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Women's access to higher education in Tanzania: a qualitative study

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University of Iowa

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**WOMEN'S ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN TANZANIA: A
QUALITATIVE STUDY**

by

Megan Patricia Johnson

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in
Educational Policy and Leadership Studies (Higher Education and Student Affairs)
in the Graduate College of The University of Iowa

July 2011

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Scott F. McNabb

ABSTRACT

This study focused on eight rural female first-generation undergraduate students at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. First-generation can be defined as students whose parents did not attend any college or university. Often, first-generation students are at a disadvantage in understanding how to gain access to higher education. Moreover, women's access to higher education is not equal to that of their male peers. Both first-generation students and women are educationally disadvantaged.

The purpose of this study was to reveal the ways in which first-generation women in Tanzania explained their success in pursuing a university education despite cultural and social obstacles. Such obstacles include social policies, socio-cultural factors, and academic factors. A review of the literature revealed that issues such as patriarchy, proximity to schools, teenage pregnancy, domestic roles, religion, and initiation rituals serve as hurdles for women who seek to reach tertiary education.

Ethnography was used to capture a deep slice of the women's background and educational experiences. The researcher spent 10 months in the field learning about Tanzanian culture and mores. This research sought to answer how first-generation female students explain the personal, cultural, social, and policy factors that influenced their ability to pursue a college degree. Additionally, participants were asked to describe the role of family members, teachers, peers, and educational policy as they moved through primary and secondary school.

The results of this research reveal that women describe their ability to pursue education by identifying strategies for success, such as avoiding the social pressures of getting pregnant or becoming married while in primary or secondary school. Moreover, the participants shared the strength it took to stay focused on their academics through discipline while balancing their studies with the societal roles they were expected to play in their homes. The women talked extensively about the role of confidence and the importance of being confident as they continued through their education. The women

also explained the difference between the emotional encouragement they received and the financial support that was imperative in their ability to stay in school. The participants also discussed the importance of role models but the lack of role models for young girls in rural areas. Along these lines, the women felt compelled to give back to their hometown communities for future generations of female students. Finally, the notion of investing in education surfaced as a major reason that these women believed they were able to pursue tertiary education. They stated that someone had used resources to invest in their education and as a result they continued with their educational trajectories.

This study will lead to a deeper understanding of the social dynamics and power differentials that first-generation women encounter and how they explain their ability to overcome these obstacles as they seek tertiary education.

Abstract Approved:

Thesis Supervisor

Title and Department

Date

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

PH.D. THESIS

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

Megan Patricia Johnson

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Policy and Leadership Studies (Higher Education and Student Affairs) at the July 2011 graduation.

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James L. Giblin

David B. Bills

To my favorite women: Great Grandma Nanfito, Grandma Ruth, Grandma Fannie,
and my mom

If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a society.

- African Proverb

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I am confident I would not have been able to take this journey without the love and support of my parents, Patti and Willis Johnson. The values of hard work, discipline, and compassion that they instilled in me allowed me to be successful in the pursuit of a doctoral degree and especially in this research. I know it was not easy for me to be away for so many months while conducting this study and their stateside assistance was unmatched. I am also appreciative of my brother and sister-in-law, Drs. Kyle and Rachel Johnson, for their love and support.

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CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Higher education intrinsically adds value to society, serving as “both a public and private good – public because it contributes to society and private because it has potential to benefit the individual” (Morley, Leach, & Lugg, 2009, p. 56). The importance of higher education on society cannot be understated; it becomes an economic booster to the community while providing individuals with personal benefits. Higher education is essential to generate and establish a productive citizenry (Giroux, 2002). Further, higher education provides paths for individual and communal development; it raises individual awareness of societal issues and often serves as a strong source of research used to address relevant issues of nation-states. In Tanzania, a developing country in East Africa, education is the “chief impetus for national development” (Hood, 1988, p. 111). Tertiary education is imperative because it shapes individuals for future positions of influence, especially in government, business, and professional fields (Bloch, Beoku-Betts, & Tabachnick, 1998). University graduates join society and influence policy reform, legal ideals, and the overall well-being of the country (Luhanga, 2009). Universities produce a substantial part of the workforce responsible for the development of the Tanzanian economy. These graduates advocate for the needs of the community – including women’s issues.

One of the ways to ensure that both men and women are equally represented in society is through their involvement in higher education. In previous decades educational, social, and economic reforms geared toward women have advanced Tanzanian women; however “the status of women in the social, economic, and political life is unequal to that of men” (Hood, 1988, p. 111). Educated women contribute to their families in addition to the economic well being of their country. Studying women in Tanzania serves as a way to advance the goal of gender equality (Mama, 2003). Gender equality is important because

social returns include: better nutrition and child health, occupational mobility, and an increase in household income (Subbarao, Raney, Dundar, & Haworth, 1994).

A report by the World Bank in 1994 notes the importance of bridging the gender gap in education by widening access for females. This goal became prevalent beginning in the 1970s and is still fodder for research and continued program development (Subbarao, Raney, Dundar, & Haworth, 1994). Education is a human right; unfortunately, women do not always have access to this fundamental right. In much of Africa women still carry a large “burden of the familial, social, and community development responsibilities” (Mama, 2003, p. 120). These responsibilities do not always align with the time demands of education. In Tanzania the family orientation is that investing in a child’s education transfers to future family security (Talis, 1985). Unfortunately, the belief that men are a better economic investment permeates society, and women’s education becomes minimized. When women are removed from educational opportunities their communities suffer. Higher education is the main route to greater career opportunities for women in Africa, but their limited access becomes a constraint for their involvement in political, economic, and social activities (Mama, 2003). In other words, access to education is one of many issues for women in Africa. Moreover, education is one of many potential solutions to the assorted issues that women face in Tanzania. When women are educated they positively impact their communities and enhance their own opportunities, but discrimination against women prevents them from achieving gender parity in education.

Research Focus

Although an abundance of research on the importance of education in developing countries exists, currently there is not a lot of research on the motivations, experiences, and educational trajectories of people from socially disadvantaged groups seeking higher education in developing countries (Morley, Leach, & Lugg, 2009). This focus of this study is on first-generation females who have persisted through the educational system

and who are enrolled at the University of Dar es Salaam in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. First-generation students are those whose parents did not attend any college or university. Both first-generation students and women fall into the socially disadvantaged category. This study will lead to a deeper understanding of the social dynamics and power differentials that either aid or discourage first-generation women from seeking tertiary education.

Objective of Study

The goal of this research is to understand first-generation females' perspectives about their ability to pursue higher education in light of the socializing agents, educational policies, socio-cultural factors, and academic factors that influenced their educational paths. This will shed light on the research participants' decisions about pursuing higher education.

Research Questions

The questions that will guide this study are as follows:

1. How do first-generation female students in Tanzania explain the personal, cultural, social, and policy factors that influenced their decision to pursue a college degree?
2. What was the role of peers, family members, educational policy, and teachers as first-generation women progressed through primary and secondary school?
3. How do first-generation women explain their success in attending college?

Overview of Methodology

Qualitative research allows for deep exploration of a phenomenon. This ethnography seeks to explore women's perspectives of societal factors and their ability to pursue higher education. Ethnographic researchers study behavioral patterns, culture, and interactions of a society (Creswell, 2007). Given the different opportunities and expectations for men and women in Tanzania that illustrate oppression for women, the critical perspective which focuses on social inequalities was taken into consideration for

this research (Morley, Leach, & Lugg, 2009). Living in Tanzania for several months, I used an ethnographic approach to observe structures inherent in the culture. Specifically, I researched how women make sense of these structures and how they overcome obstacles to their access to education.

Conclusion – Preview of Chapters

The next chapters provide context for this study. Chapter 2 sets the stage for Tanzania, where I conducted the study. I begin with an overview of Tanganyika before colonial times, briefly explaining the social organization and type of people who inhabited the land before colonialism. The chapter also addresses the impact of colonialism on Tanzania and the relevant issues that shape current Tanzanian educational policy. The current educational system's structure cannot be fully understood outside of historical context and contemporary issues in Tanzanian education.

Chapter 3, the review of literature, begins with a description of women and access to education in Tanzania. I present an overview of several key studies on women and higher education that guided my research. I also delve into the variables that permeate the literature related to women and education, which include: patriarchy, proximity to schools, and teenage pregnancy; socio-cultural factors such as the domestic roles of women, religion, and initiation rituals; and academic factors. Finally, I present the social and economic theories that ground my research. For example, after briefly describing first-generation students I describe three theories that helped guide my study: human capital, social capital, and status attainment. I explain how these Western concepts fit with a study of a developing country.

Chapter 4 addresses the ethnography I used for this study. In Chapter 4, I explain the design of the study, the pilot study, the population and sample, my data collection techniques, how I established academic rigor, the data analysis, and provide an overview of the research participants.

CHAPTER 2

EVOLUTION OF TANZANIA

Introduction

This chapter provides context on the background of Tanzania, previously Tanganyika, through modern day. I chronicle the history and cultural evolution of Tanzania from its beginnings, through colonial times, to its modern day education structure. In order to understand education in Tanzania, it is important to provide the background of this country before, during, and after colonization. Prior to colonization, research suggests a wide array of people and civilizations existed across the large landscape. During colonial times, the people found themselves simultaneously under colonial rule and beginning to form their own unified identity. Many of the colonial patterns that permeated Tanganyika before independence pervade modern culture.

Pre-Colonial Times in Tanganyika

The history of Tanganyika is the product of several hundred years that involve “the cultural, economic, social and political development and intermixture of the diverse peoples” that settled in this part of Africa (Kimambo & Temu, 1969, p. 1). Tanzanian historians John Iliffe (1979) and Kimambo & Temu (1969) provide a holistic picture of pre-colonial times in Tanganyika. The languages spoken varied based on region, but at least four different languages existed and they merged where groups overlapped (Iliffe, 1979), but a large majority of the people spoke a Bantu-language (Kimambo & Temu, 1969). Given Tanzania’s vast landscape and its various inhabitants, the country started as a land of ethnic diversity (Kimambo & Temu, 1969). A variety of people inhabited the land at that time, living in areas that supported their skills, specifically herding, hunting, fishing, and land cultivation (Iliffe, 1979). They moved when it was necessary, often sharing land and resources. Early Tanganyikans organized based on meeting each other’s reciprocal needs; although tribes did not always get along, their interactions provided the

impetus for political organization (Iliffe, 1979). In essence, the people fostered political alliances that suited their communal and environmental needs (Kimambo & Temu, 1969).

The social organization and roles of men and women, as well as religion, varied. Given their reliance upon nature and land for survival, the division of labor between the sexes provided context for the differing roles of men and women in society. Generally, the pre-colonial social patterns reflected women completing mundane agricultural work while men spent time herding and hunting, although evidence exists that men engaged in farming (Iliffe, 1979). Polygamy was practiced sporadically, although this varied by region. Religion before colonization varies as much as the skills of the people; literature on pre-colonial Tanganyika suggests people fell into one of three religious categories: a general belief in God; witchcraft or spirits; or reliance upon medicine (Iliffe, 1979).

Long-distance trade with Arabs and Persian dates back to the 14th century and by the 1800s Muslim culture began influencing the coastal regions where international trade routes exposed Tanganyikans to additional customs and culture (Kimambo & Temu, 1969; Iliffe, 1979). Kiswahili became the primary language used along the coast and by extension throughout the whole of Tanganyika. By 1885 a variety of Western Christian missionary workers arrived and spread throughout Tanganyika. The response of Tanganyikans to these missionaries and the differing religions present at the time set the stage for colonialism. While various religions and customs evolved so did resistance among different groups of people. A shift between religious to military power served as the foundation for political authority (Kimambo & Temu, 1969). Although Tanganyika resisted European colonization, the colonizers incorporated much of Tanganyikan culture into their lives (Iliffe, 1979).

Colonial Times to Modern Day Tanzania

German colonial rule of present day Tanzania began in the 1880s (Coulson, 1982; Iliffe, 1979). The Tanzanians resisted German colonization in various ways depending on the type of people inhabiting the region. The people tried to thwart colonization in two

main ways by using either active or combative resistance, or engaging in passive resistance through non-compliance; others adapted to the colonizers in an effort to advance their causes and viewed colonization as an opportunity for trade (Kimambo & Temu, 1969). The Germans infiltrated the country in different phases. The first phase involved explorers and missionaries; the second phase involved commerce as agricultural products like coffee, sisal, and rubber became popular. In 1891 the Germans officially took over Tanganyika's administration (Kimambo & Temu, 1969).

Throughout the last ten years of German rule from 1905 through 1914 the evolution of the colonial infrastructure grew (Coulson, 1982). As the Germans sought to increase literacy skills sixty primary schools and nine post-primary schools were built by 1914 (Coulson, 1982). Most of these schools opened along the coast and in urban areas. The Germans built these schools to educate a small number of boys, specifically those offspring of well-known tribal leaders. The boys would graduate and fill lower administrative positions (Kimambo & Temu, 1969; Chande, 1994). Under German rule, women's education was not a consideration (Chande, 1994).

By 1917, after the Germans were defeated in World War I, most of Tanganyika was governed by the British and it was clear that Tanganyikan independence was inevitable (Coulson, 1982). The British incorporated educational reforms including more schools, but they exacerbated the problem of oppressing women by focusing on elite males and limiting education of women (Kimambo & Temu, 1969). Tanganyika suffered from the Great Depression in the 1930s when the British did not pay attention to the colony. During this time, Christian missionaries established African sisterhoods where some women were given access to low-level education. However, outside of this limited effort for women, men dominated society (Iliffe, 1979). In fact, throughout the 1930s only ten African women teachers were registered (Iliffe, 1979). The colonial legacy's impact on women ensured that they were not qualified to enter the economy or university (Mama, 2003).

It was also during this time that Tanganyika's reliance upon world markets became evident. Between the 1930s and the 1950s the British government continued to impose technological policies and standards; simultaneously farmers sought control of their lands, resulting in farmer uprisings. The British also employed three distinct education systems for the different races; one for the Europeans, one for the Asians, and a small one for the Africans, reflecting racist practices that permeated colonial times (Coulson, 1982). The British financially supported Christian-based educational initiatives while ignoring the Muslim school systems based solely on the fact that these organizations were exclusively religious organizations (Chande, 1994).

In December of 1961 Tanzania established independence from Britain and became an independent fully functioning state. Julius Nyerere led the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), the political party in power serving as the Prime Minister. Women were drawn to this political party because of its radical approach towards women; TANU's first constitution provided a section for women (Iliffe, 1979). Nyerere also acknowledged the Muslim concerns about the lack of funding towards their educational initiatives (Chande, 1994). In April of 1964 Nyerere signed the articles of union formally creating the United Republic of Tanzania joining together the mainland of Tanganyika and the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba; Nyerere subsequently became the country's first President (Ishengoma, 2008). Although an objective of independence was to restore control and choice of the Tanzanians they were not completely at the mercy of their colonizers and retained a strong sense of identity during colonization (Kimambo & Temu, 1969).

In 1967 Nyerere released *The Arusha Declaration*, a seminal document, explaining how reliance upon socialism within the country would propel it forward. Part of the impetus for *The Arusha Declaration* was Nyerere's desire for Tanzania to not be as reliant upon foreign government capital as it had been during the Great Depression (Coulson, 1982). Although capitalist values spread throughout Tanzania during this time,

few Tanganyikans became capitalists, yet they relied on capitalist practices to secure trade and increase commerce (Iliffe, 1972). *The Arusha Declaration* declared the importance of education on the implementation of policies in post-colonial Tanzania. The new Tanzanian leader Nyerere stressed education as a way to create the development of workers (Resnik, 1968). In 1967 he also wrote *Education for Self-Reliance*, which will be discussed further in detail.

Modern day Tanzania has approximately 40.1 million people and almost 40% of them live in poverty (World Factbook, 2009). The life expectancy is approximately 52 years and the economy is heavily based on agriculture, which accounts for about 80% of the work force (World Factbook, 2009). While more than 99% of the population in Zanzibar is Muslim, mainland Tanzania is comprised of 30% Christians, 35% Muslims and 35% indigenous beliefs (World Factbook, 2009). The variety of religions and peoples reflects the earliest records of the country (Kimambo & Temu, 1969). The role of religion influences education in Tanzania, especially at the primary and secondary levels. When students are still in primary and secondary school they are often under their parents' control, whose religious beliefs may impact the length of time students stay in school. The national languages are Kiswahili and English; English is the language of instruction at both secondary schools and in higher education. According to the 2002 census, the literacy rate as defined by those over the age of 15 who can read or write Kiswahili, English or Arabic is 62.2% (World Factbook, 2009).

History and Structure of Tanzanian Education

The current education system in Tanzania evolved from German and British colonial rule (Omari, 1982). Education in Tanzania consists of distinct levels. The first level includes two years of pre-primary education for children between 5 and 6 years old followed by seven years of primary education which is available "to all children from the age of 7 years" (BEST, 2009, p. 11). Primary education begins with Standard I and ends with Standard VII; a final examination on the national level marks the completion of

primary school and determines selection for secondary school. Formal secondary school follows consisting of two sequential cycles; the first is a four-year Ordinary Level (O-Level) that spans from Form 1 through Form 4. The second cycle is two-years and consists of Form 5 and Form 6; this is the Advanced level (A-Level). National testing takes place after Form 4 and Form 6 and is used to determine further education. Tertiary education often takes three or more years for students. The general pattern of education follows a 2+7+4+2+3 pattern (BEST, 2010). The national examinations serve as a funneling mechanism whereby students who do not pass the examination either terminate their education or have to find alternative paths to pursue their studies. Table 1 below outlines the approximate ages and corresponding educational levels of students in primary and secondary school. However, it should be noted that some variation in age occurs based on ability of the family to send them to school and student performance on national exams. Some students continue seamlessly from one stage of education to the next, while others may stray from the normal path.

Table 1. Primary and Secondary Ages and Educational Levels

Pre-Primary	Primary Standard I – VII	Secondary (O Level) Form 1 – 4	Secondary (A Level) Form 5 - 6
Age 5-7	Age 7-13	Age 14-17	Age 18-20

Table 2. Overall Enrollment in Tanzanian Higher Education 2009-2010

	Female	Male	Total
Grand Total	34,442	61,796	96,238
Female/Male Percentage	35.8%	64.2%	100%

As of 2009 Tanzania had 31 registered universities and university colleges, 11 public and 20 private. Table 2 showcases the total enrollment in higher education institutions and the gender breakdown during the 2009-2010 academic year. At this time, the total enrollment of undergraduates in all universities was 96,238. However, women comprised fewer than 36% of these students; their enrollment throughout the year totaled only 34,442. During that year, public universities enrolled 63,465 students while private universities and university colleges enrolled 32,773 (BEST, 2010). Although private institutions outnumber public institutions, their overall enrollment is lower than public universities; generally speaking private higher education is a young concept in Tanzania (Ishengoma, 2008).

In 1961, the University of Dar es Salaam was initially an extension of the University of London, but in 1963, it became part of the University of East Africa, comprised of constituent colleges including: Makerere University in Uganda and the University of Nairobi in Kenya (Omari, 1991). The University of Dar es Salaam finally became an independent institution in 1970 (Mudke, Cooksey, & Levey, 2003). In the first ten years of independence education was the priority and the University of Dar es Salaam expanded and enrolled 3000 students (Coulson, 1982). Initially, the Head of State became the University of Dar es Salaam's Chancellor linking the institution inextricably to the Tanzanian government; this was commonplace in many African countries after independence (Omari, 1991). During the late 1960s through the mid-1970s the University of Dar es Salaam became a well-known school in Africa working to ensure economic development (Ishengoma, 2008). In 2009 Luhanga published a book about the history of the University of Dar es Salaam. He notes that in the early 1990s the enrolment of female students was between 10 and 20 percent for both undergraduates and graduates. However, officials at the University recognized the importance women could play in the development of the country and placed gender mainstreaming as a main objective (Luhanga, 2009).

In 1967, Nyerere wrote a groundbreaking document on the role of education titled *Education for Self-Reliance*. The paper was intended to connect the *Arusha Declaration's* focus on socialism and self-reliance emphasizing the role of education for a productive citizenry (Ishengoma, 2008). The paper made international headlines and was “enthusiastically received by liberal educationalists all over the world” (Coulson, 1982, p. 214). The primary focus of this document was to alter the elitist colonial educational system to become more accessible for all Tanzanians through curriculum reform (Hood, 1988). It was intended to meet the needs of postcolonial Africa. Before independence the education system primarily served the elite (Swainson, Bendera, Gordon, & Kadzamira, 1998). Nyerere espoused that practical education would provide learners in a post-colonial environment with the skills needed to advance society at that time. He saw the need for the type of education that adequately prepared students for life after college, but did not believe that society benefited from elitist education. The objective of *Education for Self-Reliance* was to change society by changing education.

