeois ideology. They have been influential in the development of critical theory (Marxist Internet Archive, n.d.).

contemplating the correlation between academic achievement of children in the education system and their parents' level of experience or achievement within the field of education (Prieur and Savage, 2011:568). During the 1970s, Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital was extended beyond the confines of the education system in an attempt to identify and explain the complexities of social differentiation (Prieur and Savage, 2011:568). Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital reasons that human habits and cultural practices are founded on the unique knowledge and demeanours that a person learns through their exposure to family and community role models (George and Reid, 2005:92). This suggests that relationships and the ways in which they are expressed are key components of cultural capital.

The notion of capital itself refers to any resource that bestows an advantage to its owner. A person that possesses cultural capital, therefore, has an advantage over a person who lacks that same cultural capital. This advantage is typically observed in the occupational markets or in status competitions (Bennett and Silva, 2011:430). Bourdieu (1984) argues that the spaces of both social positions and lifestyles have homologous structures that consist of three key dimensions. In descending order of importance, these dimensions are: capital volume, which is the sum of cultural and economic capital; the composition of capital, which is to say the relative weight of economic and cultural capital that the capital volume comprises; and a time-dimension, which takes into consideration the historical movement of a social agent within a system of social positions (Prieur and Savage, 2011:572).

This concept contributes a unique dimension of analysis to my study by providing a means to reflect on the nature of cultural wealth at an individual level in a society that has a traditionally collective culture. It also complements the concept of cultural commodification. Whereas the theory of the commodification of culture focuses on culture at a community level, the theory of cultural capital is concerned with culture at an individual level. The concept of cultural commodification provides a framework for exploring the impact of tourism on Samoan culture and the *fa'a Samoa* and the theory of cultural capital contributes to an understanding of the various and shifting forms of value ascribed to culture by individuals. Contemplating the relationship of tourism development and Samoan culture simultaneously through the lens of commodification of

culture and cultural capital provides valuable insights into how accommodation workers feel cultural changes are impacting on their lives.

## **CHAPTER 5. PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS**

### **Data Collection**

This section of the thesis presents an analysis of the collected data, which speaks to the research questions and ties the data into the theoretical concepts of culture, commodification of culture, development as freedom and cultural capital.

### **Accommodation Workers' Cultural Values and Conceptions of *Fa'a Samoa***

On a superficial level there appears to be little divergence in the participants' perceptions of their present cultural values and traditional *fa'a Samoa* values. The dominant responses regarding core cultural values include respect, family, the *matai* system, Christianity and family land ownership, all of which are present in traditional definitions of *fa'a Samoa*. One participant summarises the fundamental values in Samoan culture as follows:

*... the most important things to Samoans: family, church and their own land. At least with their own land they can feed themselves ~ Interview 19*

These values represent the *espoused beliefs and values* layer of Samoan culture according to Schein's conceptualisation of culture. These cultural values are also intrinsically tied to the *underlying assumptions* layer of Samoa's culture. Another interviewee suggests this when they describe their views of *fa'a Samoa* very succinctly as a survival guide of sorts, revealing:

*Fa'a Samoa is the way we live. Exactly. How we live, how do we survive in the villages, how we enjoy life [sic] ~ Interview 15*

This interviewee hints at the pervasiveness of *fa'a Samoa* values in the day-to-day lives of Samoans. For him, *fa'a Samoa* is more than a relic of traditional times in Samoa, it is a lived experience in today's Samoan society and it connects people to their history while simultaneously guiding them into the future. The history and heritage of Samoa is discussed with substantial admiration by a number of participants, who demonstrate a strong sense of connection to Samoa's ancestors and cultural heritage. One interviewee even describes *fa'a Samoa* as the process of walking in the footsteps of Samoa's ancestors

(Interview 12). These sentiments are evident in the values of all the accommodation workers regardless of their position as an employer or an employee, or whether they dwell in the country or city.

Participants in the study also shared a belief in the importance of villages to have self-determination. There is a police force in Samoa; however, the criminal justice system coexists with an older and still very respected rule of village law. Each village has a *fono* (village council) that meets to discuss the issues of the village and pass down judgements on the best way to resolve problems, including handing down punishments when deemed necessary. This system is a functioning and well-respected part of the Samoan culture, which is evidenced in the words of one interviewee:

*we try to solve our own problems. The village fono/.../ they control everything. Yeah that's the value/.../ of the Samoan culture ~ Interview 15*

A village *fono* is made up of the *matai* representatives of the families in the village and is therefore highly respected. Another participant highlights the importance of *matai* in Samoan society by asserting:

*the matai are the police. They look after your property when you're not at home. They look after your house when you are leaving ~ Interview 12*

This indicates that regardless of cultural changes that are occurring on various cultural layers, embedded values and systems such as the *matai* system appear to be well and truly intact at a deep cultural level. In fact, upon arriving in Samoa, it is quickly apparent that Samoans have a full awareness and appreciation of the uniqueness of their culture. During my time in Samoa taxi drivers often remarked on the unrivalled beauty of the country and the kindness of the people, and on more than one occasion a local woman at a bus stop struck up a conversation about Samoa and proceeded to extend an open-ended offer of hospitality if ever I wanted to visit their village. Samoans appear to make a concerted effort to nurture Samoa's unique cultural environment. One young man interviewed in a rural village explains how schools encourage cultural activities:

*all college and school they are having a special game that they call the culture game /.../ for example my school last year: they divide into four groups and they were having a competition of culture [sic] ~ Interview 18*