Teaching, research, and training are characteristics of both vocational and professional preparation (Omari, 1982). However, in developing countries, the pressure placed on a flagship university, or the main research institution, to serve civic goals is intensified because it is frequently the sole venue for reaching country-specific goals. In this sense, the pressures to achieve greatness in research, education, teaching, and investment in the arts become a function of higher education. Thus, the social and cultural mores involved in “the articulation of national ideals and direction of society” rest with the flagship institution (Omari, 1982, p. 182).

Upon independence, if Tanzania was going to overcome issues such as poverty, disease, and social attitudes of colonial rule, the country needed a progressive approach to development (Elimu, 2004). In a multitude of ways the Tanzanian government dedicated both time and resources to education. At that time, the country faced large scale development challenges including creating a better transportation infrastructure and

building its economy. In order to prove that higher education was impacting the newly independent country, graduating students needed to work to meet the country's needs (Hinzen & Hunsdorfer, 1985). This is still an issue in present day Tanzania. The emphasis on expansion and education reinforces the idea that members of a highly educated society produce more, earn more, and contribute more thus benefiting a nation-state in the long run (Paulsen & Smart, 2001). While education expanded during the early years of Tanzanian independence, *Education for Self-Reliance* helped set the stage that education's purpose was to produce active citizens who would contribute to the budding country.

The plethora of literature on higher education in Tanzania provides evidence of its importance to Tanzanian society (Coulson, 1982; Elimu, 2004; Hinzen & Hunsdorfer, 1982; Ishengoma, 2008; Mudke, Cooksey, Levey, 2003; Tripp, 1997). Education expanded and grew from the late-1960s until the mid-1970s, when "the University of Dar es Salaam acquired a reputation for scholarship that espoused causes and issues related to liberation, social justice, and economic development" (Mudke et al., 2003, p. 3). Unfortunately, Tanzania dealt with economic hardship during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. These financial difficulties impacted higher education; at that time, tertiary education depended primarily on capital from abroad. Relying on international funding was common during colonial times, but now it was impacting the ability of educational initiatives throughout Tanzania. Funding for many departments at the University of Dar es Salaam came from private gifts from various international governments and organizations (Mudke et al., 2003). This trend continues in education in developing countries.

Current Issues in Education

Tanzania is a relatively young country and the leadership is forced to tackle a myriad of issues. Education, especially higher education, is also facing a variety of challenges. Soon after independence, the ramifications of educational separatism

remaining from colonial times became apparent. The effect of colonial rule on both race and gender stifled the educational development early in Tanzanian history. Financing education is a major concern on two levels: at the macro level institutions rely heavily on monies from international sources, and at the student level, frequent strikes interrupt academic schedule and individual momentum. Students strike when they feel that the price of their education is unfair; and have become an active part of the educational landscape in Tanzania, especially at the University of Dar es Salaam. Although *Education for Self-Reliance* sought to eliminate disparities between various social classes, education still contributes “to stratification and the perpetuation of an educated elitist class” (Hood, 1988, p. 113). Access to education will be discussed in its own section later in the paper.

The Impact of Colonial Separatism

According to Coulson, (1982) when Nyerere wrote *Education for Self-Reliance* he did not fully recognize the embedded class issues remaining from colonial rule and their repercussions for the educational system. According to Tripp (1997) the colonial system that ruled Tanzania until 1960 “was class-biased as well as mean and racist” (p. 87). Entrenched class systems presided and in the 1970s local community groups navigated appropriate governmental channels to form private schools. Parents sought to expand and enhance their children’s educational opportunities (Tripp, 1997). Although Nyerere placed great importance on the value of equality, education would still be stratified based on class backgrounds and gender, introduced during colonization. When local communities won the right to create private institutions at the primary level, students benefited from the positive momentum of enhanced access to education (Tripp, 1997). Although no fees for public primary or secondary school exist, students whose families are well off have literate family members and books in their homes, providing these students with advantages (Coulson, 1982). Colonial stratification continues to influence modern day education. As recently as 2002, Tanzania implemented the Primary

Education Development Plan (the PEDP), aimed at positively impacting public responsibility in fostering basic education. However, stratification continues to create two school systems: one for the more affluent and one for the poor majority (Elimu, 2004).

Furthermore, the colonial educational system reinforced gender-related discrimination due to the reliance on male-only institutions of education that developed throughout Europe (Egbo, 2000). During the University of Dar es Salaam's early days, Western style "ethos, standards, values, research, and thinking paradigms" were ingrained in both the students and the staff at the University of Dar es Salaam (Omari, 1982, p. 185). The influence of colonial rule on the young country and the evolution of the educational system from Western models permeated the conservative nature of education. The educational policies in the University's early years were Eurocentric and discriminatory (Egbo, 2000). The idea was to educate African men so they could serve in subordinate positions under colonial rule, which lasted through independence. This system perpetuated the absence of women from institutions of higher education. Institutions of higher education currently include both men and women in their recruitment efforts, evidence of the system's evolution.

Financing Higher Education

Although primary education is theoretically free, according to Bhalalusesa (2000), the current Dean for the College of Education at the University of Dar es Salaam, the expenses of attending primary education constantly increase. The cost of uniforms, books and other materials, and transportation to and from schools is a burden by families who spend their money on agriculture and economic activities that provide more immediate returns. In Tanzania, families often pursue multiple economic activities to make sure their families survive, for "families with many children and poor families with limited income, the cost of schooling is a serious burden which parents fail to meet" (Bhalalusesa, 2000, p. 32).

In 1964, on the opening day of the University of Dar es Salaam, President Nyerere stated, “the annual per capita income in Tanganyika is £19; the cost of keeping a student at this College will be about £1000 per year” (Coulson, 1982, p. 224). Clearly, since the beginning of Tanzanian independence the costliness of higher education has been an issue. This continues to modern day. Currently, the University of Dar es Salaam is heavily reliant upon international support to run its programs and departments; while building relationships with international investors provides for strong alliances and partners, running an educational institution based on tenuous financial support can limit expansion and innovation. Currently, other countries including America, Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, and Switzerland finance higher education in Tanzania. Higher education on the entire continent of Africa is facing financial constraints resulting from increased student enrollment, country-wide economic problems, poor use of funds at the institutional level, funding policy changes from organizations such as the World Bank, and student’s inability to afford tuition (Teferra & Altbach, 2004).

Additionally, receiving a degree from the University of Dar es Salaam does not cost the same amount for all students. For the 2009-2010 academic year, students working towards a degree in subjects such as language studies, education, physical education, fine and performing arts pay 1,000,000Tshs (Tanzanian Shillings). Based on current exchange rates, this is approximately \$667USD in tuition; students receiving degrees in subjects such as geography, science, advertising, and political science pay 1,300,000Tshs or approximately \$867USD; and students working toward a degree in accounting, computer engineering, information technology, or computer science pay 1,500,000Tshs or \$1000USD (University of Dar es Salaam website). In essence, the tuition structure in Tanzania, for undergraduates, is similar to the tuition structure in America for graduate degrees, where a law degree costs a different amount than a medical degree or a degree in education.

On a biannual basis, and sometimes more frequently, the University of Dar es Salaam “experiences large-scale student strikes and class boycotts” (Ishengoma, 2008, p. 459). Generally speaking, students strike based on what they believe are unfair student fees, It is worth nothing that student fees are not common in most of Africa (Visser, 2008). These strikes disrupt classes and can last for months. The university is frequently closed and the academic cycle is shifted once the strikes end. Students claim that the rising cost of tuition is a driving factor for their strikes, but they also protest polices where student money goes directly to the campus bookstore, instead of to students for the purchase of school supplies (Luhanga, 2009). The new trend in Tanzania is cost sharing with the government whereby students pay a larger amount for higher education than previously (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). This practice places further financial burdens on students and student families as the government continues to limit its direct costs of education (Teferra & Altbach, 2004).

Economic issues provide context for the state of higher education in Tanzania, although it is unclear how they directly impact student’s access to higher education. The literature available regarding these modern educational issues focuses on current practices, i.e. relying on international funding and the nature of student strikes, but few documents exist about the long term impact these issues have on students or the role of education in Tanzania. The financial burdens that families endure as they make decisions about sending their children to an institution of higher education have the potential to impact male and female students differently.

Educational System and Women

Although the Tanzanian education system was highly influenced by British ideals and philosophy, grounded in Christianity, it has also been influenced by Islamic education through the medium of the madrasa. Islamic institutions continue to embed social norms for men and women through cultural patterns, Islamic theology, and philosophy (Egbo, 2000). Furthermore, African education based on communal

cooperation and oral tradition is also part of the educational history of Tanzania. More importantly, the role that women play in oral history means that their stories become integral to protecting and transmitting communal history (Egbo, 2000). Kerner (1986) claims that Tanzanian educators tend to fault “regions with strong Islamic influence as backward and traditional, and regions associated with Christian conversation as forward-looking and progressive” (p. 1). Depending on a student’s background and upbringing, any of the aforementioned educational philosophies could influence access to education. This is even more likely for women, because they are more susceptible to being prevented from attending schools at younger ages than their male counterparts.

Furthermore, the importance of women’s education within a developing country is significant. Several international agencies including UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank have recognized the importance of eliminating women’s illiteracy and enhancing access to education for women. In their creation of the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations recognized the importance of promoting gender equality and empowering women (Grown, Gupta, & Kes, 2005). Not only does the UN seek to ensure that by 2015 all children, boys and girls, will have access to primary school, they have also set goals regarding the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education (Grown et al., 2005). Regardless of how much these international players wish to eradicate the disparity between access to education for boys and girls, certain cultural and social barriers exist. These barriers reinforce social standards in addition to cultural norms and mores within society. These issues will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter addresses relevant issues in education in Tanzania and their impact on educational attainment. The problem of educational imbalance between men and women is an international concern that is more serious in the least developed countries. The issue of gender parity is not a recent revelation, nor is the literature on the topic of women's educational pursuits lacking. For the most part, information regarding women's access to education in developing countries can be found in reports from the World Bank, the United Nations agencies (UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, etc.), and other international agencies. This information adds to the wider knowledge base regarding the importance of educated women and their positive contributions to society.

This chapter focuses on women's access to higher education in Tanzania. It presents the effect of gender and socializing agents that influence women's ability to pursue higher education including policy factors, socio-cultural issues, and academic factors. This review provides context for research on first-generation women's access to higher education in Tanzania.

Access and Gender

Women and Access

Until the 1940s, few Tanzanians had access to more than three years of education and secondary schools were minimal (Coulson, 1982). Since the inception of the United Republic of Tanzania, educational access continues to expand, but universal access to education remains a consistent problem. Given the continuous expansion of higher education, Tanzanian society values education (Egbo, 2000; Hinzen & Hundsdorfer, 1982; Hood, 1988; Luhanga, 2009; Kerner, 1986; Mudke, Cooksey, & Levey, 2003; Omari, 1982). There is clear recognition of the importance of education in Tanzania. Central documents broadly address educational access issues, economic impact, and

policy implementation. The variety of papers, publications, and reports, however, do not always address ways to increase women's educational attainment. Generally speaking, only modest attempts have been made "to improve opportunities for women in higher education" (Beoku-Betts, 1998, p. 167).

Greater student access to primary education and gender parity are two of the Millennium Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa (Grown, Gupta, & Kes, 2005). There has been a huge increase in access to primary education for girls. Although these rates are up for primary schools, they remain considerably lower for secondary and tertiary education. For example, in 1990 they hovered around 40 and 21 percent, respectively (Bloch, Beoku-Betts, & Tabachnick, 1998). While the number of girls attending primary school increased, the same progress was not made regarding non-formal education, including basic literacy for women (Chlebowska, 1990).

Indicators of educational access, attainment, and accomplishment are elements that help researchers measure the gender disparity in secondary and tertiary education in Africa (Bloch, Beoku-Betts, & Tabachnick, 1998). Access can be measured by using secondary and tertiary education enrollment rates. Attainment is defined by rates of completion and continuation (Bloch et al., 1998). Finally, accomplishment "is measured according to labor force participation and career mobility patterns in professional and managerial fields" (Beoku-Betts, 1998, p. 159). Each of these three indicators plays a role in describing women's educational patterns and habits as they enter tertiary education. What Tanzanian higher education literature does not emphasize is family background or school quality, even though both are linked to access and persistence (Paulsen, 2001). Tertiary education is imperative for individuals and society because it influences those who are able to obtain influential positions, especially in government, business, and professional fields (Bloch et al., 1998). Although primary school enrollment rates for girls have increased substantially, this is not evident at the secondary and tertiary levels (Beoku-Betts, 1998). While women are not denied the opportunity to continue with their

education, structural limitations and prejudice exist “resulting from social, economic and cultural set-up of our communities, which put girls and women at a disadvantage” (Bhalalusesa, 2000, p. 10). Cumulatively these issues play an important role in girls’ ability to move forward with their educational pursuits.

In recent years, research on women’s access to and experiences in education has expanded considerably. In 1998 Bloch, Beoku-Betts, & Tabachnik edited a book about women and education in Sub-Saharan Africa. While this book does not focus solely on Tanzania it presents a holistic picture of the many issues and trends impacting gender-related educational pursuit. The book addresses both the consistency and inconsistency of research, policy, and practice in Sub-Saharan Africa. The book also illuminates topics such as women’s nutrition and its effect on education, female experiences in the classroom, and women’s access to both formal and informal education.

Bhalalusesa conducted a qualitative research study on women in four wards of the Dar es Salaam district (2000). All of the women in her study dropped out of school before completing seven years of primary education. She cited both policy and socio-cultural factors as reasons that these women dropped out. Her findings suggest that policies about teenage pregnancy coupled with the poor quality of teachers and the role of women in society all have a negative impact on women’s persistence of primary education.

Another relevant research study addresses the relationship between gender and literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa. Egbo (2000) writes about the social context of literacy and the relationships between gender, literacy, and power for women in Sub-Saharan Africa. Egbo uses a critical lens to interpret these intersections, taking into account power and the unique dimension it creates between men and women who want to become literate. She writes about both literate and non-literate accounts of women and she delves into the differences between educational opportunity for urban and rural women. She

argues that women, especially those living in rural areas, need more attention in terms of literacy and further education.

Five countries comprise East Africa: Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. Tanzania is the largest and has highest population of these five. Studies on women and education in these countries help contextualize education in Tanzania. Three studies on women and education, one in Tanzania, one in Uganda, and one in Kenya provide a more specific context about women's issues.

Stambach (2000) conducted an ethnography in a small region of Tanzania located near Mount Kilimanjaro. Her study focused on gender and schooling. She spent a considerable amount of time teaching in a secondary school, which is where she did her data collection. Her book highlights the cultural significance and relevance of education for women. She shares the thoughts and feelings of many village members and their ideas about education for women in this rural area. Her conclusions suggest that older women in the community do not always recognize the importance of education for girls. The young women tend to have high aspirations but feel conflicted about the role they should play in their communities.

Kiluva-Ndunda (2001) conducted ethnographic research on her own village in Uganda after pursuing tertiary education elsewhere. The purpose of her study was to clarify "the cultural, historical, social, economic, and political factors that have shaped and continue to shape women's education and employment opportunities" (p. 1). Her study provides the context for education during colonial times, addresses factors limiting girls' educational opportunities post-colonialism, discusses the role of women's community groups, and presents information about policy implications. She articulates the importance of women as intervening agents for their daughter's education.

Kwesiga (2002) builds on this study but focuses on higher education in Uganda. An article written by Mama (2003) claims that Kwesiga's book is "perhaps the most substantive source available on women's access to higher education in Africa" (p. 7). Her

study begins by outlining human capital theory and social theories of gender inequality and it builds by outlining the gender gap in access to education. Kwesiga also provides the context for the educational system in Uganda. Her study focuses on familial influence, parental attitudes, socio-economic status, and gender differentiated roles. It identifies how the combination of those issues impacts women's persistence in education. This comprehensive study most closely mirrors the focus of this research. However, she does not study first-generation students.

These studies provide a brief overview of the research on women's education in both Sub-Saharan Africa and Tanzania. Together, they present a rich context for understand the issues facing Tanzanian women today, particularly related to access to higher education.

Socializing Agents

Although the gap in enrollment trends appears to be slowly diminishing, real constraints on women's education exist. Throughout the literature the following three themes emerged: policy factors, academic factors, and cultural and societal expectations of women. Each of these areas has important implications on women's educational pursuits; combined, they provide an accurate snapshot of the hardships women face regarding access to education.

Important Policies

Educational policies continue to dictate who has the ability to pursue education. Men are more advantaged than their female peers and policies play a role in perpetuating systemic gender imbalances (Beoku-Betts, 1998). Policy factors include "direct and indirect government initiatives" (Beoku-Betts, 1998, p. 173). UNICEF further identified three areas of policy focus including "mainstreaming gender concerns, promoting gender specific programme activities, and giving special attention to the girl child" (Swainson, Bendera, Gordon, & Kadzamira, 1998, p. 24). Policy implementation is cumbersome to navigate because it is introduced on several levels, often at the national level but not

always by the state government. Frequently, non-governmental organizations and external organizations also attempt to wield power and to direct policies. This presents a potential source of conflict for how the targeted group received these policy changes.

Patriarchy

Although not always overt, the notion of patriarchy embedded in society influences women's educational patterns. Neither capitalist nor socialist perspectives tackle the entrenched patriarchal attitudes that permeate Tanzanian society (Hood, 1988). The decision making process, which begins at the household level and extends through business and government, frequently ignores women's voices (Kwesiga, 2002). Women continue to be distanced from "legislative and decision-making bodies and other positions of power" which prevents them from creating social policies (Egbo, 2000, p. 7). Women frequently bear the responsibility for cultivating crops but their ability to make decisions is minimized, if not completely removed, if they do not own property (Kwesiga, 2002). Further, men often "dominate the cash economy" but women are generally the ones responsible for "school fees, children's clothes and household items, which all require cash payments" (Kwesiga, 2002, p. 109). Gender discrimination exists at multiple levels, especially because women tend to be underemployed or employed only at the lowest levels (Kilva-ndunda, 2001).

Women continue to become educated but due to notions of hegemony, they are unable to exert their influence in areas that result in increased power and recognition. According to Kilva-ndunda (2001) gender determines how "power, property, prestige, and educational and employment opportunities are organized, regulated, and distributed" (p. 8). Again, this begins at the smallest unit – the household – and extends to larger societal patterns. Although literacy helps provide opportunities for women, it does not necessarily enhance their social standing (Egbo, 2000). The problem then becomes patriarchal norms that create a hegemony restricting educational access. Patriarchal hegemony, then, directly impacts women's social spheres, including education.

Gender relations play an important role regarding 'economic subordination' and women's gender stratification (Kiluva-ndunda, 2001). Even when women control the domestic domain, it is not common knowledge because patriarchal rule dictates that men are in charge (Kwesiga, 2002). Within the family, men are traditionally viewed as the head of the household who makes the decisions. This extends from the family unit to local communities and creates issues related to gender parity in education and policy creation. Egbo (2000) states that literate women often "become indoctrinated and acculturated into prevailing male-based systems rather than transforming them" (p. 9).

As women enter these male dominated spheres they succumb to the social norms instead of trying to change them, and serve in subordinate positions to men. A lack of female role models impacts young women who are not able to find their voices which further impacts the creation of policy (Bendera, 1999). As the national government empowers local communities to enhance gender parity on regional and local levels women have more opportunities to get involved in administering education (Swainson et al., 1998).

Proximity to Schools

In addition to patriarchy and hegemony, the location of schools inhibits women from pursuing primary or secondary education (Bloch et al., 1998). Kwesiga (2002) boldly claims that "the single most important determinant of primary school enrolment is the presence, or absence, or a school within easy reach of primary school age children" (p. 62). Children who do not live near a school are subject to greater absenteeism (Kwesiga, 2002). Generally, girls are responsible for more of the domestic workload than their male peers and their duties require a higher investment of time (Bendera, 1999). School proximity is especially important for rural schoolchildren where the school day generally runs from 8:00a.m. until 4:30p.m. (Bendera, 1999). After these long days, the assumption is that young women will prepare the evening meal, take care of the cleaning, and care for younger family members. Their cumulative household duties result in

increased fatigue at the end of the day. In rural areas, girls may travel for an hour each direction to get to school limiting the time and focus they have to study. Additionally, some families do not feel safe allowing their daughters to travel great distances to school, resulting in heightened levels of absenteeism (Bendera, 1999). Reducing the distance to school “encourages girls’ enrollment and attendance, by alleviating concerns for safety and reputation” (Grown, Gupta, & Kes, 2005, p. 50). This is especially important in rural areas where schools may be rundown and the children travel a farther distance to reach a better facility (Kwesiga, 2002). Parents are less likely to invest in their daughter’s education if she has to travel a long distance and the quality of education is poor (Sutton, 1998). Thus, distance and quality serve to impact female attendance in education throughout much of Tanzania.

Teenage Pregnancy

Teenage pregnancy is another important policy factor (Kwesiga, 2002). According to Bhalalusesa (2000), who works at the University of Dar es Salaam, expulsion due to pregnancy violates fundamental rights to education and contradicts Tanzania’s Constitution. Article 11, section 3 of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania clearly articulates the Government’s stance on ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals who want to pursue education. However, the current practice is to expel pregnant girls from school at both the primary and secondary school levels. The ideology is not aligned with the current practice regarding pregnancy. The removal of pregnant girls from school limits their potential contribution to society and often results in their poverty. Bhalalusesa claims that female students suffer because the “circumstances leading to pregnancy, consideration of the impact of expulsion, or the views of the pregnant schoolgirls are not taken into account” (Bhalalusesa, 2000, p. 33). Pregnant girls assume responsibility for the situation while the men who impregnate them suffer no consequences. Frequently, these girls suffer doubly because they shoulder the

burden of child-care at a young age and their social status becomes lowered (Bhalalusesa, 2000).

Kiluva-ndunda's (2001) research suggests that mothers find it difficult to address issues of sexuality in the modern context, yet mothers "are held responsible for teaching their daughters morals around sexuality and the consequences" (p. 113). In fact, some parents become so anxious about a potential teen pregnancy that they remove their daughters from school once they reach puberty (Kwesiga, 2002). Bendera (1999) estimates that approximately 3000 Tanzanian girls in primary school become pregnant annually. Beoku-Betts (1998) notes that about 18 percent of women from the ages of 15 – 19 give birth annually compared with 8 percent of their Latin peers and 3 percent of Asian women.

Specifically, the implication of women bearing the responsibility of teenage pregnancy reinforces the traditional and subservient role that women play in Tanzania. Frequently, when a woman becomes pregnant the young father meets with the woman's family to negotiate a bride price. In this sense, the Tanzanian cultural norms in concert with the patriarchal system thwart women's intellectual capacity and development (Kerner, 1986).

Although additional policy factors exist, including inadequate teacher training and corporal punishment, the aforementioned issues highlight the most significant limitations on women and their access to or completion of educational achievements at the primary and secondary school level. This web of policy factors directly effect young girls in Tanzania and their ability to pursue higher education.

Socio-cultural Factors

While policy and academic factors impact women's access to primary and secondary education, the cultural and societal implications also exert huge influence over young girls and their persistence towards education. These practices are not only complex, but are also deeply embedded in societal customs and may interfere with

allowing young women to finish primary or secondary school. Their role is crucial in the study of women who are able to pursue higher education.

Domestic Roles

According to Beoku-Betts (1998) the primary role of women is “to participate in agricultural production and to take responsibility for domestic labor and caregiving” (p. 178). As stated previously, young girls bear the burden of cooking, tending to the needs of children, gathering water, and engaging in farm work; thus their academic studies become a lower priority (Sutton, 1998). Furthermore, parents often treat their children as a form of investment and daughters tend to be viewed as potential wives and mothers (Kerner, 1986). If girls attend school, their time is spent away from household work and this is a high ‘opportunity cost’ for families (Sutton, 1998). In essence, the odds are stacked against women based on their gender and gender-determined roles. Bhalalusesa (2000) acknowledges the historical oppression of Tanzanian women by stating that girls “remain victims of circumstance just as their mothers and their grandmothers, generations before them” (p. 40). These circumstances do not allow young girls the opportunity to truly become invested in their education; the cultural responsibility of caring for families and preparing to become a spouse and mother is inconsistent with educational attainment. These domestic responsibilities continue to limit women’s opportunities.

Although the role of women in East African society varies from one country to another, more often than not, the duties women play suggests their inferiority to men (Kwesiga, 2002). The family structure helps determine the role of women and their general status (Kwesiga, 2002). Parents worry about their educated daughters finding husbands, bearing children, and upholding community values, which undeniably impedes women’s educational paths (Bloch, 1998). Frequently, women have multiple functions in the home leaving a small amount of time for leisure and even less time to pursue education (Bhalalusesa, 2000). Women who conform to traditional roles risk losing their educational opportunities, but those who do not conform risk social isolation (Morley,

Leach, & Lugg, 2009; Stambach, 2000). In addition to domestic roles, religion influences women's access to higher education.

Religion

When Tanzania was liberated from British rule, religion in the country was as diverse as it had been before colonization. The same religious diversity continues today. The various religious practices in Tanzania provide their own schools and although religion is not always a barrier to girls' education, it can be (Kwesiga, 2002). While variations exist, "Muslim regions and countries in SSA [Sub-Saharan Africa]...tend to have more rigidly defined gender role norms and practices, which affect access and attainment rates for girls in the educational system" (Beoku-Betts, 1998, p. 179). Co-educational schooling becomes difficult because the practice of Islam does not allow women and men to interact in an educational setting, potentially reducing women's participation in education (Kwesiga, 2002). Religious ideology influences how the family views women's education and their duties. Islam, Hinduism, and Catholicism all pose restrictions on women's roles. These belief-systems subsequently impact access to education and women's treatment (Kwesiga, 2000).

Initiation Rituals

Young women approaching adolescence are in a transitioning phase of their lives. They face the cultural tradition of initiation rituals that take place when women reach puberty (Bendera, 1999). Although initiation rituals are becoming less frequent these practices still exist in rural areas. While the number of girls who endure these rituals is unknown, their prevalence warrants discussion. They are seen as important cultural traditions and also perceived negatively by many teachers (Bhalalusesa, 2000; Stambach, 2000). Initiation rites pull women out of the classroom during their first menstruation cycle; this seclusion lasts for at least one week when the girls only see their female family members (Bendera, 1999). After this imposed seclusion the women retreat into the forest for three to five days where they are taught "good manners, hard work and respect for

elders; how to take care of themselves during menstruation; and...traditional sex roles and the submission of women to their husbands” (Bendera, 1999, p. 18). Women’s absence in the classroom for this amount of time, at least two weeks, interferes with their education. Local communities struggle with the issue of ensuring their young girls are educated according to customs, but also comply with laws regarding education.

According to Bhalalusesa, the juxtaposition between cultural norms and modern schooling is hard for girls to balance, especially when they may not have a say in what happens to them (2000). Young girls also feel pressure to succumb to the same initiation rituals as their elder family members to preserve culture (Stambach, 2000). Stambach also noted that some women endure these initiation rituals privately because it is illegal to conduct them in Tanzania and the schools condemn them, while other girls openly engage in the rituals. These women do not typically plan to go to secondary school and believed it was important to respect tradition. Even though specific initiation rituals are not as common in Tanzania as they once were, girls continue to have restrictions placed on them when they reach puberty (Sutton, 1998).

The impact of socio-cultural norms on access to education is not easy to understand without further exploration, especially as it translates from primary and secondary education to tertiary education. Although boys and girls are subject to the same economic conditions, women are restricted because of their gender (Bhalalusesa, 2000). These cultural practices continue to prevent women from achieving their potential in an educational environment.

Academic Factors

In addition to the aforementioned issues that influence women’s access to education, academic factors add to the complexity as well. These academic factors impact how men and women perform in an educational setting and also account for how well students are equipped to meet the demands of their country after graduation (Bloch, Beoku-Betts, & Tabachnick, 1998). In Tanzania students take several rounds of national

exams and the results are used for placement purposes at the next level of education. As mentioned in Chapter 2, primary education extends from Standard I to Standard VII. After Standard VII students take a round of national exams. Secondary school starts at Form 1 and runs through Form 4, the O-Level education. Then students take another round of exams. After Form 5 and 6, or A-Level is a final round of exams. Women's test scores on these exams are considerably lower than their male counterparts (Bendera, 1999; Swainson, Bendera, Gordon, & Kadzamira, 1998). Although the Tanzanian government enacted a quota system to enhance girls' acceptance rates from primary school to secondary school, the girls who benefited from this program arrived with low-test scores. In many instances, these girls are never fully able to catch up to their male peers (Bendera, 1999). They begin secondary school at a disadvantage and the pressure to succeed is exacerbated by the highly selective hierarchy of secondary schools (Bendera, 1999). Gender equity extends beyond gender parity regarding access. Gender equity means creating "conditions which enable girls to remain in school, to participate in a positive learning environment and to perform to the best of their natural abilities" (Swainson, et al., 1998, p. 93). Even when women make strides in education they often "enter fields of study that are likely to compliment their expected roles as caregivers in the household" (Beoku-Betts, 1998, p. 180). These societal patterns continue to stifle women.

Even though women consistently increase their presence in education, they still trail men in disciplines such as the sciences. Educating students in math, science, and technology is imperative to the future development of Tanzania (Bloch, Beoku-Betts, & Tabachnick, 1998; Bendera, 1999; Swainson, Bendera, Gordon, & Kadzamira, 1998). Due to the economic importance of science and math in securing a job, strengthening science and technical education for women provides a way to further their social mobility. Unfortunately, the current system of boys taking science creates an environment of fear for girls and inferiority for boys who have girls in their classes

(Bendera, 1999). Bendera's (1999) findings suggest that although some girls felt empowered when taking science classes, others experienced feelings of inferiority when around their male peers. Frequently, in Sub-Saharan Africa gender discrimination in schools exists, this is particularly relevant in the science arena (Egbo, 2000). This is significant because a science or technology background is highly valued and it lets women break out of their roles in jobs that perpetuate female roles in society.

Scholars disagree over the relevance of increased literacy for women in Sub-Saharan Africa. Egbo (2000) claims that literacy positively and significantly changes women's lives and brings them closer to influential positions. As women become more literate their opportunities expand. However, Chlebowska (1990) states "learning to read and write does not mobilize women of the Third World unless it is accompanied by the acquisition of further basic knowledge and skills genuinely adapted to their daily existence and needs" (p. 15). In essence, literacy alone does not resolve issues facing women because it does not empower them to direct their own personal development or that of the community (Chlebowska, 1990). In some instances elevated levels of literacy are accompanied by enhanced social and economic power and mobility, but in many systems the cultural and societal factors that place women in their roles are not changed through literacy alone.

Social and Economic Theories

As previously illustrated, women must overcome a variety of hurdles in order to get to the stage where attending higher education is an option. The relevant literature on access to education suggests that human and cultural capital play into a woman's decision to attend college. The following theories are grounded in Western philosophy; however, researchers studying education in Sub-Saharan Africa use them frequently to help explain the gender gap in education.

First-Generation

While a wealth of literature exists on first-generation students in developed countries, it is almost absent in developing countries. Simply stated, studies and reports on access to education in Tanzania do not focus on first-generation students. For the purpose of this paper, first-generation students will be defined as students' whose parents have no higher education. Although Grown, Gupta, & Kes (2005) acknowledge the intergenerational benefits of education and the continued importance for future generations of women, they do not make reference first-generation students and are not alone in neglecting this important factor.

The impact of colonial legacy often means that children from affluent areas are more likely than those from lower-class backgrounds to obtain primary and secondary education leading to higher education (Visser, 2008). Research on first-generation students consistently reveals the likelihood that first-generation students come from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds (Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999; Terenzini, Springer, Yeager, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996). Kwesiga's (2002) study on women's access to higher education in Uganda provides "evidence that a mother's lack of education has an adverse effect on girls' access to schooling" (p. 53). Parental education is clearly related to educational persistence.

In terms of cultural significance, "education of girls and mothers leads to sustained increases in educational attainment from one generation to the next" (Grown, Gupta, & Kes, 2005, p. 41). In other words, improving educational opportunities for women will have significant impact on future generations. Children of educated parents are more likely to attend higher education than children of non-educated parents; parental earnings influence educational aspirations for their children (Kwesiga, 2002). Advancing educational opportunities for girls and women results in intergenerational benefits for families. Further, research on the long term benefits of first-generation students would bridge a gap in information about first-generation students and human capital.

Human Capital

Human Capital provides a useful theory about expected future welfare and who benefits. As previously mentioned, investment in higher education results in both private and public benefits and “states, aid donors, religious bodies, individuals and the business community all invest in education as a means of developing human capital” (Bendera, 1999, p. 117). Although human capital is a Western concept it helped provide context for Kwesiga’s 2002 study on women and access to higher education in Uganda. She used the concept of human capital “to unearth the underlying explanation of why less attention is paid to girls’ education than to boys” (Kwesiga, 2002, p. 14).

This theory helps explain why a family or individual would invest in female education or, rather why they are more likely to invest in males than females. Families behave as if they are applying a cost-benefit analysis; they may believe that the profit margin changes based on whether boys or girls are educated. Human Capital is not the sole explanation for the lack of gender parity in education, but it does address different factors that influence educational barriers. When faced with scarce resources and finances, families make decisions based on who will produce greater benefits. Many economic benefits from educating women cannot be measured because they are indirect and do not work with conventional rates (Kwesiga, 2002). Because men dominate the economic landscape, investing in women’s education usually falls secondary to investing in male’s education. Additionally, attempts to measure human capital permeate academic literature, but rarely focus on women (Kwesiga, 2002).

Cultural Capital

Cultural capital pertains to set of cultural skills and abilities within one social class and the ability to maintain or improve that status within society (McDonough, 1997; Tierney, Corwin, & Coylar, 2005). The idea of cultural capital addresses how class status and privilege are maintained. It can also be interpreted as a model of economic capital through the lens of investment to secure resources and maintain or advance social status

(McDonough, 1997; Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999). Egbo (2000) used cultural capital as a way to explain Sub-Saharan women's disadvantage towards achieving literacy due to the relationship between "knowledge and power...and how power relations between social classes result from literacy practices" (p. 28). The basic premise of cultural capital is applicable to decision-making for women in Tanzania.

The emphasis on cultural capital, information processing, and status attainment, based on an economic model, are salient paradigms relevant to choosing a college. McDonough posits that cultural capital - grounded in economic theory, habitus, and bounded rationality are the main factors influencing students as they go through the college selection process. Privileged students in Tanzania acknowledged "a type of aspirational habitus whereby their families carefully managed their entry into higher education" (Morley, Leach, & Lugg, 2009, p. 60). In many Sub-Saharan African countries females from middle- and upper-class backgrounds benefit from education more than their less privileged peers (Beoku-Betts, 1998). These students benefit because they are supported and allowed to continue with their education, while their lower class peers face additional challenges inherent without the same financial resources. The group mostly likely to pursue tertiary education is men from the upper socio-economic divide (Morley, et al., 2009). It is evident, that men pursue higher education at different rates than their female counterparts.

Beoku-Betts (1998) notes that socioeconomic status, which is linked to cultural capital, "is a major determinant of gender disparity in African educational systems, in terms of access, attainment, and accomplishment" (p. 178). Financially savvy parents who invest in education of their children pass along the value of cultural capital (Morley, et al., 2009). These findings suggest the importance of cultural capital in developing countries and first-generation students who do not enter college with cultural capital. They go to college to pursue enhanced cultural capital, hoping to elevate their economic opportunities and social standing.

Status Attainment

Looking at two theoretical perspectives is useful for understanding issues of access or status attainment related to the pursuit of tertiary education (Perna, 2006). According to Perna (2006), the status attainment model “assumes that an individual’s assessment of the benefits and costs of an investment in college is shaped by the individual’s habitus, as well as the school and community context, the higher education context, and the social, economic, and policy context” (p. 101). This is why cultural, social, and policy factors in Tanzania need to be understood. Further, the aforementioned aspects of this model help explain why a Tanzanian family might elect to spend limited resources on higher education for their daughter.

Status attainment models rely on the foundation that students with support from peers, family members, and teachers have higher academic aspirations, which lead to enhanced educational and economic opportunities (Perna, 2006). Status attainment models take into consideration an entire community and can account for cultural differences. This conceptual model is particularly useful because of its flexibility regarding educational attainment across racial and socioeconomic groups (Perna, 2006). Kwesiga (2002) used these models to understand parental decisions about keeping a child in school and perceptions of the costs and benefits that accompany such decisions in her research on Ugandan women. Using a qualitative approach to understand more about how women choose to attend higher education will provide a more in depth perspective to the landscape of literature on women in higher education.

Conclusion

Educational systems do not operate in a vacuum; education is linked with health, economic stability, children’s wellbeing, community status, living conditions and children’s learning (Bendera, 1999; Petrides, 1998). In addition, education and society have a reciprocal impact on one another. Taking into account the complex nature and relationship of education, policy, and cultural values, helps illustrate the complex social

issues regarding women and education. The constraints on women's educational attainment overlap and interconnect (Petrides, 1998).

Furthering women's access to higher education in Tanzania therefore, necessitates considering a myriad of issues. The role of women in Tanzanian society influences the extent of their access to higher education. Based on the current patriarchal system, women do not have social or economic equality (Bendera, 1999). In order for educational reform to work research should be "aimed at discovering how actors respond to, creatively interpret, and manipulate educational resources" (Kerner, 1986, p. 9). The intergenerational benefits of women's education will help elevate societal standards over time. A study regarding how first-generation women gain access to higher education in Tanzania would fill a gap in research and provide a voice to the experiences of women and their ability to move through primary and secondary education to pursue tertiary education.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction of Approach

The objective of this study is to understand the perspective of a group of first-generation university women and their educational pursuits in Tanzania. In order to accurately capture these women and their experiences attention was paid to the cultural beliefs, language, and behaviors; therefore an ethnographic study has been employed as the methodology. Munhall (2007) acknowledges that ethnographic researchers seek to investigate and experience a culture unlike their own and then derive meaning of social action within that culture. Creswell (2007) notes that ethnography examines shared patterns. The critical background acknowledges the power differentials, specifically between men and women, inherent in society. I used ethnography in order to analyze the behaviors and beliefs of female college students in Tanzania regarding their access to higher education. It was my goal to focus on the shared educational patterns and acknowledge the common barriers that the women in my study overcame in their pursuit of higher education in Tanzania.

Morse (1994) states that “ethnography is based on the assumption that culture is learned and shared among members of a group” (p. 160). Therefore, I spent a considerable amount of time understanding the shared language, rituals, patterns, and behaviors of the women participants to learn more about their culture (p. 160). This was accomplished through observation, interviews, reading documents, looking at cultural artifacts, and living in Tanzania for 10 months. Each of the aforementioned strategies takes multiple layers of analysis. The pilot study I completed in August of 2009 laid the foundation for beginning to understand the complexity of women’s roles in Tanzanian society.

Design of Study

Critical theory was taken into consideration to understand this population in order to discover how women explain their successes. Inherent in this position is recognizing the barriers they overcame in order to access a college education. This paradigm allowed me to better focus on the historical experience of women in Tanzania. Munhall (2007) indicates that gender “is viewed as central in the shaping of our ideas of the world, the skills we acquire, the institutions in which we reside and work, and the distribution of power and privilege” (p. 137). Critical theory also highlights power in social structures. Since my goal was to capture the educational experiences of women focusing on gender parity the role of power must be uncovered. Using this framework, I bring to light the voices of women “whose stories are otherwise restrained and out of reach” (Madison, 2005, p. 5). This ethnography then, helps account for the gender parity issues related to educational access which are rooted in power and privilege.

This study used questions aimed at illuminating the participant’s perceptions of socio-cultural, policy factors, academic issues in the environment. Interview questions were geared towards societal factors like the specific roles of peers, family, social capital, and cultural capital in relation to women’s pursuit of higher education. Embedded in each of the aforementioned constructs, with the potential exception of peers, is the notion of power. In the family environment power structures drive family agendas. Women may be in charge of domestic issues but men often drive the family direction; for example, which children get education. This role distinction can become more complicated in a society where extended families live together. Social relations provide the framework for understanding social capital. These social networks frame differential power structures within a given society (Perna, 2006). Cultural capital explains a system of how information about the role and importance of education is passed from parents to children (Perna, 2006). Power is a basis for understanding family structures, social capital, and cultural capital.

Although the historical perspective of Tanzania is important, the role of colonization was not at the center of this study. However, the study did take into consideration the societal roles of men and women (Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith 2008). Understanding the role of power and oppression during colonization is inextricably linked to the current status of women in society; however, that served only as background for this research.