This young man speaks of his role in the culture games with pride and the fact that his group came runners up is a great source of pride. This highlights the significance placed

on understanding and respecting the culture in Samoa and suggests that it is so engrained in the everyday lives of Samoans that tourism's impact on the deep, *underlying assumptions* layer of culture may in fact be close to negligible. The pride in the culture and belief in its capacity to guide one through life is evident in much of the collected data. This is true even among the young respondents; one young hotel operator explains:

*if you have enough belief and faith, and you know your values, and you know who you are, and you know your roots, you'll be okay ~ Interview 13*

There appears to be no separation of religion and culture in this respondent's perception of the Samoan worldview. The faith that she speaks of relates simultaneously to the faith she bestows in her religion and in her culture to guide her through life. Perhaps as a result of this ardent commitment to religion, culture and roots, research participants welcome tourism; it allows Samoans to share their unique worldview with visitors. It is difficult to separate these expressions of cultural appreciation from the fact that Samoans, especially those working in the tourism industry, are now financially dependent on pleasing tourists, and therefore have a vested interest in presenting a favourable impression of their culture. This will be discussed in further depth in the coming pages but I will first tease out the cultural values held by accommodation workers in Samoa as they relate to family and religion, two dominant pillars of Samoan culture.

### **Family is Important, but Who Constitutes Family?**

A mutual respect is nurtured by the accommodation sites' preparedness to adhere to the cultural needs of villages and workers. Many participants feel comfortable asking for time off to attend to family matters if and when they arise. Furthermore, accommodation sites make allowances for this. As one interviewee exclaims:

*we come from families that we have to take care of our families as well /.../ so all they [the workers] have to do is let us know that they have something to go to and they have a very important task to do apart from job, so we have to swap/.../ reshuffle the schedule [sic] ~ Interview 5*

At Schein's *underlying assumption* level of Samoan culture, one answers to their family above all else; family comes first. This value has its roots firmly planted in the traditional *fa'a Samoa*, in which the *aiga* – the extended family – is a foundation of society. However, change appears to be occurring on the layer of *espoused beliefs and values* as to what constitutes 'the family', as well as to what an individual's responsibility towards the

extended family should be. Traditionally, Samoans relied on their family connections for survival and security. The reigning mentality was ‘the bigger your family, the better’. This family commitment, which extends far beyond a nuclear family, is still apparent in some participants’ responses regarding family, as one participant states:

*in Samoa the bigger the family the better, so how it works is we call each other cousins or aunties [when we are more distant relations] ~ Interview 19*

Despite the above demonstration of commitment to the extended family, other participants seem to be more concerned with their responsibility towards their nuclear family. A number of parents participating in this study, for example, prioritise school fees for their children as the first expense to attend to with their wages. Putting money towards children’s school fees before contributing to *fa’alavelave* (ceremonies including weddings and funerals where people are expected to exchange a vast number of gifts) in the extended family suggests a shift at the *espoused beliefs and values* level may be taking place when it comes to family values. One mother highlights this prioritisation of children’s needs when she states:

*but my wages are never going for any fa’alavelave. First I’m taking care of my kids. If there’s no money left, then I don’t have to do any fa’alavelave ~ Interview 3*

The benefit of improved access to Sen’s instrumental freedoms – social opportunities and economic facilities – is evident here: respondents are securing an education for their children through their opportunity to participate in the workforce and therefore save for school fees. On a deeper level, tension seems to arise between the agency being achieved at an individual level and the preservation of the traditional cultural structure at the societal level. Although respondents wish to preserve traditional *fa’a Samoa* when discussing the issue hypothetically, the reality of their individual lives and pursuits may contradict this preservation. Some respondents choose, for example, to save their wages for personal leisure activities rather than contribute them to cultural ceremonies. A few interviewees have shied away from participation in what they see as the excesses of *fa’alavelave* and will now only contribute to *fa’alavelave* for immediate relatives or people close to them. One interviewee sums this up in her own words:

*if I can, I will give, but most of the times/.../ we save money and then go overseas/.../ for a holiday ~ Interview 14*



This apparent priority shift can be understood, and partially explained, if contextualised within the changing economics of village life. The reciprocal gift-giving village economy is, although still present, slowly giving way to a cash economy. This must undoubtedly result in a value shift within the community because of the interrelated nature of the economy and culture. This cash economy is fundamentally individualistic (opposed to the *aiga*-oriented traditional village economy) and because a person's individual economic wealth is limited, they must necessarily prioritise the redistribution of their wealth. The complexity of society indicates that changes in one system – be it the economic, political, cultural or social – will have an impact on the other aspects of society. It therefore stands to reason that as the nature of the village economy changes, participants' priorities will change. The findings of this study suggest that participants are prioritising the education of their children or saving for leisure activities over contributing to ceremonies for distant relatives, regardless of the ceremonies' cultural significance. Furthermore, respondents are not concerned about the cultural changes occurring and are able to reconcile their individual and collective responsibilities.

### **The Church and Christianity in Samoa**

Alongside the importance of family, Schein's conceptualisation of culture would consider a strong Christian faith to be another *underlying assumption* fundamental to Samoan culture. Although religious views more accurately define the cosmology or worldview of the holder instead of their assumptions, Christian faith fits into this *underlying assumption* category because people within the Samoan culture assume that others within the culture have a Christian faith. Only one participant is not involved in some kind of church activity, and she had been a member of a youth group prior to relocating to the village where she is now working. Every other participant attends church regularly and many young participants talk about their involvement in youth groups, which keeps them occupied with activities on multiple evenings every week. It is evident that the central role of Christianity goes beyond merely attending church services. As one participant explains:

*our country is founded on God and as Samoans we strongly believe in our faith and our family. We believe that all of this is a blessing from God ~*  
Interview 13

This central role of religion provides a strong sense of identity and belonging for the participants, and provides a space wherein the *espoused beliefs and values* layer of culture

is scrutinised and developed. This spiritual devotion also entails a financial burden. Many participants discuss the pressure they feel to make weekly donations to their church, and the financial hardship that this can create for their families. These donations are incredibly important to the respondents and many prioritise the donations over attending weekly services. This emphasis on financial contributions to the Church encourages workers to remain at work on Sunday and forgo the traditional day of rest, church and family so as to be in a financial position to make donations. The shift in adherence to cultural and religious activities is therefore not only due to the demands of the tourism industry, but also to the nature of the Church's expectation of donations. This can create tensions for accommodation workers who consider Sunday a day of rest, and yet are required to work to make ends meet. As one participant observes:

*and usually Samoans they respect Sundays. But with this job, like you don't get to rest on Sunday ~ Interview 17*

Some accommodation sites are aware of this issue, and are culturally sensitive enough to offer employees a choice as to whether they wish to make themselves available for work on Sundays. This respect for the deep-rooted religious ceremonies in Samoa puts the onus on the worker to prioritise their commitments and illustrates how some businesses are developing while simultaneously maintaining a harmonious relationship with Samoa's culture.

### **Tourism Development and the *Fa'a Samoa***

The majority of accommodation owners and operators in Samoa are nationals. Therefore, there is a broad awareness and understanding of the deep-running veins of Samoan culture within the accommodation sector, which acknowledges the importance of collaboration with local village leaders and working within the cultural value sets.

### **Cultural Displays Commodified for Tourism**

When cultures become increasingly commodified through tourism, there is an assumption that this will always cause a transformation for the worse (Shepherd, 2002:185). This is problematic because assuming contact with tourists necessarily causes degradation of the local culture implies the local culture was pristine prior to contact with outsiders, and this pristine cultural state is a baseline for measuring the ensuing degradation (ibid). Yet there can be no such cultural baseline because cultures are fluid

and – as they always have been – are influenced by interaction with their environment. It is therefore challenging to label cultural commodification through tourism as inherently positive or negative. Tourism is a cultural exchange between the host community and the tourist/s and although power dynamics are inescapable, the exchange can arguably have beneficial and detrimental consequences for the host culture and society.

Many of the accommodation sites offer a number of cultural activities for their guests. One common activity is a weekly or biweekly *fiafia* evening, which can include traditional Samoan dances, fire dancing, Samoan songs and traditional Samoan dress. Other cultural activities on offer through accommodation sites include guided tours or walks around the villages or to natural sites, the kava ceremony, which is a welcoming ceremony usually reserved for the *matai*, demonstrations of *umu* (Samoan underground oven) cooking, basket weaving demonstrations and coconut tree climbing demonstrations. The demonstrations, although commodified for tourists, are still important for Samoans. One interviewee who operates a hotel on the outskirts of Apia explains that the hotel does not hold *fiafia* nights, although:

*usually when we do government functions, they bring their own cultural group. So they can come and perform and that's about it ~ Interview 13*

This suggests that the *fiafia* has not lost its significance for Samoans regardless of having been, at least to some extent, commodified. They are still culturally important to Samoans at events that are removed from the tourists' gaze. Commodification has allowed Samoans to gain an additional economic level of appreciation for a culturally valued activity.

Earlier in this analysis I asserted that accommodation workers have a vested interest in displaying a positive attitude towards their culture so as to ensure their livelihood security through tourism growth. This is intertwined with the commodification of Samoa's culture and presented a challenge for me, as a perceived tourist, to gather accurate data on the perceptions of tourism and cultural change. Accommodation workers are definitely conscious of displaying their culture in a manner that will be appealing for the tourists. This conscious act of filtering through the culture to provide an experience that meets the tourists' expectations is evident in the manner in which many of the workers speak about the cultural activities at the accommodation sites. One participant discusses the *siva* (dance) performances at *fiafias* and explains:

*siva Samoa, yeah like dance/.../ lots of tourists they came, they ask for – they want to see/.../ Samoan culture/.../so that's the only thing we just do to tell them the culture of Samoa, it's the dancing [sic] ~ Interview 21*

The emphasis is placed on the tourists' expectations rather than the cultural value of the activity on display. Another interviewee notes that, although its not particularly part of her culture, she adopts the habit of wearing a flower in her hair because it builds on the tourists' notion of an Islander:

*the sei, the flower, flower in the hair. Maybe that's part of the/.../ culture too, I mean probably not the culture but it looks Islander ~ Interview 13*

This participant alters the way she dresses so as to meet the cultural expectations of tourists. The dress component of the *artefacts* layer of her culture is therefore commodified because tourists, not her own cultural desires, determine what she wears.

The *artefacts* layer of culture is perhaps where the most obvious forms of commodification take place. *Artefacts* such as clothing and accessories are the most visible aspects of culture to outsiders and can therefore readily develop an economic value that can overwhelm the cultural value. One interviewee describes his concern about the loss of value of the tattoo in the culture. He laments the fact that nowadays anyone can wander into a tattoo parlour and exchange money for a tattoo, whereas in the past a tattoo was a symbol that the owner had to earn:

*the tattoo, it belong to the matai, but for now/.../ Samoan guys staying in New Zealand for ten years and he comes here and pay the money and he's getting the tattoo [sic] ~ Interview 18*

This scenario demonstrates how money has the potential to alter accessibility of cultural artefacts, and therefore change their significance within the society. A tattoo that a person purchases with the wages from their job abroad may not elicit the degree of respect as a traditionally acquired tattoo, that is a tattoo that a person has been endowed with through the wishes of their community. The mere existence of the former possibility may impact the value of the latter because the tattoo has lost its exclusivity. Commodification seems to be altering the perceived value of some cultural objects and yet this change does not appear to have filtered down to the roots of Samoan culture.