The critical perspective acknowledges that people make decisions in alignment with their culture and their actions are consistent with certain hegemonic beliefs and values (Carspecken, 1996). The focus is on women's perceptions of social inequalities in Tanzania, understanding the critical lens helps explore underlying social patterns and systems within society. Sharing the voices of women and why they pursued university-level education provides a conduit for the participants and their views of gender relations in society.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe the voice of the research participant as a 'passionate participant', which fits well with how I present the participants in Chapter 5. I sought to understand the reality of participants' backgrounds and their respective paths as they moved through various educational dimensions. The stories of the research participants vary, based on their home environments as well as socio-cultural, academic, and political factors.

Munhall states, "social actors make choices or decisions about their actions while taking into account the social or cultural constraints or expectations" (2007, p. 242). This idea is congruent with the ethnography used to frame the research. Using critical ethnography helps explain why women choose to persist and how they identify and overcome structures within the Tanzanian culture that either prohibited their access to higher education.

Research Questions

At the core of this study is how participants make meaning of the events, and situations which shaped their educational pursuits. The purpose of this study is to find out how first-generation women make the decision to attend university in light of the overall societal structures that shape their lives.

The driving force framing the research questions was my desire to uncover the “social action, subjective experience, and their conditions” as it relates to women’s decisions (Carspecken, 1996, p. 29). The research responds to the following questions:

1. How do first-generation female students in Tanzania explain the personal, cultural, social, and policy factors that that influence their decision to pursue a college degree?
2. What was the role of peers, family members, educational policy, and teachers as first-generation women progressed through primary and secondary school?
3. How do first-generation women explain their success in attending college?

In answering these main questions, I described and explored the support structures women identified as they advanced through primary and secondary education.

Additionally a greater awareness of the hurdles women overcome as they move through the educational process was revealed. Inherent in the analysis of an ethnographic study is frequent and direct quoting, thus providing the research participants a voice, in this case first-generation college women in Tanzania. Chapter 5, Findings, is peppered with the voices of the women, capturing the experiences they shared.

Pilot Study

During the summer of 2009, I received a Stanley Grant for International Research from the University of Iowa Foundation. This grant afforded me the opportunity to spend a month in Tanzania conducting a pilot study which laid the foundation for my dissertation research. The purpose of the pilot study was to strengthen my methodology

and enhance my awareness of Tanzanian culture. I applied for and received IRB and COSTECH (Commission of Science and Technology) approval. While in Tanzania I made daily visits to the University of Dar es Salaam campus where I attended classes, spoke with professors, interviewed students, and spent time in the library reading hard copies of documents only available on campus. I also visited the Ministry of Education and Vocational Studies to retrieve historical information and statistics about education in Tanzania. The month I spent in Tanzania conducting preliminary research allowed me to refine my methodology and to understand how more extensive research would take shape when I conducted my dissertation research and lived in Tanzania for an extended period of time. I confirmed the feasibility of my research and was able lay the foundation for my return.

While on campus at the University of Dar es Salaam, I initiated contact with Dr. Eustella Bhalalusesa, the Dean of the College of Education, who has written about women and education in Tanzania; Dr. Fenella Mukangara, who was the Director of the Gender Centre and co-founder of the Tanzania Gender Network Programme (TGNP); Dr. Fidelis Mafumiko, who was the Coordinator of undergraduate Studies and Quality Assurance at Dar es Salaam University College of Education; and Dr. Mark Hamilton; Senior Lecturer, Dar es Salaam University College of Education. Dr. Hamilton is an American who was living and teaching in Tanzania. All of these individuals agreed to support me while I conducted my research; their collective insights about recruiting participants, following appropriate cultural norms, and how to collaborate with the campus community provided deep insights into how I would conduct my dissertation research.

I interviewed nine students during the pilot study; initially I met with a first-generation woman and her friend, a non-first generation woman. While speaking with both of them I discovered their perceptions of the role of women in society. The non-first-generation woman agreed to meet with me again and to bring two additional friends.

When the four of us met, a week later, I felt comfortable asking questions that I perceived to be riskier. I was also able to solicit feedback from these students about my study and the questions I wanted to ask. Meeting with one student on more than one occasion solidified my interest in the snowball method of sampling. That individual not only served as a gatekeeper, but she provided context for the other women and proved that with continued contact I would be able to build a relationship with these students. The five other women I interviewed were all first-generation women. I interviewed them one time, in a group setting. I had never met any of the women before talking with them and this experience allowed me to understand the differences in conducting an interview with two or three participants, which was much more informal, than with five participants.

As a result of the pilot study, I learned that I would need to alter some of my language and slow my rate of speech during the interviews. I also discovered that it would be possible to conduct the interviews in English, but that my grasp of KiSwahili would need to be greatly enhanced to better understand cultural idioms and nuances. Overall, the pilot study provided me with the opportunity to practice my interviewing skills and to refine my questions and approach. The women gave me feedback on the types of questions I asked and they gave me direction for eliciting the information about their educational experiences.

Researcher's Perspective

While researcher subjectivity is a cornerstone of qualitative research, in an ethnography subjectivity is more closely aligned with the researcher's positionality. This requires that attention is directed beyond the individual or subjective self (Madison, 2005). Madison suggests that the researcher must pay attention to subjectivity and how it informs our interactions with those we are studying (2005). In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument and it is important to acknowledge biases and ethical considerations as it relates to the research.

As an American, the cultural norms and specifics of Tanzanian customs are mostly unfamiliar to me; using an ethnography afforded me the time and ability to learn about Tanzanian culture and values of the society. Additionally, as I learned Kiswahili, the national language, I continually uncovered societal meanings and cultural nuances that unfolded as I became more familiar with the language. Throughout this research, I employed “holistic, contextual, emic, etic, and nonjudgmental concepts...[that] boil down all the information, observations, interviews, theories, and patterns that emerge during fieldwork to produce a sense of culture” (Fetterman, 1998, p. 24). I was aware that I needed to suspend certain judgments and understand how I had been socialized in America. The fact that I had visited Tanzania previously and read a slice of literature on education in the country helped shape my view of the culture. Spending more time there, living and interacting with Tanzanians, and investing in the research participants exposed me to different cultural practices; this inevitably shaped my interactions with the research participants.

Paying close attention to both the emic and etic perspective allowed me to understand my own biases. Fetterman states the importance of the emic perspective, saying that, “the insider’s or native’s perspective of reality – is at the heart of most ethnographic research” (1998, p. 20). The emic lens takes into account reality and ensures that the research participants’ perspective is at the center of the research, clearly presenting situations and behaviors through their eyes. Contrasting the emic perspective is that of the etic, which identifies the researcher’s framework and explanation of the researcher (Morse, 1994). In essence, the etic view is that of the researcher. Morse focuses on the balance that needs to be created between the emic and etic perspectives, stating that, “both views help the ethnographer develop conceptual or theoretical interpretations” (1994, p. 166). During the pilot study, the topic of removing pregnant girls from secondary school came up; the women I interviewed thought it was a useful practice whereas I believed it constrained women’s access to education. However, I did

not challenge the participants, instead I listened and asked questions to better understand their perspective. In essence, the emic and etic perspectives collided, I am confident that I acknowledged both emic and etic views as they arose throughout the research. I was committed to presenting the emic view of the participants as I analyzed the data and wrote the findings of the study.

As Carspecken suggests, discovering one's own biases is important and will evolve throughout the study (1996). Previous trips to Tanzania afforded me the opportunity to consider my biases and to reflect on how I would handle these when I was living in Tanzania for an extended period of time. I recognize my value orientations, especially about the role of higher education in society and its potential to positively influence the lives of women. I also acknowledge my biases regarding the social roles of men and women and how they are treated differently regarding educational opportunities. These biases lead me to pay attention to the critical lens, the value orientation of the critical perspective acknowledges inequalities, injustices, and oppression in society given the relative privilege of one group over another (Carspecken, 1996). I also believed that the women I would interview would not be of the traditional college age and certainly not the 18-22 year old American norm. My pilot study revealed that the participants would likely have families, children, and additional community responsibilities. Additionally, I discovered that many students do not enroll for classes in consecutive semesters; rather they enroll when they can afford to attend.

Given these assumptions, my perspective was that access to university education is not easy, and students engage in a cost-benefit analysis regarding whether or not to pursue higher education. This is based on the idea that education leads to greater economic gains. In reality, higher education may or may not lead to immediate economic dividends in Tanzania. My belief about the role of women in society is that they should have the power and opportunity to pursue education – I recognize this is a fundamental framework guiding my research. I also realize the cultural differences between the

expectations of women in Tanzania and the evolution of women's roles as I grew up in America.

Ethnographies frequently lead to questioning institutions of knowledge and power; therefore, it was essential I follow ethical guidelines (Madison, 2005). Paying attention to the questions I asked, my intentions, the evolution of the research and my role as the researcher including my biases and assumptions heightened my ability to attempt the highest moral behavior.

Population and Sampling

This research took place at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's flagship institution. The University of Dar es Salaam evolved from an extension of the University of London during colonial times, to an independent institution in 1970 (Mudke, Cooksey, & Levey, 2003). The University was inextricably linked to the government through its governance structure. While the President of the country is no longer the President of the University, the initial ties between these two public entities provide evidence of higher education's role since the country's inception. Although Dar es Salaam is no longer Tanzania's capital it serves as the administrative and commercial center of the country (Tripp, 1997). Thus, the University of Dar es Salaam was an ideal location for this research to take place.

The University of Dar es Salaam began focusing on gender mainstreaming in the late 1990s when officials realized that women did not constitute even a quarter of the student body (Luhanga, 2009). By 1997 the University set up a Gender Dimensions Programme Committee that subsequently positively impacted the role of gender in policy across campus. By 2002 the University established a Students Gender Club and by 2006 the University Council passed the Gender Policy of UDSM and the Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy (Luhanga, 2009). Although the University did not address women's issues until the 1990s, it has quickly evolved setting up offices, policies, and scholarships to support women.

Although this research took place between September 2010 and February 2011, the most recent statistics about education are from the 2009-2010 academic year. During that time, women comprised 35.5% of all students enrolled in the 31 higher education institutions throughout Tanzania (BEST, 2010). The University of Dar es Salaam enrolled 16,064 students and 6,118 of them were women. At 38%, the University of Dar es Salaam enrolled slightly more females than the national average. The University of Dar es Salaam serves as a testament of the vision of the country's first President, Julius Nyerere; 'education for all' is a central component of its mission.

The criteria for this study required that participants be both women and first-generation students. These two requirements directly link to the overarching research questions. Contacts with faculty and individuals at both the Gender Centre and the College of Education served as a starting point for contacting research participants. The goal of this research was to have between 8 and 12 women that would be interviewed during the 2010 – 2011 academic year.

Before I arrived in Tanzania I secured permission from IRB at the University of Iowa, and applied for research clearance through COSTECH in Tanzania, and the Cooperation, Links, and Project Office at the University of Dar es Salaam. During my pilot study I navigated this same process and maintained contact with several key individuals who helped me as I gained clearance for the research.

I was selected for an Advanced KiSwahili language course funded through Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad (GPA), sponsored by the US Department of Education. I arrived in Arusha, Tanzania in June of 2010. I spent two months following a rigorous curriculum of KiSwahili written, spoken, and reading skills while living with a Tanzanian family. This time afforded me the opportunity to learn more about Tanzanian customs and to ask informal questions about women and education.

At the conclusion of the GPA program in August 2010, I moved to Dar es Salaam where the research was conducted. I was sponsored by the US Department of Defense on

a Boren Fellowship which afforded me the opportunity to live in Dar es Salaam for an extended period of time. I spent several weeks meeting with administrative contacts and gaining proper research clearances and the accompanying visa. In Tanzania, national elections take place every five years, and 2010 happened to be a year when the national elections took place. The elections were held on 31 October 2010; due to this fact, classes did not begin at the University until the second week in November. I spent the months of September and October taking a private KiSwahili course at the University of Dar es Salaam. Given that this was a break between academic years, most of the students had not returned to the University. At this time, the majority of students on campus were graduate students.

It was during this time when I met the woman who served as a gatekeeper for this research. Creswell suggests using a “*gatekeeper* or *key informant*” to aid in access to individuals or groups (2007, p. 71). In addition to an informant, I anticipated using emails, letters, and flyers to solicit research participants. However, during this time, my KiSwahili teacher, a woman who was finishing her Master’s degree, became one of my participants. She, in turn, served as the contact through which I met all of the research participants. During the pilot study in July of 2009, the snowball method of asking participants to suggest peers was successful; it allowed for participant familiarity with me, which resulted in deeper conversations. This method was used again during data collection.

Recruiting participants and interviewing them was a process that spanned from September 2010 through December 2010. The questionnaire in Appendix A was intended to be given to participants after they agreed to be part of the study. However, it ended up being given to the participants during the final interview. I discovered that if I gave the document to participants before we spent time talking, they did not feel comfortable enough with me to ask questions from the questionnaire. It served as a reference as I began analyzing the data. Understanding the background and general demographics of

the participants, including the region of Tanzania they came from and the number of siblings in their family helped me recall aspects of their identities. It should be noted that pseudonyms have been used for all participants to protect their identities.

A total of eight women were successfully recruited and agreed to participate in this study. I interviewed three other women one time each, but they did not respond to subsequent attempts to continue as participants; I have omitted their information from the results of this research. Three of the eight participants were graduate students and five of them were undergraduates. Sisto, the woman who served as my KiSwahili instructor during September and October, became my first participant; she introduced me to her graduate school colleagues, two of whom agreed to participate in my study. I interviewed these three graduate students during the months of September, October, and November. Because there were limited number of students on campus, I was not able to recruit all of my participants at that time.

Once classes started, I met several students through the Gender Centre, but given that my contact there, Dr. Fenella Mukangara, had been elected as a Member of Parliament during the October elections, I did not have a solid familiarity with these students. I met several individuals who shared their view of women's education with me informally through the Gender Centre. But it was Sisto who introduced me to five undergraduate students, all of whom agreed to take part in this study. The snowball method of recruiting participants worked seamlessly for this research. Again, their familiarity with her allowed them to feel comfortable talking with me. The specifics of how the data was collected will be explored in the next section.

Data Collection

The importance of living in Tanzania for 10 months cannot be understated. This resulted in an increased ability “to see the power of dominant ideas, values, and patterns of behavior in the way people walk, talk, dress, eat, and sleep” (Fetterman, 1998, p. 17). Carspecken (1996) suggests five stages for qualitative data collection. The preliminary

step, after identifying a social problem or group of people to research, is to brainstorm a list of broad and general questions related to the topic. My interview guide can be found in Appendix B.

Stage one involves being “as unobtrusive as possible within a social site to observe interactions” (Carspecken, 1996, p. 41). Given that I was one of the only ‘wazungu’, or white people on the University of Dar es Salaam campus, it was difficult to blend in, especially because the students were on their break and the campus consisted mostly of graduate students. I was able to observe students interactions and behaviors, but frequently I discovered that I was being observed in return. This stage involved starting a field journal, engaging in passive observations and finding venues for intensive observations (Carspecken, 1996). Fortunately, during both my pilot study and the while collecting the research I spent considerable time at the University of Dar es Salaam where I was able to observe and take field notes on the campus culture. I attended classes, met with various students, and spent time in the spaces occupied primarily by students. For example, almost all of the interviews took place at the ‘chai banda’ or canteen, one of many, that was located under the KiSwahili building on campus. I have included two pictures of the location where most of the interviews took place in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Location of Interviews



Stage two involved analyzing the primary record, reconstructing and expanding the initial meaning. This extended beyond the campus community. Specifically, I paid attention to social interactions and the norms of a specific setting; for example, how women acted on campus compared to how they act in the fish market or while riding public transportation.

Paying attention to my field notes from the first step and organizing them so they made sense laid the foundation for understanding more about women at the University of Dar es Salaam. Additionally, this is when I recognized power relations and various types of authority (Carspecken, 1996). I specifically noted the roles that men play in commerce, contrasted with where I saw women engaging in business endeavors. This became clearer as I observed interactions and behaviors both on and off campus.

Stage three consisted of the interviews; the interview questions in Appendix B provided a starting point for learning about aspects of their social identity, their view of cultural norms, and policy implications they experienced. I refined these questions based on the pilot study; they also changed slightly as I spent more time interviewing participants. For example, the role of confidence was not initially on my radar as a specific concept which I should investigate. However, it came up early in the interview process and presented itself as a main theme throughout the research. Having the opportunity to interview women during the pilot study allowed me to reflect and re-frame the questions so I was able to ask them in a manner allowing the participants a better opportunity to share their stories. The initial questions were designed to start a conversation and probe deeper into understanding various topics. Carspecken also suggests having a list of follow-up questions that are a bit more concrete (1996). Employing this semi-structured interview protocol more than once with each research participant served as the foundation for both breadth and depth of information gained.

Ethnographers use interviewing as the foundation of understanding their participants and their respective culture (Madison, 2005). The interviews generally

followed a back-and-forth of asking questions which frequently evolved into a more fluid conversation about the educational experiences of the research participants. The general approach of starting with socially acceptable broad questions lead to more specific questions about the participant and her views and experiences on access to education for women.

With the permission of the participants, all of the interviews were recorded. I interviewed all participants three times, with the exception of Sisto who I interviewed four times. Unfortunately, with one participant, an interview did not record, therefore the only evidence of that interview are my notes after the interview. Each interview lasted between 30 minutes to an hour, with most interviews tending to go on for at least 45 minutes. During my first introduction to each participant, I explained the purpose of the study, obtained informed consent for participation, and provided an opportunity for questions. Occasionally, the first meeting turned into an interview. Other times, the initial introduced was established just to provide information and recruit the participant.

Using open-ended questions, each round of interviews focused on topics identified in the literature concerning either first-generation students' access to higher education or women's pursuit of education. Generally, the first interview consisted of questions about daily routine during primary and secondary school. This allowed me to understand the social roles these women played before and after school and how much time they allotted to studying. Further, I was able to ascertain information about family background including the number of siblings and their educational level, the role of parents or other adults living with the family and their respective ideas about education. It was also during this interview that I learned about the region the woman came from and her educational trajectory, specifically whether she attended public or private school.

In addition to asking follow up questions from the first interview, the second interview allowed me to ask about role models, both within the local community and at the national level. It was also at this time when I asked each participant about her peers,

teachers, and the subjects she enjoyed studying. It was often during the second interview when the topic of teenage pregnancy came up. Further, the role of women in society was broached; often this led to a conversation about the intersection of marriage and education. This is significant because four of the eight participants are married. The role of marriage in Tanzanian culture cannot be understated. The women shared that marriage is the main way for women to gain their sense of identity; all of the participants confirmed this through their statements about how they viewed marriage.

I began the third round of interviews by asking each woman to fill out the questionnaire found in Appendix A. Most participants had questions about the form which led to an organic conversation about either her motivation for pursuing education or her desires after finishing with her schooling. During the final interview I also asked each participant to explain her educational experiences using three words or sentences. This was done to encourage the participants to focus on a few key adjectives describing her education. This question proved to be difficult for the participants. However, proverbs are frequently used in Swahili culture and I asked each woman if there was a proverb or two that she heard repeatedly during her youth that influenced her education or motivated her. The women enthusiastically shared proverbs that encouraged them or that they used to describe the meaning of education. This line of questioning was a great way to capture each participant's overall view of education. I attempted to schedule the interviews one week apart from each other. In essence, I would meet with a participant for three or four consecutive weeks. This allowed for maximum familiarity and allowed me to have a high retention rate.

The next step in Carspecken model is examining "the relationship between the social site of focused interest and other specific social sites" (1996, p. 42). Meeting friends, family, or community members provided a greater context of the research participant's social relationships and provided greater depth to what had previously been collected. For example, I spent three days in Sisto's remote village for her wedding send-

off, a traditional event that takes place whereby a bride and groom formally announce their intention to marry one another. This provided greater awareness of her background and life in a rural area, and allowed me to become familiar with some of the struggles the remainder of my participants described. I continuously engaged with various members of the community to better grasp their view of my research topic. Casual conversations about women and education occurred almost daily during the 10 months I lived in Tanzania; these happened in coffee shops, local 'dukas' or shops, with my Swahili translator, on the 'daladala' bus system, and in other places. It seems as though every person I met was eager to share his or her view of women's access to education in Tanzania. The role of women and women's education was also prominently featured in newspapers, on the radio, and even on television shows. During the national elections, education and women's education became a focal point for politicians. Additionally, the National Exam results are widely published and served as a way to gauge education in society.