## **Accommodation Sites Demonstrating Respect for Cultural Values**

The staff running accommodations sites are often, however tenuously, related to the owners or operators. This perpetuates Samoan family values in the business world. Discussions with hotel operators during this research made it clear, for instance, that the employees travelling long distances to reach work were free – and even encouraged – to stay at the hotel over night during the week. This would allow them to save more of their wage (as bus fares are expensive in relation to wages) and provides a sense of family within the work environment. As one hotel owner in Apia states:

*they [the staff] just let us know that they are staying or they are going, so there is food for everyone/.../ but to us we would like them to stay because they will save the money from the buses and all that, and at the end of the week they are maybe twenty dollars richer ~ Interview 15*

The operators of accommodation sites also seem to appreciate the importance of *fa'alavelave*. This is evident in the flexibility of work hours that some participants discuss in their interviews. Both tending to crops and tending to family affairs are deemed adequate reasons to change or alter shifts on short notice. Additionally, one staff member at a resort discusses how the owners allow employees to take out small loans if something happens in the family and they are required to contribute to a *fa'alavelave* (Interview 3). *Fa'alavelave* are an important aspect of Samoan culture as described by accommodation workers, and employers providing access to these micro-loans may help to mitigate potential financial stresses arising from them.

## **Gender Roles: the Accommodation Sector Versus the Village**

It appears that, at least within working hours, change is taking place within gender relations. Samoa is a patriarchal society and the village culture is still governed by strict gender-specific (and age-specific) roles, which men and women are expected to adhere to. This study's findings suggest accommodation workers' roles are typically dictated by gender – for example housekeeping staff are women and maintenance staff are men – however there appears to be a team spirit which overrides traditional gender expectations and allows all staff to collaborate.

Many participants discuss the importance of teamwork when working at accommodation sites, for instance, and employers encourage group work regardless of the gender or age

of group members. Men, women, boys and girls all work together when necessary to complete required tasks, which is far removed from the social structure in traditional Samoan society where the people in each of these categories have a particular role to play. Although patterns in the type of day-to-day work allocated to men and women generally still exist, the focus on teamwork in many of the accommodation sites has the potential to increase gender equality among workers. One operator highlights the focus on equality stating:

*There is no/.../ stereotype of the type of work women do or men do ~*  
Interview 7

This disregard for gender in team environments may be confined to the sphere of work, as a number of interviewees discuss gendered roles at home. Men, for example, do the outside cooking in the *umu*, and women do the inside cooking. One participant notes this separation of roles for women within and outside of work:

*I guess women at the front, at home, they're mothers. Here [at work] they're just, not just workers but they all have [job] titles/.../ so in that respect they do do different types of works [sic] ~* Interview 13

Accommodation workers perceive a clear distinction between gender roles – and the subsequent norms and expectations – in the workplace and those in the wider community. The collaboration encouraged in accommodation sites allows workers to experience alternative roles in a social space. Women can, for example, take on leadership roles in the operation of accommodation sites. One of the accommodation owners discusses the challenges his wife faced when they initially took over an accommodation site from her father:

*[my wife] found it difficult to deal with people older than her. But then over time she realises that when you are the boss you have to treat everybody the same and it's for the good of the business, and of course for the general workers ~* Interview 8

Although challenging, this female operator has learned to assert her authority within the business, regardless of which employee she is dealing with.

The work environment in the accommodation sector is, therefore, nurturing a more positive attitude towards equality between the genders. The degree to which this is changing the *underlying assumptions* layer of Samoan culture appears negligible at present, because workers admit to reverting back to their gender-specific roles outside of

work. It will be a challenging process to change the ingrained gender roles in the village culture. Nevertheless, indiscriminate teamwork in the work environment is a promising step forward considering that older male *matai* still adhering to a strict following of the old *fa'a Samoa* may refuse to talk to women at all (interview 7).

### **The Meeting of Two Worlds: *Fa'a Samoa* and the Capitalist Business Model**

The *matai* system is, from an outsider's perspective, seemingly incompatible with the capitalist business structure. In the past, Samoa's leaders have been *matai*; however, as suggested in the previous section, business owners are increasingly gaining access to power and influence from a completely new space: the cash economy. The owner of a business – regardless of gender, age or title – makes decisions regarding the tasks their employees must undertake, which could create tensions if their employees are older or have a *matai* title. This is an acknowledged challenge by many participants, although they have little trouble reconciling a life lived within the two systems. In a similar vein to the gender roles in and out of work, there seem to be clear demarcations of working life and life beyond the walls of work when it comes to the hierarchy of respect. As one *matai* participating in an interview summarises the situation:

*If you're at work, you're at work. But first and foremost you're a worker and when you go outside the grounds then you're a matai ~ Interview 7*

Many participants, regardless of gender, age or title, share this sentiment. Reiterating this point, another interviewee ponders the dichotomy of work and village life and states:

*the hotel is not the village stuff or the Samoa stuff. It's just the work; it's hotel work ~ Interview 21*

The *underlying assumptions* of Samoan culture are so firmly embedded in *fa'a Samoa* that the expansion of the cash economy through accommodation sites is not perceived to have a deep influence on the culture beyond the confines of the work environment. Respondents perceive the capitalist cultural norms adopted in the work place as inconsequential to their lives outside work. The workplace cultural norms have changed the *espoused beliefs and values* layer of the culture in the workplace but not beyond the workplace. This suggests that the changes have not penetrated the *underlying assumptions* layer of the culture, as they are still considered foreign to *fa'a Samoa*.