The fifth stage is when the focus turned to the participants' view of educational opportunities for women in Tanzania (Carspecken, 1996). The foundation of this stage is the voice of the research participants. It was imperative to match my field notes with their words and stories, focusing on the emic perspective. The research slowly evolved throughout the intensive data collection process.

Trustworthiness

Carspecken (1996) outlines a model for academic rigor providing the foundation for each of the five stages and adding to the validity of an ethnography. After each of the five stages, the concepts are revisited and explored more in depth to ensure the researcher is making sense of what is being uncovered. I continuously revisited my field notes and talked to research participants and other Tanzanians about what I had read in the local newspapers or heard on the radio for consistency. This also served as a form of triangulation, whereby one source of information was tested against another "to strip

away alternative explanations” (Fetterman, 1998, p. 83). Further, I gathered educational statistics on female presence in the classroom, teacher preparation, teenage pregnancy and other topics that surfaced during the interviews. This allowed me to achieve a more holistic picture of the role and value of education and women’s place in Tanzania.

Between 2008 and 2011, I visited Tanzania four times and spent over 13 months in country. My time in Tanzania during the dissertation research was a little over 10 months. While this is a considerable amount of time to gain exposure to cultural norms, as an outsider I can never be fully knowledgeable about the customs or motivation behind certain behavioral patterns. Although I asked clarifying questions about mores, I was not socialized in the same way as my participants. I understood cultural concepts the women explained to me, but they are not ideas which are embedded in how I think or act. I did take time to read about, consider, and ask clarifying questions to better understand the view of my participants and members of Tanzanian society.

I transcribed each interview before conducting the subsequent interview with each participant. This allowed me to ask follow-up or clarifying questions about a concept or topic I may have missed or misunderstood. The majority of the interviews were conducted in English; however, I explained to all of the participants that they were free to use Kiswahili if they needed. Several of the participants alternated between English and Kiswahili, some of them would start speaking in Kiswahili and repeat their statement in English. When I finished the Kiswahili language program in Arusha in August, I tested at the ‘Advanced Low’ level. I was able to understand what the women were communicating and was also able to use Kiswahili to ask questions if a participant did not understand in English. I met with a Kiswahili tutor, who had worked as a translator for UNESCO, he helped me translate the sections of my interviews that I was unable to differentiate. I also had him validate the sections I had translated on my own. In an effort to be consistent, and because Kiswahili was used sparingly – only five quotes in the Findings Chapter, I have used only English in the final document. Included in Appendix

D is one of the original interview transcriptions. I have used one with the Kiswahili included and the English translation.

After each set of interviews, I printed and read through the transcriptions before meeting with each participant one final time. The final meeting served as a ‘member check’ whereby I presented the main points the participant had shared with me and asked the participant to confirm that I had accurately captured what she stated. This process of ‘member checking’ helps ensure trustworthiness. Capturing the participants’ experiences is at the core of this research and providing them with the opportunity to identify discrepancies aids in the validity of this study.

In order to give a voice to the participants and to add to the validity of ethnographic research, Morse (1994) suggests peppering the finished product with direct quotes. Using direct quotes leads to a thicker description of the information that was collected during the interviews. Providing data consistent with itself in terms of themes, participant values, and ideas lends greater credibility to my portrayal of what was conveyed during the interviews. The Findings Chapter is rich with the voices of the research participants.

Qualitative research is grounded in human instrumentation as the primary research tool. Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggest credibility is enhanced when the researcher maintains awareness of biases and assumptions. Throughout the research process, I engaged in consistent self-reflection regarding how I was interacting with the participants and paid attention to how the interviews evolved. Because I transcribed the interviews as I moved through the research process I was able to listen to my tone of voice or how I phrased questions to ensure that I did not communicate any judgment and was open with the responses of the participants.

Data Analysis

Using a traditional approach of data analysis affords the study maximum validity. Morse notes that when using ethnographic research, “the analysis process starts very

early in the data collection and continues throughout the project” (1994, p. 180). I conducted a set of interviews with the three graduate students beginning in September and spanning through November. I then met with the five undergraduate students between the end of November through January. This allowed me to pay close attention to each of the ideas that the women presented in our conversations and interactions. Transcribing the interviews while still ‘in the field’ created the opportunity to understand more about the participants and their culture; it also allowed me to go back and ask questions when I found discrepancies or needed more clarification. Along with my field notes, I kept a methodological journal that aided in my awareness of how the study evolved.

I pulled forth main concepts presented during the research, putting them into codes after finishing each full set of interviews. Madison states that, “coding and logging data is the process of *grouping together themes and categories that you have accumulated in the field*” (2005, p. 36). This style of data analysis allows maximum validity, focusing on both the emic and etic perspective during the interviews and translations. Utilizing this approach I listened for language patterns and ideas. Additionally, using data “from both participation observation and informal or more structured interviewing” maximized my understanding of what happened during the interviews as I was able to see the roles women play in society (Morse, 1994, p. 180).

Carspecken (1996) suggests using both low-level codes and high-level codes as a way to distinguish between concrete and abstract ideas deduced from the primary record, i.e. the interviews. Low-Level codes rely on direct language taken from an interview; they are generally objective because they are close to literal codes. High-level coding is based on more abstract concepts or ideas. High-level codes reflect something other than the interviews and this is where I relied on my field notes. For example, some of the women I interviewed spoke specifically about their parents’ views of them pursuing higher education, but they also made references to cultural challenges they experienced.

The views of their parents are considered low-level codes and the general cultural issues are considered high-level codes. The high-level codes may reflect previous studies, my observations, policy statements, or other stimulus in society. The Findings chapter makes use of low-level codes only. I use participant language to explain themes I found throughout the interviews and within the culture. The idea of high-level codes was used as I decided what was the most relevant material to present in the Findings chapter.

As I analyzed the data, I came up with 17 codes based on concepts presented in the interviews. These have been condensed to three main subject areas with several sub-findings which will be presented in the next chapter. In the next section I will introduce the participants and present background information on each of them.

Overview of Participants

In total, eight women took part in this study. The participants ranged in age from 21 to 41. Of the eight women, five are pursuing a Bachelor's degree, one is finishing her Master's degree and hoping to continue with a doctoral degree, and two are at the final stages of their doctoral studies. Four of the eight participants are married and of those, three have children. The eight women come from seven different regions of Tanzania and they all describe their hometowns as rural. Although they shared their hometowns with me, for simplicity and to preserve anonymity, I will only refer to regions of the country. A map of these regions has been provided in Appendix E.

All interviews were conducted between September 2010 and January 2011. During this time, each participant was interviewed between two and four times with an additional meeting for a member check, whereby participants were given the opportunity to change, correct, or add any information to their overall profile. The following section provides basic background information on each of the participants, from oldest to youngest, and gives a brief overview of their respective educational experiences. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the privacy of the participants. Appendix F is a shortened table of the information below.

Lucy

Lucy comes from a rural background in the Kilimanjaro region in Northern Tanzania, which is at the base of Mount Kilimanjaro. Lucy is the oldest child in a family of seven children and she attended public school throughout her education; her O level studies, Form 1 through Form 4, were completed at an all girls school. Lucy is the only child of seven children to reach university level. The very first experience Lucy shared was about a primary school teacher who played a big role in encouraging her to pursue education. When Lucy was in Standard 7, this teacher approached her and asked to speak to her parents. He explained to Lucy's mom that he felt Lucy was a bright girl and he wanted to see her continue to secondary school. During that time, Lucy's father was in Kenya and both of her parents struggled to find the money to send her to secondary school. Lucy's parents had to borrow money in order to pay for her secondary school fees, most of this borrowed money came from one of Lucy's uncles. Her parents were initially hesitant to send Lucy to secondary school because they were not sure of the outcome of her education. She says they quickly changed their minds and "came to accept that 'a girl can do wonders'" (personal communication, 20 October 2010).

Lucy credits much of her educational persistence to her teacher. She has even considered writing a book about her teacher titled, *Kama Si Mwalimu Huyu (If Not For That Teacher)*. Lucy stated several times that the interest her teacher took in her studies served as the foundation for her confidence. Throughout our time together she talked about the importance of confidence for young women and how it has the possibility to positively impact girls' education. When she arrived at Form 1, in secondary school, Lucy found the environment of the all girls' school overwhelming, but she recalled the teacher who instilled confidence in her and she claims that gave her courage to continue.

Lucy referenced an aunt, who was four years older than she, as a role model. Her aunt was pursuing secondary school when Lucy was still in primary school and Lucy recalls being given a science book and vividly remembers seeing pictures of a Bunsen

Burner. Lucy enjoyed studying science subjects in secondary school but after missing several weeks of classes in Form 3, due to a health issue, she was not able to catch up and she began studying languages; English, French, and Kiswahili.

Lucy also talked about how her Catholic background helped positively impact her educational pursuits. She claims her religion helped keep her focused; she believed sex before marriage was a sin and that helped prevent her from becoming a victim of teenage pregnancy. She also talked about the supportive environment she had during secondary school, in her O level studies. She claims that the environment allowed each student to practice her own religion and there was time for worship everyday.

At the time of our interviews, Lucy was 41 years old, married with two children, and pursuing a PhD. She expressed gratitude for a husband who is both financially supportive and emotionally encouraging of her pursuing a PhD. She claims that for most of her life, her education was more important than marriage. Lucy believes that education made her who she is today and when asked to use a metaphor to describe education, she said 'Elimu ni Bahari', education is like the sea (personal communication, 11 November 2010). She expanded by stating that in the sea one is able to catch a lot of fish, and the importance of being in the ocean to catch the fish was as important as being in the classroom in order to continue getting more education (personal communication, 1 November 2010).

Pascalina

Pascalina grew up in Tanga region, in the Northern Highlands where she was raised in a Muslim family, although she is now a Christian. Her father had three wives and 18 children. Pascalina lived with her mom and her 5 brothers and sisters. Although her mom had no formal education, she encouraged Pascalina to pursue education, explaining that people could take away property, but they could never take away her education. Pascalina's mom died when she was in Standard 7 and her older sister served as her role model and source of support.

Pascalina's father was very negative about educating the children, especially the female children. He believed that educating girls was akin to throwing money away. Of his 18 children, only Pascalina and her sister have progressed beyond secondary school. She claims that her father is proud of her and her sister and views women's education differently now than he did when she was growing up.

Pascalina finished her primary school in Tanga and then attended her O level education in Mwanza region, and A level education in Iringa region. All of her education was completed in public schools. She believes if she would have stayed in Tanga for secondary school, she would not have progressed as far as she has. Further, she did not consider pursuing a university education until she was in A level. A few teachers and their support influenced her interest in certain subjects, namely art subjects. She also believes that Kiswahili is a better medium of instruction than English, this is based on her experience with her peers who corrected their teachers' English. This topic was also the focus of her Master's thesis.

Pascalina is 33 years old and married with two children. She has two Master's degrees and is currently pursuing a PhD. Her husband encourages her studies but does not support her financially. When asked for a metaphor to describe her education she stated, 'Elimu ni Mwanga', education is light. She further explained that education helped her open her mind and come to discover new information.

Sisto

Sisto comes from Kagera region which is located on the West side of Tanzania, near the Ugandan border. Sisto's parents died when she was one year old and at that time she and her only sibling, an older sister, became orphans. Sisto claims that after her parents' death, her relatives took advantage of the property that should have belonged to her and her sister and that she did not receive any support from those relatives. Sisto moved to several homes with various relatives before the age of nine. In order to finance her primary school education, Sisto sold goods. Sisto did not attend Standard 3, instead

she took care of her sick Aunt whom she was living with at the time; the Aunt died before Sisto began Standard 4.

Outside of teachers, Sisto did not see any female role models in her village. Sisto struggled for resources in primary school and claimed the school environment was not always conducive for learning. Sisto used to sit on dried grasses on the floor during her primary school because the classrooms were overly crowded. The pictures in Figures 2 and 3 were taken while visiting Sisto's village. A new school building is slated to open in 2011. In Figure 3, the bottle tops and pieces of straw are being used in a Standard 1 classroom to help the students learn math.

Figure 2. One of Sisto's Classrooms and Outside of Sisto's School

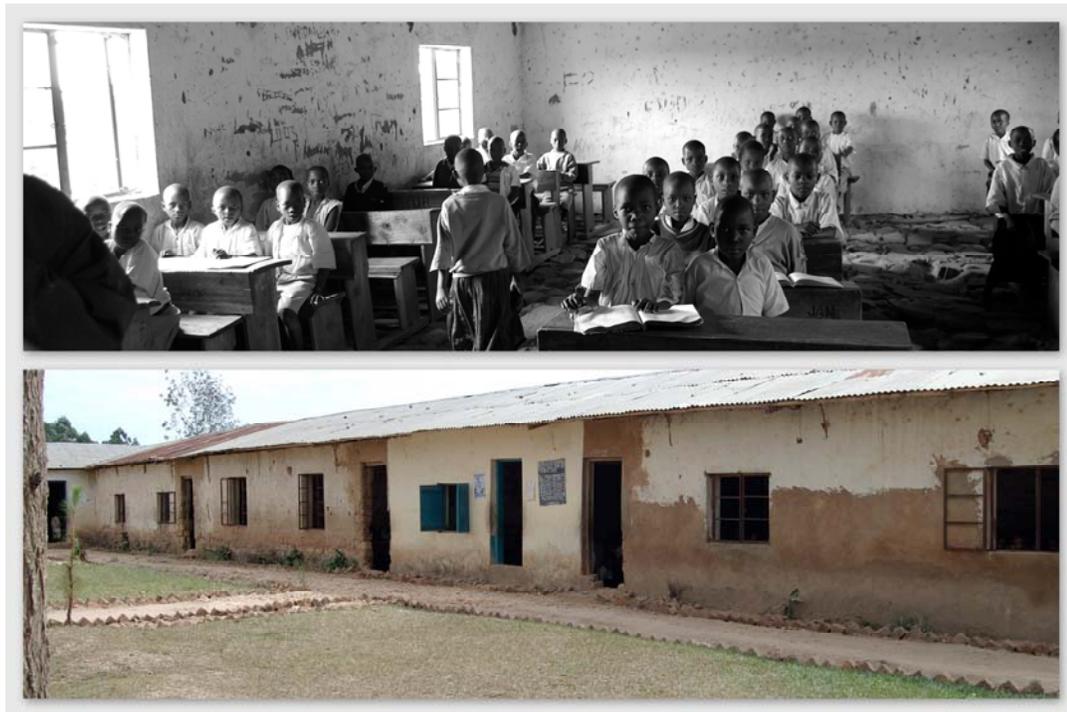


Figure 3. Images from Sisto's Primary School in Kagera Region



Sisto believes the difficulties she passed through, especially during primary school gave her confidence and motivated her to continue; she said her focus was always on education and not the hardships she was encountering. Although Sisto did not have any female role models, she had one uncle who encouraged her to go to secondary school and pursue her education. Sisto's sister did not progress beyond primary school and Sisto's secondary school fees were paid for by a small, now defunct, organization in her village that specialized in helping orphans of AIDS victims. Sisto attended O level education in Kagera region, where she had to travel at least 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) each way to get to school. She was accepted to an A level school in the Pwani Region along the East coast of Tanzania, which had a dormitory for students not from the area. Because the journey between her A level school and home would take her well over two days by bus, she would often stay with different teachers during the holidays. Of the 38 students in her Form 6 class, only seven continued to University. Of those seven students,

three were women. Sisto experienced many of her female peers leaving school because of teenage pregnancy.

Sisto was married in November of 2010, while she was participating in this study. She has just finished her Master's degree and she is applying for PhD studies; she is currently 28 years old. When asked about educational metaphors, she stated that "Elimu ni Vita! Kwa wanawake, ni vita!", Education is war! For women, it is war! (personal communication, 14 October 2010). She started by explaining the lack of support women get in terms of their education and then continued by explaining all of the hardships women face as they move through the educational system – including challenges at the university level.

Zaituni

Zaituni is from a small village in the Singida region, which is located in central Tanzania. Zaituni is the fifth born of eight children and her family is Muslim. Her father died when she was very young and her mother encouraged her in her educational pursuits. Of her older brothers and sisters, Zaituni is the first child to be selected for secondary school. Her mom died just before she began secondary school, at that time her older siblings discouraged her from continuing with school. It was her younger brother who encouraged her and supported her education in secondary school. During her studies in Form 1, Zaituni encountered financial difficulties but she went to the Executive Officer in her ward and was able to get help with school fees. She encountered financial difficulty again during Form 3 and Form 4. At that time, her brother advised her to talk to someone at the District level. She pursued this individual and received help with her school fees so she could continue studying.

Zaituni noted an absence of older women in her community that could serve as role models to her. She and her younger sister were encouraged only by their younger brothers. Zaituni is from a small village and in this rural area she experienced issues with a lack of materials and poorly prepared teachers. Zaituni did not pass her Form 4 exams

and did not immediately continue studying at the A level. Instead, she received a teaching certificate and moved to Dar es Salaam to teach. After teaching for three years, she hired a private tutor and studied for the Form 6 exam in the evenings. After passing the Form 6 exam, she continued to the University level.

Zaituni is currently 29 years old, she is married with two children. She credits both the financial and emotional support of her husband, who is a teacher, to her ability to balance a family life and school. She is currently in her third and final year of her Bachelor's degree. When asked about a proverb that motivated her, Zaituni replied, "Mchumia juani hulia kivulini", the one who reaps from the sun will enjoy eating in the shade (personal communication, 27 December 2010). She explained that she has struggled to attain her education but, even though her life is still difficult, she enjoys what she has now.

Grace

Grace is the first born of four children; she is originally from Dodoma region, in central Tanzania but she went to Kigoma region in the far western part of Tanzania for both primary school and O level, both of which were at public schools. During that time she lived with her grandma. During O level it would take her an hour and a half to travel from her grandmother's home to school. Grace failed her Form 4 exams, but her family encouraged her to repeat Form 4 and try again. Grace described the difference between good teachers and bad teachers, stating that good teachers were the ones who participated in the classroom as both teachers and learners. Grace enjoyed studying French but she had a French teacher who was cruel to her, so she stopped taking the subject. Grace believes that students in rural areas face many more challenges than students in urban areas, specifically issues with poor materials and unprepared teachers. Although Grace stated that her family was supportive of her education, she also described the pressure to work at the family store in the evenings. She explained that in order to avoid working in her parent's shop, she would stay late at school and study there.

Grace is currently 25 years old and finishing her third and final year of her Bachelor's degree. After completing this degree she would like to work for a few years and find a sponsor so she can return to complete her Master's degree. Her parents encouraged her to continue with her studies and not get married at a young age. When asked for a metaphor or proverb to describe her education, Grace said "Elimu ni bahari", education is like the sea; Grace explained that, to her, education is like the sea because it has no end.

Festo

Festo is the oldest and only female of five children. She is from a small town in Iringa region, which is located in central Tanzania. All of her education was done in public schools in Iringa and her A level studies were done at an all girls school. Festo's dad is an accountant and he paid for her school; at a young age he promised her that as long as she studied hard and progressed through school he would find the money to support her up to the University level. In primary school it took Festo between 45 minutes and one hour to commute from home to school. Festo is a Christian and she cited the Christian Ambassador Fellowship Tanzania (CASFETA) as an organization that helped provide her with information about gaining access to education. Further, she was involved in the Tanzania Youth Ministries (TAYOMI). She cites her involvement in these groups as helping her with her discipline and she says religion is the single most important factor that encouraged her to continue with her education. Festo was able to identify two female role models who encouraged her education, the wife of one of her headmasters and a woman from church, who advised young girls on how to move forward with their education.

During her O level experience, she studied chemistry, biology, and agriculture but her grades were not satisfactory, so she switched to study history, geography, and Kiswahili. During her O level education she liked to sit in the first or second row of her classes so she could focus and would not be distracted by her classmates.

Festo was accepted to three universities but she chose the University of Dar es Salaam based on the strength of its educational program. She is 23 years old and in her third and final year of studying education but she would like to study sociology. She was accepted to the sociology program at another institution, but she believes there are more job opportunities in education. Festo feels pressure to get a job and support her younger brothers when she graduates. Festo believes strongly that to get education, one needs discipline, tolerance, and awareness. When asked about a proverb that motivated Festo, she said “Muvilivu kula mbivu”, the tolerant one will eat the fruits (personal communication, 30 December 2010). Festo explained that she passed through many difficulties in school, but that she knows one day she will eat the ripe fruits and benefit from her discipline.