Interestingly, some contradictory statements have been made alongside this perception of the separation of work and village cultural values. For example, one interviewee explains how workers must be treated equally and that the *matai* system should only exist outside work hours, yet he continues on to state:

*the owner [of the accommodation site] is a high chief so we give our respect to him. So we always give first priority to him. ~ Interview 12*

Similarly, another participant recognises that everybody in the workplace has a job to do and there are “special rules” outside of the *matai* system governing social interactions between staff members in work environments, while simultaneously noting:

*But when the staff members gather together there is still that respect that took in the priority to the titled man, titled men [sic] ~ Interview 5*

To an outsider observing this dialogue, it appears to be inherently contradictory. However, my findings suggest this is not the case; Samoans consolidate their respect for *matai* with their respect for business operators and their actions are guided by this respect. There seems to be a symbiosis between the *matai* system and the business system that allows this ambiguity within the hierarchy of respect to be mutually beneficial to the village and the accommodation sites. *Matai*, for example, are employed by many of the beach *fales* and resorts as security guards in the evenings to ensure nothing untoward eventuates on the grounds of the accommodation sites. This is beneficial for the businesses because the involvement of the *matai* provides legitimacy in the eyes of the village, and it also ensures that the grounds remain secure because the *matai* are so respected and villagers do not want to cross them. This relationship is also beneficial for the village because of the employment and income it generates. When the business consults with the village and uses village channels to resolve issues, respect is nurtured on both sides. One participant articulates this:

*Both the village will respect and also the matai will respect the hotel... that should work something good for the/.../ hotel/.../ and the hotel will respect the values of/.../ the villagers. ~ Interview 15*

Respect is a critical component of culture in Samoa. A mutual respect as described above can ensure that cultural changes take place organically and are not forced upon the village communities. This creates a two-way exchange, in which the Capitalist business system is not overly dominant and there is seepage of *fa'a Samoa* values into working lives. An interviewee sums up the situation when she says:



*you have to live, get the best of both worlds. That's how I see things: I get the best of both worlds. I get my culture and I get to live the modern day life. ~ Interview 13*

This is yet another reflection on the harmonious existence of two spheres in Samoan culture: the working sphere and the village sphere. The mutual respect between the accommodation sites and the villages is nurturing these two spaces, and in the following section I will analyse what this means for cultural capital in Samoa.

### **The Changing Face of Samoan Cultural Capital**

The accommodation workers have two value sets – one that applies to work hours and one that applies to time spent outside work hours – and accordingly there are two sets of cultural capital influencing their lives. For example, cultural capital in the tourism industry could be an understanding of capitalist values and systems, or possession of a formal management or business education. These would not be considered cultural capital in a traditional community with a village economy because in the traditional village system they would not bestow any advantage to their holder. In contrast, cultural capital in a village could relate to *matai* titles or traditional knowledge such as that of Samoa's traditional medicine women. Titles and traditional knowledge provide individual status, and in villages this also extends to an individual's family. These two sets of cultural capital do have some overlap though. Politeness, for instance, is highly regarded in Samoan culture and also goes a long way if one is working in the tourism industry. In this way politeness could be seen as a cultural capital because it makes life easier for its possessor.

Another cultural capital in *fa'a Samoa* is a propensity for storytelling. Oratory is a valued art form in the *fa'a Samoa* and to possess this skill is to possess a form of cultural capital. A *matai* title exists for a talking chief (the orator, or *tulafale*), which endows its holder with the privilege of telling stories and speaking at village meetings and other important events. A *tulafale* is widely respected in Samoan culture because this chief is believed to personify wisdom and leadership (Huffer and Qalo, 2004:92-4). The ability to spin a yarn provides status in Samoan culture, contrary to the ability to relay factual knowledge of Samoa, which is esteemed in the tourism industry. It is perhaps from this cultural backdrop, wherein the elocution of a good story is revered above the factual content, that

one participant expresses his dismay at tourists wanting facts about the Samoan sites they visit, not stories:

*some of the guests, they read the books of Samoa before they come here. So we have to carefully tell them the truth, not like a funny story or fiction. ~*  
Interview 12

These words hint at the participant's awareness of the conflicting cultural capitals between the accommodation sites and the villages.

As detailed in the theoretical background, Bourdieu claims that social positions and lifestyles can be explained through an examination of the absolute and relative amount of cultural and economic capital a person possesses. In Samoa, economic capital has seen a transformation from village economies to cash economies. This has affected the nature of cultural capital by introducing the cultural capitals relevant for success in a cash economy and, with relation to the tourism sector, by ascribing an economic value to traditional cultural capital. A thorough knowledge of traditional *fa'a Samoa* is economically valuable in tourism and so this form of cultural capital is simultaneously commodified and nurtured. Sen's instrumental freedoms are relevant here: the economic facilities of a community have "empirical linkages" to the other instrumental freedoms within the community (1999:38). The growth of the cash economy is coupled with an increased preoccupation on the individual's role in society, because it is the individual – not the family – that can be offered a job opportunity. This shift of focus onto the individual may explain the recurring preoccupation of many workers to provide access to formal education for their children.