Dotto

Dotto is from the Southwestern region of Mbeya. She is the second of five children and she is Catholic, but she says her religion did not impact her education either positively or negatively. She attended both primary and secondary school in Mbeya region. Her primary school was public, her O level school was an all girls private school, and during A level she attended public school. During her primary school it would take her between 40 minutes and one hour to walk from home to school. A teacher in Standard 7 encouraged her to continue with her studies; he was also a neighbor and saw how hard she would study at home. During her O level studies the headmistress encouraged her to study and stay away from boys.

She is the first child in her family to go to A level and now to attend university. During her time in A level, Form 6, her dad, who is a farmer, had problems with crops and was not able to pay all of her school fees. She approached the headmaster and after showing him her test scores, he allowed her to continue with her education without paying the fees. Dotto did not have good experiences with teachers in A level; she said she would prefer to ask the boys in her class questions about the subject material rather

than approach the teachers, who were all male except for one who Dotto claims did not like female students. Dotto enjoyed studying geography, Kiswahili, and history, but not math.

Dotto is 22 years old and in her first year of her studies. She is motivated to get a Bachelor's degree so she can have a better life; she does not want to be poor like her family. She is interested in pursuing an MBA after she finishes her Bachelor's degree. She feels confident at the university level because she believes boys and girls are treated equally, an experience she did not have during her A level education. When asked to use a proverb to describe her education she said "Haraka, haraka, haina baraka" which is loosely translated as, those who move quickly do not get blessings (personal communication, 11 January 2011). Dotto explained that, to her, this meant that she needed to be patient while moving through her education.

Mariam

Mariam is also from the Mbeya region and she completed all of her studies before university in Mbeya region. Her primary school and O level education was completed at a public school, but she attended a private, girls only school for A level. Mariam is the youngest of five children and the only girl. None of her older brothers attended school beyond the primary school level. Her brothers did not encourage her to study and they are jealous of her education; however, Mariam did receive encouragement from both of her parents, especially her mom. She believes her mom was so supportive of her education because her dad (Mariam's grandfather) did not believe in women getting education.

During both primary school and O level it took her an hour each way to get to and from school. Her parents could not afford the A level school fees and her uncle sponsored her education. Mariam's uncle died before she began her university education and she worried about who would help her with tuition. Mariam believes that most Tanzanian families support boys' education more than girls' but her family is different. Mariam talked about two teachers who encouraged her to pursue her education, a teacher in Form

3 and one in Form 6. Mariam saw boys pursuing education and she realized, if she worked hard, she could be like them.

Mariam is 21 years old and in her first year of studies. When asked to describe her education with a proverb, Mariam said “Elimu ni ufunguo maisha”, education is the key to life (personal communication, 11 January 2011). She explained that education can help open one’s mind and that education is needed by individuals to become independent.

Conclusion

I selected ethnography in order to fully understand the experiences of first-generation college women. Combined, the social, religious, and cultural history of Tanzania intersects with economic considerations regarding women obtaining higher education (Petrides, 1998). The methodology and analysis plan presented in this chapter mirror similar research conducted on women’s education in developing countries. The results will hopefully add to our understanding of first-generation women at the University of Dar es Salaam and how they confront and overcome obstacles to attending higher education.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

Introduction

As a result of this study, several themes emerged regarding first-generation women and their access to higher education in Tanzania. These findings can be grouped under three main areas: strategies for success, emotional and financial support, and women and education as investments. Participants became successful in their educational pursuits by finding motivational strategies, which included: avoiding social pressure, staying committed to their academics, and finding confidence in their abilities. Further, these participants referenced the importance of emotional and financial support by defining the difference between support and encouragement, and how they sought to find a balance of both through role models and navigating various relationships. Finally, these women credited their ability to attain education because they were motivated by the fact that they were viewed as financial investments, usually by their families. Simultaneously they viewed their education as an investment in their futures. This chapter will explore each of these concepts that answer the research questions posed for this study.

Strategies for Success

The women who took part in this study credited their ability to pursue education to finding and implementing strategies for success. These ideas have been grouped together based on three main areas: how the women described their social lives and pressures, how they viewed and treated their academic pursuits, and the confidence they discovered throughout their education. Each of these areas will be explored in more detail in this section.

Avoiding Social Temptation

The participants clearly identified their abilities to avoid certain social temptations as one of the strategies for pursuing education. Teenage pregnancy was mentioned repeatedly. The women feared getting pregnant because, as they explained, it would

mean the end of their educational pursuits. Further, they felt it was important to stay single and not focus on romantic relationships that might take them off track of furthering their education.

Teenage Pregnancy

“Because when you get pregnant then it means no more school.”

The participants claimed both explicitly and implicitly, that the notion of teenage pregnancy influenced their paths to higher education. Although students who become pregnant have the right to continue with their education, the participants in this study did not agree that the current practice is to allow girls to remain in school. I asked many of them about the role of teenage pregnancy as women pursued education and several of them shared stories of their friends or siblings who dealt with this issue. Some of those stories will be included here briefly to help illustrate how teenage pregnancy is viewed by these participants.

Several of the participants talked about their families' unwillingness to send girls to school because of the threat of pregnancy. Pascalina shared that one of the reasons her dad was negative about sending girls to school was because of this issue. She claims he saw daughters of other men getting pregnant when they continued with their schooling and that changed his view of his daughters continuing with their studies (13 November 2010). Sisto cited the shame that some families feel as a reason that students who get pregnant drop out of school; she claimed that “the parents they feel ashamed therefore they are going to stop you from going to school” (personal communication, 22 September 2010). Dotto was much more casual when she broached the topic of teenage pregnancy. She never blatantly stated that it is an issue, but she brought it up in more than one interview and she claimed that women who get pregnant stay at home and do not continue with their education (personal communication, 15 & 27 December 2010).

Lucy credited her ability to avoid teenage pregnancy to her religion, even though she did not receive any information about reproduction in school, she said, “I think what

helped me a lot was, ah, religious faith. (laughs) I knew from the right, that, when I do this it is a sin. Ok? So, I am not in the position of doing this...until I become an adult” (personal communication, 27 October 2010). To Lucy, the reality is that teenage pregnancy only impacts women and that the males who impregnate these women are not held accountable (personal communication, 20 October 2010). Lucy also shared the impact that teenage pregnancy had on her little sister who became pregnant after Form 2; once her sister became pregnant she left school, “because when you get pregnant then it means no more school” (personal communication, 11 November 2010).

It is important to keep in mind that, at the time of these interviews, Lucy was 41 years old and working on a PhD. Festo, on the other hand, was 23 years old and finishing her final year as an undergraduate. In more than one interview, Festo expressed that the current policy is to remove a young woman from school if she is pregnant (personal communication, 16 December & 20 December 2010). However, Festo had a friend who was pregnant but who returned to complete her studies, “she was getting pregnant at Form 2 level, but her parents, her parents allowed her to return to school” (personal communication, 20 December 2010). In essence, Festo believed that the policy is to remove girls who become pregnant, but she knew a woman who was pregnant and allowed to return to school.

Zaituni, who taught for three years before continuing at the university level, also shared a story about a young girl she taught in Standard 7 who became pregnant:

The girl was sent back home, but when the exam reached, she was to come back to school to take the exam. Can you imagine? After 6 or 7 months she was not there in the class? Do you think she make good? She failed! (personal communication, 16 December 2010).

Pascalina, Zaituni, and Lucy shared their views about how difficult it is to secure an operational policy for how schools should handle education regarding preventing teenage pregnancy. It should be noted that all three women are married, each with two children. Pascalina believed that women should be taught about how to prevent teenage

pregnancy in education, whereas Zaituni does not. Pascalina said, “I see if you take her to school it means you can educate her about even the way she can protect herself” (personal communication, 13 November 2010). Zaituni, on the other hand claimed, “according to our culture...it is something which is not good to tell your girl that “this is the way of preventing the pregnancy.” It means you tell her - go and do such a thing” (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Lucy lands in the middle and captures the debate that is happening with leadership in Parliament about the issue. She claimed that some leaders believe it is important to educate girls so they can continue, which is similar to Pascalina’s perspective; while others say that if you education her about prevention, you are giving young students permission to engage in sexual activities, which is in line with the point made by Zaituni (Lucy, personal communication, 27 October 2010).

It is important to understand the women’s views of how to handle education and prevention about teenage pregnancy because this is an issue that hinders women’s ability to pursue education. These women communicated their desire to avoid getting pregnant because they had fears that they would be removed from school. Teenage pregnancy is a difficult issue in Tanzania because, as is evidenced by what these women communicated, it causes discrimination against women while there are no repercussions for men.

Staying Single

“Don’t follow men, men is not good.”

Several of the women expressed their desire to get married because of the cultural role they are expected to play in society; however, they also wanted to pass secondary school before getting married. These women, coming from rural backgrounds, witnessed many of their female peers and siblings getting married at a young age. They shared that, if they would have chosen to get married during primary or secondary school, it would have been in lieu of continuing with their education. For many of them it was a choice to delay marriage, specifically so they could continue to study.

When sharing information about her peers who chose to get married instead of continuing with their education, Dotto verbalized she was waiting to get married; when asked why, she responded:

You know that according to poor life which I live with my family, for me I am...I am like to study, after study when I get good life, it can help me and my family. When I am marriage, I cannot continue to study, because most of them, they have poor family like our parent. Me, I don't like to live poor family like my parent. I want to improve my parent, my family” (personal communication, 15 December 2010).

Here, Dotto clearly communicated that if she is married she cannot continue to study because of the role she would be expected to play in the home. There is no time for her to go to school and take care of domestic issues. Additionally, she articulated that her motivation for studying was to avoid being poor. She believed if she married her educational efforts would be thwarted and she would remain poor. Dotto also had external encouragement from a headmistress in O level who told her:

Please continue to study hard and be like me. Don't follow men, men is not good. It can disturb your life. It can make your life bad. Be as me...if you study hard and you are at university you can get good man, he marries you, you have your own rights (personal communication, 15 December 2010).

In essence, Dotto had a positive message of continuing with education delivered to her and she choose education to lift herself out of poverty. She also heard the message that if she waited to get married she would have her own rights.

Sisto, who was orphaned at the age of one and who was married while enrolled in this study, also shared the importance of education over marriage as it related to her economic situation, but she did not have the same encouragement from members of her community as Dotto. Sisto explained that she resisted listening to the people in her village who encouraged her to get married instead of continue with her studies, “I didn't listen to anybody, that a woman needs to be married, not to study. I could not listen to that! And I had no chance to involve in love affairs. I had not that chance!” (personal communication, 14 October 2010).

Sisto continued in the same interview by explaining that she needed to focus on herself and meeting her own needs instead of focusing on marriage. She was motivated to stay focused on education to change her economic status “Even to think about marriage...I don't think about that. I don't have even the soap to wash my body. Anybody can love me? I was not focusing about something, marriage. I was focusing on how can I come out of this situation?!” (personal communication, 14 October 2010). Sisto clearly did not feel as though she was able to engage in activities outside of her education, partially because she was determined to use education as a way to change her financial status.

While Dotto and Sisto referenced the idea of avoiding marriage, Grace shared an experience with a man she knew during her A level studies:

He wanted to marry me (giggles) and I, he was praying for me to fail [National Exams] ... because I was a student and he wanted to marry me ... It was not my dream, my expectation was just to continue to study until when I get my own works and get married (personal communication, 27 December 2010).

Similar to Dotto, Grace acknowledged the importance of marriage but not until she reaches a certain point in her life. By the time she reached A level studies, Grace knew the importance of continuing with her education. In a previous interview Grace mentioned that she was supported by her family “they encouraging me to study, not to engage in other, other issues. For example, getting marriage, they don't like that, they just want me to study, to complete my studies” (personal communication, 16 December 2010). It is evident here that Grace’s desire to focus on education was partially derived from her family, but that she was also able to clearly identify what could have happened if she would have failed her National Exams and chosen to get married.

For Lucy, who is now married with two children and pursuing a PhD, the decision to wait to get married was intentional. She shared the decision she made to pursue education instead of marriage, “I think more important is education, because getting married is important at a certain age, when you reach a certain age is when you say 'oh

marriage, now is important'. But, um, getting education it will help you to live better in your marriage” (personal communication, 11 November 2010).

Lucy, who comes from a Catholic background, even joked that her mom thought she would be a nun because she did not have a boyfriend until Form 6. But Lucy credited herself for staying focused on education and avoiding boys as a strategy for getting as far as she has in education:

When I was studying it was like ah...this is marriage, I can say marriage, and this is education. I saw marriage which was out of out of my, my, my programs or out of my direction and ... I didn't want to bring myself to think about things which were not in my, my direction (personal communication, 11 November 2010).

In essence, Dotto, Lucy, Grace, and Sisto were all able to clearly communicate why they delayed getting married. Each of them acknowledged the importance of marriage in Tanzanian society, but not at the expense of their education. Their quotes also illustrate that, at a certain age, specifically when they were younger, getting married and simultaneously pursuing education was not an option. The women express their desire to continue with education instead of getting married as a strategy for their success.

Focusing on Academics

The first time I met with each participant, I asked her to walk me through a typical day in Primary School, either Standard VI or VII and then again in either Form 4, or Form 5 and Form 6, depending on the type of school she attended for O level and for A level. As the participants described their daily routines, I was able to comprehend their educational environments and their strategies for focusing on academics. It became evident that these women had to balance school and after school studies with the roles they played in their home environments.

Staying Focused

“Education without discipline is nothing.”

Several participants shared their struggles in terms of crowded classrooms, lack of materials, and long commutes from home to school. As they explained the issues they

faced, some of them also communicated how they dealt with these hurdles. Sisto talked the most about the educational environments she faced throughout primary and secondary school. She recalls being in Standard I:

I couldn't get a chair, I couldn't get a table; therefore, I was sitting down and I was writing on my thighs and ... I was take my grasses, dried grass ... in the classroom and when I had to move out of the classroom I had to collect them and tie them somewhere so as tomorrow I can use them again (personal communication, 22 September 2010).

Sisto felt that she had to have a pattern of consistency to help her stay focused in the classroom, she used the dried grasses as a place to sit because she was not given a seat in class. She described crowded classrooms and her technique for making sure she had a way to capture what was happening in the classroom. Sisto continued to explain the situation in her O level studies:

When I was Form 1 to Form 4 we were crowded. Very crowded. If you are not, if you are not following up about what you are learning you can find yourself, you are out of everything because we are so many you see. And we had no assets (personal communication, 22 September 2010).

This quote illustrates the situation Sisto faced in her classroom during secondary school and her determination to concentrate on what was being taught. She also mentioned not having any assets. Many of the participants referred to the difficulties in their rural surroundings with a lack of materials. Zaituni, who also taught in Dar es Salaam before returning to University, explained the difficulty of getting exercise books in rural areas as well stating, “the lack of material, for example school supplies” (personal communication, 23 December 2010). While the participants mentioned a lack of school supplies, few of them shared their strategies of how they overcame that specific obstacle. The participants were not able to control the amount of school supplies and materials that reached them in their rural settings; instead they focused on the things they could control.

Sisto very clearly illustrated her ability to pay attention as a method of control, “My focus was about education, was not about the problems I am facing. No! I did not focus about 'we don't have books, we don't have enough teachers'. I didn't focus about

that, my focus was to pass” (personal communication, 14 October 2010). Sisto also shared her strategy of controlling her attitude as a way to directly confront her struggles. She claimed that in the face of not having enough materials and overcoming her own personal struggles, she decided to focus on positive things, “I passed my exams because I was focusing on what I know. And I was not looking outside about the negatives, the problems I am facing, the situation. I was not worrying about the situation ... I was simply focusing on positives” (personal communication, 14 October 2010).

In light of Sisto’s experience with crowded classrooms and a lack of materials, she used her ability to focus as a method for overcoming her problems. She felt that education was the way to lift herself out of poverty and she pursued education as a motivational strategy:

Those problems were forcing me to study hard. And I was, do you know, when you have something that you are depending on or needing, that I am going to get a way to pass through and to get out of these problems ... therefore, all of your mind focusing on education, not otherwise (personal communication, 21 October 2010).

Again, Sisto blatantly disclosed that she was using education as a tool for success and her focus on education aided in that success. While Sisto used her positive attitude and problems as motivation, Festo turned to other things she could control, namely her disciplined attitude and where she sat in class. Festo iterated the reciprocal relationship of discipline and education, “education without discipline is nothing, discipline without education is nothing” (personal communication, 20 December 2010). Festo explained that those who pursue education but who are not disciplined will not be successful. She also believed that those who have discipline but who are not studying will gain nothing. Festo talked about the importance of discipline several times during our meetings. She referenced both tolerance and discipline as strategies for helping her focus on education:

Because sometimes of course you face difficulties, so if you are not ready to get education, you won't tolerate. Other things in education, they are very difficult, example maybe subjects in class, so if you are not tolerant it can leave and you will go away. And discipline is, discipline is

EVERYTHING in education, everything. If you are not disciplined that is, it is not good (personal communication, 30 December 2010).

Festo continued by sharing her specific strategy of choosing her seat in class. In the crowded classrooms where it is not uncommon for three students to share one desk Festo claimed, “I don't like to sit back, I like to stay in front especially in class” (personal communication, 30 December 2010). Festo explained that during church services her pastor would admonish those who sat in the back of the church and it planted the idea that she should be sitting closer to the teachers. In this sense, Festo found a very specific strategy for helping her focus, “at the first or second chair it can make me to concentrate more on the teacher's and it can avoid me to make communication between me and my colleagues” (personal communication, 30 December 2010). Given the crowded classrooms and lack of materials, Festo proactively controlled where she sat so she was able to stay focused during class.

The importance of staying focused on education, both inside and outside of class, is a theme that the participants talked about as a strategy for continuing education. The participants needed to find ways to actively pay attention in crowded classrooms with few materials while also making sure they controlled their attitudes about education outside of the classroom, after school hours.

Balancing Study Time with Societal Roles

“If you have time, you can take care to read...I said if you have time!”

As mentioned previously, during the first interview all participants were asked to describe an average day. They all referred to the responsibilities that were expected of them in their home environments. Further, many of them explained the balance between those domestic roles and their educational pursuits. A few of these women identified specific methods for finding time to study.

Lucy and Grace specifically explained the role of women in the home in Tanzanian society, painting a picture of the hardships female students face. Lucy verbalized that “because cooking was confined to women, so no way, you can avoid to

cook unless mom was there. So, we cook after that, hmmm, (laughs) you eat. If you have time, you can take care to read...I said if you have time!” (personal communication, 20 October 2010). Here, Lucy energetically commented about the role of women in the home. She acknowledged that women, either the female children or the mom, bear the responsibility for the evening meal. It is important to remember that the evening meal is an involved process that can take up to an hour or more. She admitted that she would study after her evening duties, if time permitted.

Grace, takes it one step further; she also explained the burden placed on women but she was not as optimistic about getting time to study in the evening:

I'm afraid that in our society girls are treated different, that she must come home early compared to boys, that is a problem...to come from school and school is very far from where we are living, so you use a lot of time in walking up to home and when you reach there, there are activities to do. So when it reach at night, you become tired and sleep therefore you do not get enough time to study (personal communication, 27 December 2010).

In this excerpt Grace explained not only her view of the unfair expectations for women but the compounded effect that women experience when they are expected to do certain activities in the home, in addition to attending school which is not often within easy reach for students. Many of the participants I interviewed talked about their roles in the home or additional hurdles they had to face; often times they explained these issues separately. However, in the previous quote, Grace paints a bigger picture of what women deal with as they pursue education and continue to perform the expected societal duties.

Festo, Dotto, Mariam, and Grace explained the evening duties they had to perform in their homes and when they managed to study. Festo, who is the oldest and only female of four children, shared her struggle to find time to study, she disclosed that “maybe after cooking the, the, the evening [meal] or after cleaning dinner I was just to study after that” (personal communication, 16 December 2010). She continued by saying that sometimes she would wake up early and study before going to school in the mornings. Dotto told a similar story that she would cook until 8pm and then study until

midnight, she also verbalized that sometimes, ‘I am so tired. So I am, I don't have a mood to continue to study’ (personal communication, 15 December 2010). Many of these participants would wake up before 6am to begin their daily routines, so it is understandable that staying awake and studying until midnight became difficult.

Mariam disclosed her evening ritual:

So, I returned at 7:30. When I come back I do housework, cook, washing clothes, washing plates after 9PM I start my studies of evening and prepare for tomorrow (personal communication, 15 December 2010).