### **Embracing an Opportunity to Work**

The development of the tourism industry in Samoa has occurred at a gradual pace and the participants in this research display an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards its continued development. This is unsurprising considering their livelihoods are dependent upon the industry. Past research has demonstrated that those people in a community economically dependent upon the tourism industry are likely to display more positive attitudes towards it than those that are not (Chuang, 2010:1315). The limited work opportunities in Samoa, particularly beyond the metropolis have resulted in an appreciation of the opportunities that tourism can provide for rural villages to generate incomes. A number of participants discuss the pride they get from their work. The

monetary incentive is no small component of this: many interviewees feel that living expenses in Samoa are continuously increasing and there are limited income generating opportunities. Sen (1999:36) asserts that the expansion of freedoms is the “*primary end*” and “*principal means*” of development, and in so far as this is true, tourism is providing development through economic freedom for the accommodation workers. The limited work opportunities in Samoa is described by one of the workers in a hotel in Apia:

*Everyday we have people coming in too, like not one, but three, four looking for jobs. Yes and it stresses them because of their fa’a Samoa. They going to extreme [sic] ~ Interview 14*

The participants largely share a sense of appreciation for having a resort or beach *fale* located near their villages. Many workers can walk to work and the money they save on bus fares goes to supporting the extended family in the villages. One interviewee describes the work opportunities in his village prior to a resort being established there as follows:

*before the resort was established here in the village, most of the people relied on their land. Yeah, they grow the crops and taking up to the market to sell and for family use only. [sic] ~ Interview 5*

Accordingly, accommodation sites have provided much needed diversification of the RNFE. Consultation with villagers has meant that developments have been widely accepted and the financial benefits – especially for the workers and their families – are perceived to far outweigh any cultural concerns for the *fa’a Samoa*. There is especially a focus on the potential for tourism to generate job opportunities for young Samoans. One participant sums up her views on villages giving approval to prospective business owners’ development plans as follows:

*good will come out of the deal because you know the young ones, they look for futures and all that, they will get jobs for sure and they earn money to support their families [sic] ~ Interview 15*

Other respondents echo this sentiment. Accommodation workers recognise that changes will inevitably occur when ties to the global economy are deepened through tourism development and they want to ensure that future generations will benefit from these changes.

## **Outlook for Tourism development in Samoa**

Critics of tourism development have argued that it will invariably result in an influx of social ills overwhelming the host community: drug addiction, crime, prostitution, pollution and increasing social instability (Shepherd, 2002:185). However, these ills are far removed from the concerns accommodation workers feel towards tourism development. Instead, the concerns shared by respondents regarding tourism development focus overwhelmingly on the nature of and need to increase Samoa's marketing strategies abroad so as to increase the flow of tourists.

The cultural values and cultural change explored in this analysis are not perceived by respondents to threaten *fa'a Samoa*. Although this has been the dominant sentiment shared by respondents, one respondent reflects on an alternative view. He has noticed that youth do not respect their elders to the same extent as they did in the past, which could be problematic for the continued harmonious existence of traditional *fa'a Samoa* values and the individualistic capitalist values of the West. The respondent reflects on this and declares:

*I noticed some changes in it/.../ the young people now are becoming more outspoken. ~ Interview 8*

The respondent considers this change to be problematic if the youth are behaving in a similar fashion in the village as at work. Yet, as a business operator he considers youths' increased confidence from work in tourism to be highly valuable, for business and for increasing opportunities for the young Samoans in the future. This newfound gregariousness may create tensions in the village structure if the village systems do not also change to accommodate the shifting identities of the youth.

Leaving aside the above example, respondents demonstrate a conspicuous lack of concern for the health of the culture in Samoa. My findings suggest this is partly explained by the strength and pervasiveness of *fa'a Samoa* in the daily lives of Samoans. The respondents perceive their culture to be strong enough to withstand any challenges presented by tourism development because the values and beliefs of *fa'a Samoa* still dominate so many elements of life in Samoa. In addition, the health of the culture is nurtured by accommodation sites balancing their respect for *fa'a Samoa* values with their understanding of operating a business. If businesses can maintain this balance into the

future, tourism development may continue to provide economic opportunities to Samoans while nurturing the unique *fa'a Samoa* culture.

## **CHAPTER 6. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This study explores accommodation workers' perceptions of *fa'a Samoa* cultural values and the changes occurring due to the use of tourism as a development tool in Samoa. Qualitative research has been conducted, primarily in the form of semi-structured interviews, to ascertain what accommodation workers perceive to be the cultural benefits and challenges of expanding the tourism industry in Samoa. Schein's (2010) conceptualisation of culture and the theoretical perspectives of cultural capital, commodification of culture and Sen's (1999) development as freedom provide the guiding framework for my analysis.

The findings indicate that cultural changes are occurring at the *artefacts* and *espoused beliefs and values* layers of Samoan culture. These alterations have not yet filtered down to the deepest roots of *fa'a Samoa* because accommodation workers still hold *underlying assumptions* comparable with traditional *fa'a Samoa* core values. My analysis also suggests that elements of *fa'a Samoa* have been commodified to appeal to, and benefit from, tourists. This is observed at the *fiafia* nights held by accommodation sites, or at tattoo parlours where VFR Samoans can now buy their right to a tattoo instead of earning it in the traditional fashion. The nature and application of cultural capital is another form of change in Samoa. Traditional village cultural capital is becoming commodified for tourists, and in addition a form of cultural capital that nurtures success in the capitalist accommodation businesses now exists. Although cultural change concerns some accommodation workers, appreciation of the income from tourists far outweighs any hesitations about the commodification of culture. My findings suggest that there has been an expansion of social and economic freedoms afforded by work in the tourism industry in Samoa and that the tourism industry is perceived as a positive influence on accommodation workers' lives.

This study also explores the simultaneous existence of two cultures in the lives of accommodation workers – the culture confined to work hours and *fa'a Samoa* – and how respondents are embracing and skilfully navigating both. The analysis provides a seemingly harmonious view of the relationship between cultural change and tourism

development in Samoa. It also examines the possibility that accommodation workers have a vested interest in displaying a positive attitude towards tourism's impact on changes in Samoan values and culture. Although these findings provide an optimistic outlook on the relationship between tourism development and cultural change, further research may therefore be required in the future to establish a thorough understanding of the nuances of this relationship in the broader Samoan community.