Grace told a story that was a little bit different. Grace attended Primary School and O level in Kigoma where she lived with her grandma. During this time she would often stay late at school to study. She used this strategy to avoid doing some of the chores that were expected of her when she would return in the evenings. When she started her A level studies, she was living with her parents in Dodoma. She articulated the role she was expected to play in the family’s store, “it disturbed me a lot. And when I come back home, we have a shop there in Dodoma, so they used to (chuckles) to, I used to serve, so I used a lot of time in serving” (personal communication, 27 December 2010). Grace knew that she would be expected to work in her family’s shop. She reverted to the strategy she had used when she was living with her grandma in order to find time to study, “when you come home earlier, you will meet a lot of work to do, you will not get enough time to study. So the only way for me to keep on studying is just to remain there” (personal communication, 27 December 2010). In essence, Grace would find a quiet place to study at school and she would stay there to avoid having to work in the family store. Grace shared with me the resistance she sometimes received from her family. This will be discussed further under the *Emotional Encouragement* section.

Pascalina verbalized her experience in attending boarding school where she lived on campus. She talked about having to do chores on campus, but also expressed the importance that teachers and administrators placed on finding time for studying. Pascalina, who attended an all girls boarding school for O level, explained that each

evening from 7pm until 10pm the students were expected to have quiet study time on their own (personal communication, 13 November 2010). Each day the students had responsibilities for cleaning and doing chores, but it was balanced with intentional time for studying. This is an important difference for students who attended boarding schools and those who, during their Secondary School experience, were at home where the expectation for them to help as they were getting older increased.

The participants consistently cited their struggles to stay focused on their academics. They described their learning environments and how they would overcome some of the harsh contexts in which learning took place. In this way, it became evident that in order to be successful in school they had to find strategies to stay focused in class and a way to balance their social roles in the home with their academics.

Finding Confidence

Lucy was one of the participants I interviewed early in the research process and she brought up confidence in our first interview. It inspired me to ask more questions about how these women gained confidence. A few of the participants mentioned confidence without being asked; the others all responded when asked about the role of confidence. The idea of these women finding confidence and the role it played in their desire to continue with education became a main theme in this study as it relates to how women explain their success with getting to the university level.

Instilling Confidence

“Because I pass through difficulties and therefore I had confidence.”

Lucy, Sisto, and Mariam talked specifically about the role confidence in terms of helping them with their education. Each of them shares a different perspective, based on their experiences, of how they gained confidence. Lucy believed confidence can be gained on a micro level through individual support, Sisto recalled that she became more confident as she confronted struggles on her own, and Mariam talked about her view of confidence in broader societal terms.

Quite simply, Lucy experienced confidence early in her educational career when a teacher saw something special in her, “as I told you, I got confidence first after my teacher identified me as I can do something” (personal communication, 27 October 2010). She continued by articulating how her peers reinforced her confidence and how her belief in herself helped her later in her educational pursuits. Lucy also referenced the down-side of women’s confidence, “females do not believe in themselves, that they can do, that they can compete, that they can do something (chuckles) you know?” (personal communication, 20 October 2010). Lucy’s solution to helping women gain confidence is to role model for them what they are capable of doing. Later in this chapter I will explore the idea of role models; however it is relevant to mention Lucy’s view of the importance of role models to girls’ confidence:

Young girls? Ah, they gain confidence I think by looking for, by looking to their role models, as I said “Oh! Did you reach this point? Are you a teacher at the university? Oh, I should be! I should be! I have to travel so as I can reach where you are!” So it's like role model plays a very big part in giving someone confidence (personal communication, 27 October 2010).

Lucy clearly articulates the role of other women in the lives of young girls as a strategy to help women gain confidence in their own abilities. She talked about how important it is for girls to see women who have traveled or reached a certain position, as a means for motivating school children. It should be noted that the teacher who took an interest in Lucy during primary school was a male; in Lucy’s experience one or two people can make the difference in instilling confidence in young girls.

Sisto, who dealt with a wide variety of personal struggles, did not discuss role models or a specific individual who instilled a sense of confidence in her. Instead, she credited her hard work as the method for gaining confidence. She was working in homes and selling goods from the age of seven. She did not begin Standard I until she was nine years old and, by that time, she believed in herself and her ability to overcome her hardships (personal communication, 22 September 2010).

When directly asked how she managed to continue with her education without having any support (she was orphaned and lived with various relatives from the age of one) she answered by stating that her ability to pass through various difficulties gave her confidence (personal communication, 14 October 2010). Sisto did not have anyone invest in her, nor did she see any older women in her community modeling confidence. She claimed her confidence was as a direct result of realizing that if she kept working hard, she could achieve what she wanted.

Sisto's experience of relying on herself is very different from Mariam's perspective. Mariam credits her confidence to seeing others, specifically boys, persist in education. She also talked about the role of women in society and how that impacts women's confidence. Mariam, who was soft spoken in our interviews, talked about wanting to be on the same level as boys, "I think that I get a confidence because...I think that there are boys which are study, why me? why me? I can use my, I can see me as a boy, so I will study, when I see the boys study that means I can study as well" (personal communication, 15 December 2010). Mariam saw the boys in her community doing well in school and she decided there was nothing preventing her from working just as hard. This perspective inevitably came from her overall view of women in society. In a subsequent interview, Mariam revisited the idea of women gaining confidence:

I think now, many women they have confidence because the country is changing. The country is changing ... many people like men they say that, women they have not any opportunity to get education, women are the people who can remain at home to do the things at home. But now, many women, MANY women they have get education and they have participate in different jobs like banking, others they are soldiers, many jobs which men are doing and women are doing it. Others they build homes like men, so I think that, that women they can take, they have confidence now (Mariam, personal communication, 20 December 2010).

Mariam said that she felt confident studying at the same level as the boys in her classrooms because she saw women taking on more responsibility outside of the home. She believes that as the country is evolving, women are gaining more confidence. She

referenced women working in various roles and even the same roles as men, this invariably influenced her in the classroom.

Lucy, Sisto, and Mariam all referenced the importance of confidence in their education, yet each of these women credited confidence to a different experience. Regardless of how they gained confidence, it helped them to pursue education. The next section will explore the reciprocal relationship between education and confidence.

Reciprocal Relationship of Education and Confidence

“Education enables us to be more confident, to speak in front of many people.”

Some participants talked about the importance of gaining a small amount of confidence which lead to more confidence. These women were able to build upon what someone instilled in them and continue thriving and moving forward. The idea of getting confidence at a young age was important to some, but others did not realize it until later in their educational pursuits, some even at the university level. Further, many women cited confidence in relation to men and working to achieve the same levels as men, or feeling confident when they are being compared to men.

When Lucy began Form I, she was attending an all girls school, and she felt overwhelmed with her new environment, specifically she felt some of her peers had better English skills than she did. But her way of moving forward was to recall that her primary school teacher had believed in her, “I started to get courage and I said, my teacher, my teacher identified me as someone who can do something. Why not, eh, use my capability to cover this shock?” (personal communication, 20 October 2010). In essence, Lucy turned to her confidence as a coping strategy when she felt unsure of herself. Lucy continued by explaining that once she started having confidence in herself it continued to build. She felt as though because she was able to cross a certain barrier, she did not second guess herself or her skills as she continued to encounter more challenges. Zaituni also addressed the role of education and confidence, “education enables us to be

more confident, to speak in front of many people” (personal communication, 23 December 2010).

Lucy believed that the role of confidence is imperative for girls and their educational pursuits. She talked about the reciprocal relationship and impact of having courage on continuing to get more confidence, “what I learned that when you get confidence also people tend to believe in you (chuckles) and trust you and encourage you. So when you, you give someone an open door and ... such ah, a moral support, a support also keep you in believing yourself.” (personal communication, 20 October 2010). In addition to using confidence to find more moral support, Lucy also referenced her view of getting confidence from her peers, “the students also...when they support you, you get more confidence.” (personal communication, 20 October 2010). For Lucy, she had one teacher in primary school who believed in her, this set the stage for her educational path. She felt confident as she entered O level and because of that believe in herself, others took an active role in believing in her, which only led her to feel more and more comfortable in moving forward with her education.

Sisto also credited her peers who saw her exhibit confidence, but for her finding the courage to continue was not an option. She believed that she needed courage to continue to live, “my classmates, in the village they say “ah, you are smart, to pass through that school! you are smart.” I said “No, it is just the courage I had.” Because when you don't have courage, you can't do anything” (personal communication, 14 October 2010). Sisto had the courage to try to succeed in school, her classmates reinforced in her that she was intelligent, but for her she just kept going. However, Sisto continued in that interview by disclosing that she had to ensure that her basic needs were met, getting food, clothes, and water. But she also talked about being able to get married when she was done, this is as a result of the confidence she has gained due to her education. Her thoughts on marriage are as a result of her confidence; she felt confident in making the choice to wait to get married.

Many of the participants cited confidence as a way to feel more valued in society, specifically as it related to being on the same level as men. Dotto did not have a positive experience in A level with male teachers, she preferred to approach her male peers rather than the teachers when she had academic questions. This did not instill a sense of confidence in her, but now at the university level she feels confident:

I am confident and I feel comfortable because I know that girls and boys they are equal here. Because if to study all of them they are study A level, up to O level, up to degree, up to university, so they know this girl up to there is competition (personal communication, 27 December 2010).

Dotto believed that because she has made it to the university level, she is treated more equally by professors and given more respect because she had to compete for her position in the university and that instills a sense of confidence in her. Mariam also shared her views of men and women's equality with regard to education. She believed that men and women are equal but that women who lack confidence will not be as successful:

I think that women and men all of them are the same for the level of education. You can use your, if you have confidence you can be equal like men. But if you have not any confidence, you can get a big difficult to be like that because men they believe that they can, but women many of them they can't believe that they can. If you believe that you can... you can be the same (personal communication, 20 December 2010).

Mariam continued by talking about the increased number of women who are passing their Standard 7 national exams and are able to continue with their secondary school studies. She stated that if women are able to find someone to encourage them they will be able to continue, she attributes this to confidence and being on par with men, "the number of women who have educated increasing day to day. So I can say that now women have more confidence to get something like men" (personal communication, 20 December 2010). Again, Mariam's perspective was that men have more positions in society, but as the number of women in education is increasing, their collective confidence is raised which in turn encourages other women.

Sisto, who is about to begin her PhD studies, talked about having more confidence now than when she was selling goods to pay for her school fees in primary school:

I had confidence of course, but it was not like what I have now. Because, when you talk with people ... when you are talking with uneducated people, always they discourage you. But when you are talking with educated people...they can encourage you, they can appreciate you. Then you get confidence. There is, now I have confidence! I can talk! I can talk! I can talk and talk with people, with big people...I feel like I am a man! Yeah! I feel like a man. I don't see any difference between me and a man (personal communication, 21 October 2010).

Here, Sisto began by explaining the role of confidence and the difference she experienced in talking with educated and uneducated people; Sisto comes from a small village where she did not see many educated people and where she was not encouraged to continue with her studies. She continued in that quote by verbalizing how confidence made her feel like she could talk with anyone, as though she had something important to say. She ended by stating that she has enough confidence to be seen as a man.

The role of confidence for these participants was used as a strategy used to help them continue with their education. For some of them, confidence came from one person; for others, they saw other women in society having confidence and that motivated them to do more. Without drawing too many conclusions, it is easy to see that many of these women value the confidence they have and the confidence they are gaining outside of their educational pursuits, but in the larger society itself.

In essence, the participants credited their ability to continue with their education on various strategies. They understood the societal expectations placed on them and sought to focus on their academics. They avoided social pressures, understood the importance of balancing their responsibilities with their academics and found the confidence to continue. The next section will examine the women's views of their support structures.

Emotional and Financial Support

In addition to the women identifying their strategies for academic motivation, it also became evident that each participant had a network that helped them throughout primary and secondary school. In some cases, the women referenced a family member, other times it was a teacher; but, in every case, the women had at least one person who helped them either emotionally or financially. The women and I conversed about role models and they articulated how they viewed role models in their villages and communities when they were young. Some of them had role models they could talk to and others were only able to identify women in the broader Tanzanian society. This section will present the participant's views of how the systems they encountered helped them reach university level.

Support versus Encouragement

I asked each participant about who had supported her education. I quickly discovered that the women viewed support in terms of finances only. When I asked follow up questions about encouragement, I discovered an entirely new set of answers. I realized that these women have different definitions of support and encouragement. They viewed support in terms of finances or sponsorship, but encouragement could be emotional and motivational. This led me to ask more questions about the two different roles of support and encouragement throughout their educational pursuits.

Grace illustrated how her grandmother aided her throughout her education, clearly defining the difference between financial support and emotional encouragement, “supporting not in terms of money or anything but she encourages me, she always encouraged me to study” (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Grace uses two different words to intentionally distinguish between support and encouragement. Similarly, the following exchange with Festo provides a prime example of the difference between support and encouragement:

Megan: So did your mom support you?

Festo: No.

Megan: Did she encourage you?

Festo: Yes, my mom is encourage me even that, even then she is interested about school...but dad, he was paying even the school fee but my mom, no (personal communication, 16 December 2010).

Here the difference between support and encouragement is clearly differentiated.

The interviewees clearly articulated where they had received support and where they had received encouragement. Additionally, they shared their experiences with school fees and how the fees affected their ability to pursue education.

The Impact of Emotional 'Encouragement'

“She is just supporting not in terms of money or anything but she encourages me.”

Of the eight participants, seven had a story to share about the role of emotional encouragement. Often times, this encouragement came from a relative, but not always a female relative. Many of these participants credited their family members for providing them with positive messages of inspiration. But they also communicated the importance of receiving messages of encouragement in their communities.

Grace, who lived with her grandmother in Kigoma for primary school and during O level, credited her grandmother as being the individual who fostered her desire to continue with education the most, “she was always encouraging me to study. So, since when I was a baby from Standard 3 up to O level” (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Grace continued by disclosing that she would stay late at school to study. She said that on her way home, she would pass by women who would send her messages of encouragement, “most of those women when they see me in the evening, I am coming home, they just wonder 'Oh, I like the way you study.' The way I was serious in my studies” (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Grace not only had her grandmother to support her, but she heard other women on her commute home from school, sending her positive messages.

Dotto shared a similar message of getting support in the community. She heard the message that if she studied hard she could have a better life. Her neighbor, who also happened to work in her school, talked with her father and encouraged him to continue supporting his daughter. This neighbor recognized Dotto's potential "he support me to continue everything, 'work hard, you have good habits, continue to have good habits, continue to study, according to that you can continue to study hard then you can get good work, you can live good life'" (personal communication, 15 December 2010). Dotto received motivation from her family who had heard a positive message from a neighbor. Dotto also heard the message of support from a teacher, who told her that she performed well and if she continued to work hard she would be able to excel in university (personal communication, 15 December 2010). In this sense, she was strongly supported by people close to her in her own community.

Festo credited several individuals with motivating her to continue with her education. She claimed that her parents, her teachers, and her religious affiliation cultivated her educational pursuits. She said that her dad promised her that if she studied hard he would make sure she reached university. She mentioned the role of her mom as well, "of course she haven't money, my mom, but she was encouraging me. Even sometimes maybe I done poorly in my subjects, then maybe I was crying much, my mom come and encourage that maybe 'my, my daughter, you have done well'" (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Festo cited her school's 'Academic Day' where the top 10 students were rewarded for their hard work. Festo received positive feedback regarding her discipline when she received an award from her teachers during Form 6. This encouraged her to prepare well for her Form 6 exams.

She also explained that she was involved with a Christian Ambassador program that sent a positive message about education. She stated the organization encouraged the secondary school participants by providing information about education (personal communication, 20 December 2010). While Festo acknowledged the role of families and

community members, she also credited her religion with her success “is just the fear of God in my heart. This only is the one which helped me to reach here” (personal communication, 20 December 2010). Festo’s religion played a big part in her overall view of education. From Festo’s quotes and experiences it is evident that she had an overall supportive environment which fostered her desire to continue with education.

Sisto, on the other hand, told a very different story. Most of Sisto’s extended family did not support her after her parents died. She moved from home to home when she was growing up in Bukoba and she said that her extended family could not support her because her aunts and uncles had their own children to support (personal communication, 22 September 2010). Sisto shared the story of one uncle who encouraged her:

I had no one who could encourage me. Most of them would say... ‘Just get married and rest. How can you get money to go to school? How can you get the courses advanced level?’ But one of my uncles encouraged me even though he had no money, but he said, ‘If you pass Form 4 and then you are going to Form 5 then look for money! You can go!’ (personal communication, 22 September 2010).

Figure 4. Two of Sisto’s Primary School Teachers (right) and Her Headmaster (left)



This story is important because it illustrates the role that one person was able to have on Sisto. She heard a message that if she performed well, she would be able to find a way to keep going. She did not feel the support of family members or community members in Kagera, but her uncle, who lives in Dar es Salaam, encouraged her to persist and insisted that if she did she would be able to continue with her education. This same uncle spoke at her wedding send-off in Kagera District in November 2010. This event is a large scale community ritual whereby the bride publicly chooses her groom. The specific send off events differ from region to region, but it is a celebratory event. Sisto's uncle spoke proudly of her educational achievements given the environment she grew up in. This event was attended by approximately 500 members of the community, including Sisto's former primary school teachers and headmistress, all of whom knew her story of struggling and finding success: a picture of these women is included below. Sisto is not the only participant who cited the importance that one person could make.

Pascalina credited her mom and older sister as the two people who encouraged her to study, but not simultaneously. Although Pascalina's mom had no formal education and she died before Pascalina reached O level, she communicated a strong message for her children to continue with their education:

She didn't go to school, but she was positive about going to school. She was always saying – 'you my kids, you study hard, because I know, I can buy things but tomorrow if I am not here, someone can take those properties from you. But I know education, no one can take education from you' (personal communication, 13 November 2010).

Pascalina's older sister supported and encouraged her, but she does not recall any of her other brother's or sister's encouraging her. In fact, of her 18 brothers and sisters from three moms, only Pascalina and her sister, from the same mom, moved beyond O level education. Pascalina's father, who did not support his children continuing with their education, is now proud of his two daughters who have reached the university level (personal communication, 13 November 2010).

Lucy felt so strongly about her primary school teacher, who was referenced for giving her confidence, that she has even considered writing a book about him. In addition to the primary school teacher who expressed interest in Lucy's academic abilities, Lucy, credited an aunt who gave her a chemistry book, as another person who encouraged her to continue studying. The aunt is only four years older than Lucy and was able to provide her with encouragement and answers to her questions about education (personal communication, 27 October 2010). Here, Lucy paints a picture about her environment, "in entire family, there were few people who reached higher level of education. So it was like struggling by myself to try to get some information, how do I cover this? How can I get this? How can I get that?" (personal communication, 27 October 2010). The importance of her aunt, who was slightly older than her, enabled her to have someone who could answer her education related questions. Lucy's family supported her to the extent that they could, but she relied on her aunt as the person who was able to understand her questions as she persisted beyond the levels of education that her family had achieved.

Zaituni told a similar story about having one or two people who helped her with her education. Although Zaituni's mom died after she finished Standard 7, she had sent her daughter a positive message about continuing with education. Once Zaituni's mom died, it was her younger brother who encouraged her to continue:

So after the Standard 7 results most of people say that 'oh, no we can not send her to school because most of women or girls when they go to school they come back with nothing' ...but my mom and my young brother, my brother...they say that they want me to have a chance to go to school, because in my family I was the first one to be selected to join the secondary school (personal communication, 16 December 2010).

Zaituni's continued by articulating that her four older brothers and sisters did not support her, but her younger brother was the one who wanted to ensure that she continued with her studies. He both encouraged her to continue studying and made sure she had the finances to stay in school.

On the whole, these women shared the importance of one or two individuals who helped them continue with their education. Although they referenced the overall environment, which was sometimes helpful and sometimes not, they were able to recall specific individuals who provided them with the emotional support to continue.

The Importance of Financial 'Support'

“...financial, it was, it was not good to me at that time.”

In addition to hearing positive messages of encouragement, the participants described the importance of receiving financial support. They clearly articulated the role that financial support played in helping them with their education. School fees were also mentioned as a hurdle for most of participants or their families – either the women or their family members worked hard to find money for these fees.

Lucy's father worked in Kenya during much of her primary school career; when a primary school teacher approached her mother about Lucy's academic potential, her mother contacted her father. Together they decided it was important for their oldest child to continue with her education. Although Lucy's parents were unable to find all of the money for her to attend secondary school, Lucy explained that they took out loans from friends to pay for her education. She also described how her uncle helped support her to buy soap and school supplies (Lucy, personal communication, 20 October 2010, & 11 November 2010).