Utilising tourism as a development tool is often criticised because of the fluctuations that occur in tourist numbers. Samoa is in a strong position to overcome this challenge facing development through tourism. The group of VFR tourists is increasingly important for Samoa's tourism industry. This group has more predictable return rates, because of their ties to Samoa, so they are less likely to bypass Samoa for the latest trendy destination. Although tourism development is not without challenges this study suggests that, at least from the perspective of my respondents, tourism can have a positive impact on the effort to eradicate poverty in Samoa. The economic opportunities tourism is providing Samoans is hugely appreciated because the community has otherwise limited options in terms of diversifying its economic markets. There will undoubtedly be cultural hurdles to clear as tourism expands ever further into village life, especially if – or when – the proposed casinos do eventuate. However, with due diligence paid to nurturing local ownership and mutual respect between business owners and village communities, tourism holds the potential to empower Samoans to achieve development goals dictated by Samoan vision and values.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Interview Guide

Can you describe your role and the type of work you do at the hotel?

How far do you travel to get to work? How long does it take you?

What did you do before working here?

What made you want to work here? How did you get the job?

What do you like about working here?

What do you dislike about working here?

If you could change something about your job, what would it be?

Who do you share your wages with?

What do you spend your wages on?

Do tourists respect Samoan cultural and social values? Can you give me examples of when they have or have not done so?

Do you work weekend or evenings?

- How often?
- Is it easy to rearrange or swap shifts if you have family or community commitments?
- Would you spend more time with your family, church or community if you were not working?
- How do you spend your weekends and evenings off?
- Do you have more or less free time than your family and friends? How do they spend their free time?

Do men and women do the same jobs at work? If not, how do they differ?

What does *fa'a Samoa* mean to you? How would you describe it to somebody who is not from Samoa?

Do any *matai* work here? If so, how do titled people and untitled people work together? Does this change their relationship outside of work?

Have your views on Samoan culture changed since you started working here? Describe how.

What is the biggest change this job has made on your life?

What Samoan cultural or social activities are available to the guests that stay here? Do you think these truly represent Samoan culture and society?

- are *fiafia* nights held here? If so, how do the *fiafia* nights differ from *fiafia* nights with your family?
- Should tourists be shown any other cultural activities or ceremonies?

How does your family feel about you working here? Do they think it impacts on your duties and responsibilities at home?

Do you have different views on Samoan culture and values than:

- Your parents? How do they differ?
- Your friends that don't work in tourism? How do they differ?

How do you think the presence of tourists in Samoa impacts on the lives of Samoans? How has this resort/ hotel/ *beach fale* impacted on the local community?

What do the villagers think about having tourist accommodation here?

Do you want to stay working in this industry in the future? What are your other goals or plans for the future?

Do you have concerns about the future development of tourism in Samoa?

*Closing statement*

Do you have any further comments, suggestions or questions about working in hotels/ resorts and the impact it has on family and community life?

Thank you for participating in this study and contributing to our understanding of the tourism industry in Samoa.

## Appendix II: Participant Consent Form

**Project:** Exploring perceptions of cultural change and tourism development in Samoa through an interview study.

“I (the participant) understood the nature of this research project and my questions about participating in the research have been answered satisfactorily. I agree to participate in the research and understand that I can withdraw from the research at any time during the interview. I also understand that I can request the information I provide be excluded from the research for up to four weeks following my participation in an interview. I understand that the information I provide during the interview will remain confidential. It may also be used in a thesis and may be published.”

I agree to the interviewer recording this interview

**YES / NO** (please circle)

I agree to the interviewer taking notes

**YES / NO** (please circle)

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

Signature:

Date:

NAME OF RESEARCHER:

Signature:

Date:



## **Personal Information of research participant**

Hotel/ resort/ beach fale name:

Job description:

Length of time at job:

Age:

Gender:

Place of birth:

Current village:

Education level completed:

Phone:

Email:

Skype:

\* Do you agree to being contacted again during the course of this research? This would occur if information needs to be clarified, or additional questions asked, and could occur up until June 2012.

YES / NO      (Please Circle)

## **Appendix III: Questionnaire**

### **Fesili**

#### *Questions*

- 1. E mafai ona e fa'amatalaina mai lou tulaga ma le tuaiga galuega e te faia i totonu o le fale tali malo?**

Can you describe your role and the type of work you do at the hotel?

- 2. E fia aso o le vaiaso e te faigaluega ai i le fale tali malo?**

How often do you work at the resort?

- 3. O le a le umi talu ona e faigaluega i lenei fale tali malo?**

How long have you worked here?

- 4. O a nisi galuega fa'atino o lo'o feagai ma oe pe a fai e te le'o faigaluega i le fale tali malo?**

How do you spend your time when you are not here?

- 5. E masani ona fetufa'ai lou totogi ma tagata o lou aiga? O a nisi mea e te fa'aogaina ai lou totogi?**

Do you share your wages with your family? What do you spend your wages on?

- 6. Olea se tulaga ua fa'afiafiaina ai oe i le galue i le nei fale tali malo?**

What do you like about working here?

- 7. E iai ni tulaga e fa'ale-fiafiaina ai oe i le galue i le nei fale tali malo?**

Is there anything you dislike about working here? Please explain your answer.

- 8. I lau lava iloa, e fa'amata olo'o iai se naunauta'iga o uso a malo olo'o api ma ii le fale tali malo ina ia fa'aloalo ma ii le Faasamoa ma ona talitonuga? E mafia ona e aumai se fa'ata'ita'iga e ala i se ala na ffaali mai ai le nei mea?**

Do you think tourists respect Samoan cultural and social values? Can you give me examples of when they have or have not done so?

- 9. Fa'amata Fa'amata olo'o atagia manino mai le faasamoa moni ona o fa'afiafiaga fa'aleaganu'u fa'asamoa olo'o faia i totonu o le fale tali malo ma e masani foi ona fa'atino nei fa'afiafiaga faale-aganu'u i le fale? Oa foi ni isi itu o le aganu'u faasamoa e ao ona fa'ali i malo tafafao maimoa mai fafo olo'o e iloa e le'o fa'atauaina o totonu o le fale tali malo?**

Do you think the cultural activities at the hotel/ resort give tourists a true picture of *fa'a Samoa*? Are they activities that you or members of your family do at home? What else should be shown to tourists?

- 10. Olea se tala mai a le tou aiga talu ona e galue i le nei fale tali malo? Fa'amata olo'o iai se manatu ia i latou olo'o iai se a'afiaga i ou tiute tau ave i totonu o lou aiga, ae maise i totonu o le nu'u ma le ekalesia?**

How does your family feel about you working here? Do they think it impacts on your duties and responsibilities at home?

- 11. Olo'o iai pea sou naunau ta'iga ete galue pea i le nei fale tali malo? Faamata olo'o iai sau fuafuaga mamao ete galue pea i galuega tali malo i le lumana'i?**

Do you want to work in tourism in the future? What are your other goals or plans for the future?

- 12. Faamata ua mafai foi ona faateleina atili lau malamalama i tu ma aga o ni isi atunu'u talu ona e faigaluega i le nei fale tali malo? Oa ni mea fou ua mafai ona e iloa i le kukaina o mea'ai eseese, le olaga o tagata, ae maise o ituaiga faafiafiaga eseese mai i isi atunu'u? Fa'amata ua suia ai foi ou manaoga ma outalitonuga?**

Have you learnt about other cultures and societies working here? What have you learnt about different foods, lifestyles, entertainment? Has this changed your interests and values?



**13. Se'i aumai sina fa'amatalaga pe faamata e tutusa lau lava malamalama i le faasamoa moni ma tina ma tama matutua olou aiga, ae maise au uo e le'o faigaluega i galuega tali malo? Oa ni eseeseaga?**

Are your views on what fa'a Samoa means the same or different to that of: your parents? How do they differ? And your friends that don't work in tourism? How do they differ?

**14. Ua iai ni mea sa le mafia ona e faia ae ua mafia nei ona e faia talu ona e galue i le nei fale tali malo? O le fesili le nei e fa'atatau i auala ua fesoasoani ail au galuega ia te oe i le taimi le nei, e faatusa atu i le taimi sa e le'i faigaluega a ii se fale tali malo.**

Is there anything you do now that you didn't or couldn't do before you started working here?

**Upu Mulimuli:**

**E momoli atu le agaga faafetai ia i outou uma ua mafai ona fesoasoani mai i le saga faamalamalamaina atili o galuega tali malo i totonu o Samoa. A iai ni isi vaega fa'aopopo, fa'amolemole tusi ifo i le pito i lalo o le nei pep.**

**Soifua ma ia manuia!**

Thank you for participating in this study and contributing to our understanding of the tourism industry in Samoa. Please make any additional comments below:

## Appendix IV: Lists of Respondents

### Interview List

Date DD.MM.YY	Interview Number	Age	Gender	Job Title	Accommodation Type	Rural/ Urban
07.11.11	1	55	Female	Accommodation Owner	Room Rental and Bed & Breakfast	Urban
16.11.11	2	40	Female	Bar Tender/ Waitress	Hotel	Urban
23.11.11	3	41	Female	Waitress	Resort	Rural
23.11.11	4	35	Female	Bar Cashier	Resort	Rural
23.11.11	5	36	Male	Sou Chef	Resort	Rural
28.11.11	6	25	Female	Kitchen Hand	Hotel	Urban
29.11.11	7	41	Male	Manager	Hotel	Rural
30.11.11	8	61	Male	Director	Beach Fales	Rural
30.11.11	9	61	Female	Gift Shop Assistant	Resort	Rural
30.11.11	10	29	Female	Spa Assistant	Resort	Rural
30.11.11	11	24	Female	Spa Assistant	Resort	Rural
30.11.11	12	42	Male	Office Assistant/ Tour Guide	Resort	Rural
01.12.11	13	22	Female	Manager	Hotel	Urban
06.12.11	14	31	Female	Housekeeper/ Receptionist	Hotel	Urban
06.12.11	15	66	Male	Manager	Hotel	Urban
06.12.11	16	36	Female	Housekeeper	Hotel	Urban
08.12.11	17	23	Female	Bar Tender	Beach Fales	Rural
08.12.11	18	20	Male	Waiter	Beach Fales	Rural
08.12.11	19	42	Male	Manager	Beach Fales	Rural
14.12.11	20	22	Female	Shift Supervisor	Hotel	Urban
14.12.11	21	24	Female	Bar Cashier	Hotel	Urban

### Questionnaire List

Date DD.MM.YY	Questionnaire Number	Age	Gender	Job Title	Accommodation Type	Rural/ Urban
24.11.11	1	40	Female	Housekeeper	Resort	Rural
24.11.11	2	34	Female	Kitchen Hand	Resort	Rural
24.11.11	3	33	Female	Bar Tender/ Waitress	Resort	Rural
24.11.11	4	58	Male	Security Guard	Resort	Rural