Sisto's story is unique because in her village in Kagera region she was financially supported through an organization helping orphans effected by AIDS; however, she also worked to sell her goods and services to get money for costs outside of school fees. She claimed that the organization helped orphans and it was the reason she was able to attend Standard 1, “but I was, I was so scared because I don't get other needs like uniform, exercise books, other things” (personal communication, 22 September 2010). Here Sisto referenced the importance of being financially supported in regard to school fees, but it is evident that children face other financial hurdles. She attended A level in Pwani district,

along the coast, which took her two days to reach by bus. On her way to A level, she met a friend of her deceased Aunt's, at the bus station in Dar es Salaam. That man and his brother's family provided her with materials for A level. She persisted even though she had no idea of knowing who would support her education (personal communication, 22 September 2010). Sisto never knew where she would get the financial support to continue with her education; but, as stated in the previous section, she had an uncle who told her if she kept going he was confident that she would continue to find a way.

Pascalina, who is one of 18 children, claimed that her older sister is the one who supported her financially. She illustrated the importance of someone being willing to help her with the finances associated with pursuing a degree, "because even my mom and my father, we are not in a good position so at least my, my sister...when I was in Form 1 she was already working. So she was supporting me" (personal communication, 13 November 2010). It only took one person to support Pascalina in order for her to continue with her education. Pascalina also shared that it was important to find someone to sponsor her education or the consequences would be severe, "take my village as an example, especially for girls you find that when they finish Standard 7, many of them, they just get married. So, because you get...maybe someone to sponsor this one" (personal communication, 13 November 2010). Here, Pascalina illustrated the importance of people who were willing to help her with her education. The idea of giving back to the community, as a motivational factor for these women, will be explored more in depth.

Mariam also shared her experience with financial support; remember, Mariam is the youngest of six children and the only girl. Her parents worked hard to support her education, she claimed they liked to see their daughter study and they used their money to make sure that she could study. Her older brothers did not contribute to her academic success, either financially or emotionally. She also stated that her parents were willing to support her financially because she showed the desire to continue to learn (personal communication, 15 December 2010).

The role of finding financial sponsorship varied from participant to participant. As evidenced above, Lucy, Sisto, Pascalina, and Mariam had to find people to financially support their studies, both in terms of school fees and external needs related to their overall growth. These women would not have been able to continue school without someone to support them financially, but the burden of school fees was an obstacle these women worked hard to overcome.

The role of school fees

“I have to raise money to get money for school fees.”

Obtaining financial support in terms of transportation, food, clothes, and specifically school fees, was a recurring theme that the women explained. Currently, primary school is compulsory for all Tanzanian students; therefore, the role of school fees did not come up as an issue for these participants during primary school. However, when these women advanced to O level or A level school fees became a potential inhibiting factor, especially if the women attended private schools. These participants shared the stories of various people who helped them pay for school fees.

For most of the participants, the O level fees for government school hovered around 20,000Tsh (Tanzanian Shillings), which is about \$13USD per year. This does not include school materials or uniforms. Some of the participants were able to afford these fees while others struggled because of the jump of the school fee from primary school to secondary school. Mariam shared that her parents were able to afford the 20,000Tsh fee in O level but she attended a boarding school for A level and needed to find a sponsor. Her uncle served in that role until he passed away (personal communication, 15 December 2010). Mariam also explained the role of school fees for families with many children, “20,000[Tsh] for school, for tuition fees for government [school], ...they can't afford it because many of Tanzanian parent have more than four children” (personal communication, 15 December 2010). Mariam continues by explaining that parents with many children are unable to afford school fees for all of their children. Festo tells a

similar story, that her father was able to afford the 20,000Tsh fee during her four years of O level, but her A level school fees jumped to 70,000Tsh, approximately \$47USD; Festo stated that because she was in government schools where the fees were reasonable, her father was able to continue supporting her (personal communication, 16 December 2010).

Both Zaituni and Dotto disclosed that they were unable to pay the school fees during secondary schools. Both women told compelling stories of how they petitioned headmasters and district officials to allow them to stay in school. Zaituni ran into financial struggles with school fees during her O level studies, during Form 2. She shared the story that the headmaster told her to return home because she could not pay the school fee. Her younger brother, who supported her after her mom died, told her he did not have money for her schooling and sent her to appeal to the headmaster. Zaituni explained to her headmaster that she did not have the fees but that she wanted to continue, he suggested that she see the executive officer in the district. Zaituni visited the executive officer who agreed to help pay the school fee for Form 2. Zaituni disclosed that, “after that year, they started all about payments, so when I was in Form 3 life was very difficult, no money, and my brother was...to make sure that all people in our family get some food, clothes, all the responsibilities of the house” (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Zaituni continued by explaining that the executive officer for her district agreed to pay for her Form 4 fees as well.

Dotto’s story is a bit different because her financial problems originated from problems with the crop yield during her year in Form 6, which lead to her dad’s inability to pay the school fee. Dotto approached her headmaster as well and explained her situation. At that time the Form 6 examinations, which determine eligibility for university, were nearing. The headmaster asked to see Dotto’s current academic standing in her classes, when she brought them to him he believed she was performing well and he agreed to help her for the remaining two months of her schooling. He said he would tell the cashier not to send Dotto home when she failed to pay the school fees. Dotto

expressed gratitude that her headmaster was willing to pay her remaining two months of school fees (personal communication, 15 December 2010). She clearly did well on her Form 6 National Examination and explained that after passing the exams she and her father brought part of the next harvest to her headmaster as a way to thank him.

Each of these women told a different story about the role of school fees. For some of them, the school fees were just a little bit out of reach for their families and presented a small challenge, while other participants ran into significant challenges with being able to pay these fees. Regardless, all of the women in this study were able to identify individuals who provided them with emotional encouragement and financial support, which allowed them to continue on the path to a university level education.

Conundrum of Role Models

Seven of the eight participants shared the various functions that role models played in their lives. I was able to easily deduce that there was a difference between role models these women saw in their daily communities and the idea of role models in the larger Tanzanian society. Further, the participants explained the role models they saw in their rural villages. The only participant who did not identify role models in her community, Zaituni, expressed that she felt pressure to be a role model for future generations of girls in her village. The importance of giving back as a motivational strategy will be explored in the next section.

Idea of Role Models versus Reality of Role Models

“I think what we miss is role models, to talk with them.”

When asked specifically about role models, many participants cited females such as Asha-Rose Migiro, the current Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations; and Anna Kilango, a current Member of Parliament in the Tanzanian Government, as female leaders. While these leaders clearly serve as motivation for girls to understand that they can be successful, none of the participants in this study have met these women.

They recalled their experiences with learning about these women and the importance for young girls to see strong women in leadership positions. Lucy stated how much she admired Asha-Rose Migiro and Anna Kilango but she also acknowledged the importance of finding someone to serve as a role model on an individual level. Lucy believes that there is currently an absence of role models, “I think what we miss is role models, to talk with them...to get courage, confidence” (personal communication, 27 October 2010). Lucy is someone who truly believed in the importance of role models as a means for young girls to build courage and while she was able to see women in high positions as role models for her, she also referenced the idea that girls need women they can see on a daily basis.

Mariam, Dotto, and Sisto also mentioned Asha-Rose Migiro in our conversations, but they expanded on the idea of role models in different ways. Mariam talked excitedly about the precedence Asha-Rose Migiro set for her, “I have get that idea in Form 1 ... there is somebody who is called Asha-Rose Migiro and she, she is very succeeded in our council” (personal communication, 15 December 2010). Mariam continued by stating that Asha-Rose Migiro influenced her to study in order to reach the same level some day (personal communication, 20 December 2010).

Dotto explained that many of the girls from her village emulated each other and if one stopped going to school and chose marriage, several would follow. But she was motivated by what she saw in government, “I like even me, to be like Asha Migiro...I know when I am study it can help me to, to, to move from one stage to another and to improve my life...it can help me to have a chance in government because I study” (personal communication, 15 December 2010). Dotto was motivated to continue because she saw someone in government making a difference. Dotto shared several times that her long term desire is to be a Member of Parliament. It was a motivational factor for Dotto to see someone in a high position, this sent her a message that she could succeed.

Although Sisto acknowledged Asha-Rose Migiro and other female leaders in Tanzania, she also mentioned that often times, young girls see women from outside of Tanzania as role models:

In most cases, we are learning from outside people... and that is why when the society said that this is becoming a white man even though he is a black one, you see, we are learning through people outside our country...you think 'Oh, I can do this! I can do this!' This is a human being, of course! (Sisto, personal communication, 6 October 2010).

Sisto consistently communicated her awareness of how she was influenced and socialized to view both education and women's role in Tanzanian society. Here, she clearly communicated how she made sense of role models, regardless of whether they were Tanzanians or not. The idea that non-Tanzanians can be viewed as role models is important to note.

It became evident that the idea of strong, successful female leaders impacted these participants. I probed further to see if they were able to identify women in their home communities as role models.

Female Role Models in Rural Areas

“I think the problem is just because of models, there are no models!”

The participants stressed their lack of extensive experience with role models in their rural communities. This varied based on each participant's experience, some of them only saw role models in their family units, while others identified women in the community who provided them with motivation to continue studying.

Sisto's explanation regarding female role models is perhaps the most complex of all the participants. Over the course of three different interviews, the topic of role models came up repeatedly; she simultaneously felt as though she was able to see role models in her community, but only to a certain extent. In an interview, Sisto shared her excitement about seeing Asha-Rose Migiro in a position of international leadership, she said:

I knew that even women do rule, can become president, can become, you see. That is when I get 'aooooohhh! (snaps fingers) I can do it! I can do it!' And that confidence it made me to reach this stage. Otherwise it was not

possible because most of women I lived with they are married, they are house workers now, how can I feel conscious that I can do this? It is impossible! (personal communication, 2010).

Here Sisto articulated what she was seeing in her daily environment and the contrast of a Tanzanian woman who had reached international recognition. In the following two interviews she stated clearly that the models she saw in her community were teachers. When she was younger, Sisto wanted to be a lawyer to help orphans. Sisto felt her relatives had taken advantage of her and her sister and she wanted to work in the legal system on behalf of orphaned children, but she claimed that she did not see any female lawyers in her community, nor did she see accountants or doctors. She stated very clearly, “that is why maybe I am becoming a teacher, because those were the models for me” (personal communication, 14 October 2010). In a subsequent interview she continued to allude to role models. Sisto was able to articulate the problem she encountered with a lack of female role models in her village. In the following excerpt she explains just how complicated it was for her to find women that she could emulate:

The first focus was to become a lawyer, that changed because I didn't see anybody. And whenever I talked about that thing, to become a lawyer, ah, you just received, discouragement, “Like who? You are going to become a lawyer like who?” ... and I think what makes a person to become how he is or she is, is just the environment. I think maybe if I could have any model, any woman who was a lawyer by that time, I could want. Because I pass well, I did well, and my faculties and my courses which I took, it was possible for me to study law, but I had no such a view because I didn't see any woman who was a lawyer, therefore I was discouraged and that is why I decided to apply for education courses (personal communication, 21 October 2010).

This quote is rich with information about Sisto’s experience as she was growing up in a small village in Kagera. She had ideas about what she wanted to be, but she did not feel supported. Further, she describes the messages she received from her environment regarding pursuing her dream. Sisto is not the only participant who brought up the difficulty of finding role models in rural communities.

Lucy explained that women in rural areas have a harder time finding role models because there are fewer women in positions of power or authority. She stated that, “in the

villages the role models come from the family or the close family of the clan but in the city, because [in the] city you find different people...not only from your family or clan but from other, other places” (personal communication, 27 October 2010). Lucy claimed that in her family she did not see any other woman in her family, outside of her aunt who was four years older than her, pursuing education.

Pascalina reinforced this point by stating that she only saw her sister as a role model in their community, “I was just motivated by my sister because I saw my sister continuing well, so I say, 'even me, I have to be like her'” (personal communication, 19 November 2010). In a previous interview, Pascalina verbalized how she saw her sister succeeding in school. She noticed a difference in how her sister talked and carried herself when she would return from school on breaks, so she believed she could continue due to the example her sister set. However, she did not see any other women whom she wished to follow in her community (personal communication, 13 November 2010).

Mariam also presented a mixed picture about role models as she was growing up. In an interview on 15 December 2010, Mariam stated, “there are some, there are many women which are doing job in bank, others are leaders...so all of them they have encouraged me. I need to get that chance” (personal communication). In a subsequent interview she referenced female teachers who encouraged the girls to study, but she also stated that there were no women in her community who could provide her with direct counsel (personal communication, 22 December 2010). Similar to Mariam hearing positive messages from her teachers, Dotto saw a headmistress who was the boss of the male teachers; Dotto expressed her interest in seeing a female in a leadership role over males.

Festo was the only participant who was able to identify not one, but two female role models in her home environment. The first was a woman in her church and the second one was the wife of one of her headmaster’s in secondary school. Festo stated that the woman in her church encouraged the girls by explaining to them what she had done to

continue with her studies and to believe in themselves. Festo also explained that the wife of her headmaster not only encouraged the girls, but “she was discouraging of course about bad behaviors, discouraging about bad behaviors” (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Here, Festo communicated the importance of hearing not only a message of how to continue, but also of what to avoid.

The participants identified a need for role models and the importance that females in positions of leadership could exert over young students. However, there was clearly a lack of women in leadership positions in these rural areas. In essence, the idea of role models, that these participants could continue and achieve a position high within the government, was present, but they did not see anyone on a small scale in their communities who had achieved these positions.

Giving Back

As I talked with the women about the importance of role models in their lives, many of them, especially those without strong role models, felt compelled to reinvest in their families or home communities. To them, the idea of giving back meant that they had a responsibility to help others, in some cases this meant financial assistance and other times they referred to being able to encourage members of their families or people in their communities. The idea of helping their families may or may not initially have influenced their educational pursuits, but the participants explained that the farther along they continued in education the higher the expectation became for them to reinvest in their own communities. This, in turn, served as motivation to push forward with their studies.

Pascalina realized the importance of education, in that if she worked hard and performed well, she would be able to get a job and help her family (personal communication, 19 November 2010). She specifically believed that she would not be happy unless she was able to support a younger sibling who wanted to continue with school but who was not able due to funds (Pascalina, personal communication, 13

November 2010). Remember, Pascalina is one of 18 children from three moms. Her own mom had six children alone. When asked if she felt motivated to continue her education so she could help others, Pascalina explained, “I do. And not only my siblings but even other relatives. You know for us we have extended relatives like maybe the kid of maybe my aunt” (personal communication, 13 November 2010). Pascalina continued by explaining her view of Tanzanian society and the expectation to help relatives based on personal earnings. Pascalina also acknowledged how difficult it is to help everyone who asks for financial support, she stated “you become selective and you see someone who is at least showing the interest and putting effort, so you can help that person” (personal communication, 29 November 2010).

Zaituni, Festo, and Dotto were the first in their families to be selected for university, and they expressed the pressure they feel to give back to their families. Zaituni, who was the first in her family to be selected for O level heard her mom say, “I think she is going to help us after getting education” (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Zaituni stated that she struggled so as not to disappoint her family. When she was not selected for A level studies she felt as though she had let her family down. Now, as she finishes her final year at university, she has a chance to financially support her family (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Festo expressed a similar sentiment stating that she was motivated to work hard because she was the first born and felt pressure to set a good example and financially support her four younger brothers with their education (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Dotto also expressed her desire to model positive behaviors for her younger siblings. She stated specifically that, “if I have money I am, I am giving my father then to support my young brother. For me, I would like my brother to continue to study” (personal communication, 15 December 2010). As stated previously, these women view their obligation and future abilities to give to others as a motivating factor to continue.

Mairam suggested the importance of both helping financially and spending time with girls from her community as her way of giving back. She stated that “if I can finish my studies I can advise other girls in our tribe to study hard and I can...encourage them to study and if I have any money, I can help ... to pay school fees” (personal communication, 20 December 2010). Here Mariam hinted at the importance of finishing higher education so she can aid girls from her community. While Lucy, on the other hand, explained how important it was for her to continue her education so she can help her extended family (personal communication, 20 October 2010). She also mentioned the pressure she felt to continue with her schooling when she was younger so she could help prevent her younger brothers and sisters from becoming street children. She specifically disclosed that any money she had would be shared with her siblings so they could invest in education (personal communication, 11 November 2010).

Sisto credited education with providing her with a sense of responsibility to contribute to her home community. She claimed that because she had teachers who supported her and provided her with school materials, the value of helping others was instilled in her (personal communication, 21 October 2010). Throughout my time with Sisto it was evident that she struggled greatly to get access to education. She wanted to empower girls from her village who have seen that she came from a very poor background to continue with their education; she does this in part by staying simple. She described her minimalistic style of dress and her short haircut as important, so that when she returns to her village and talks with families of young girls they can see that she has not changed. Sisto also talked about the importance of helping girls with education, specifically so that they may, in turn, continue to help their families (personal communication, 14 October 2010). Here she makes a point about the importance of members of her village seeing that she is successful:

There is something changing. We were always believing that men can do better than women, but for the side of my village it is different now, because when I go back home...they love me! First of all, the leaders they

say 'Oh! This girl is smart! ... She is living in Dar es Salaam for a long time, since 2001. That is nine years, but can you see her? She looks like how she went. She is smart in the head.' Because for them, they do not believe you can take a girl outside, outside the family, outside the village, she is going to be a prostitute, she is going to get pregnant, she is going to, to, to be infected by AIDS. That is what they think (Sisto, personal communication, 14 October 2010).

Sisto captured the sentiment that her role modeling is not only for young girls and their families, but also to make sure members of her village realize that it is possible and productive to educate a woman. The participants who talked about giving back felt the need to do so in different ways and for different reasons. Some of them felt that society expected them to reinvest in their communities, while others experienced pressure from their family members. Regardless, the importance of giving back was a theme that seemed to help motivate these women to continue.

Navigating Relationships

Throughout the interviews, the participants told stories of having to work through various relationships as they continued in their educational pursuits. The role of family has been discussed previously in terms of financial support and emotional encouragement. Further, how families view both their daughters and education as investments will be discussed in the next section. Here it is important to delay the role of marriage as it influenced the women both before and during university.

Marital Relationships

“If the husband is educated and she is not educated...her husband will be superior.”

Four of the eight women in this study are married; they shared their experiences as they related to their pursuit of higher education or their current degree, especially those women who were pursuing a Master's or doctoral degree. Almost all of the women in this study mentioned the intersection of marriage and education; and as the interviews evolved, I asked questions about their views of marriage as it related to their education. Those who were not married shared their views about education as a motivational factor

to have more rights in their future marriages, and those who were married talked about being married and how it influenced their current pursuit of education.

The participants who were married when they enrolled in this study had a unique view of balancing education and marriage. They communicated their experiences with feeling more empowered in their relationships. Lucy, who is the oldest participant in this study, articulated her view of the importance of education as it relates to women understanding their rights, “in marriage if you are not educated you can view some things which are maybe simple but you can view them as huge or as difficult situations, but if you are educated, you can know how to deal with various situations” (personal communication, 11 November 2010). Lucy explained how to move through the difficulties of marriage through the use of education. Zaituni also verbalized her idea and experience of being educated and married. She stated that, “if you marry an educated man...things will be good because you will understand each other. Your husband will know the rights of women, his rights. Even me, I understand my own rights and the rights of my husband” (personal communication, 23 December 2010). Pascalina made the same statement about understanding the various responsibilities and rights of each person in a marriage (personal communication, 19 November 2010). This relates to education because these women credit their education with allowing them to understand their rights, the rights of their husbands and the responsibilities that come with marriage. The participants stated that without education, they would have not been able to navigate the nuances of marriage.

Pascalina, Zaituni, and Sisto shared their husbands’ current view of their pursuit of education. All of them felt as though their husbands were comfortable with them continuing in the pursuit of their advanced degrees. Pascalina stated that “maybe I can say supporting morally but not, not economically” (personal communication, 19 November 2010). She expressed that her husband told her she could continue with school but she had to find her own financial means. Zaituni, on the other hand, who is in her

final year of her Bachelor's degree, said that "he provide me much support, ALL the support, and financial, if I don't have money, provide me some money" (personal communication, 23 December 2010). During one of our interviews Zaituni disclosed to me that she had not returned home until 9pm the night before and she had left her home at 5am that morning. She said her husband had no problem taking over the domestic roles of taking care of the children, so that she could study. Sisto, who was married while she was enrolled in this study, married a man who is currently in medical school. She stated that he was supportive of her continuing with her degree; but she also stated that because she had her own money and her own freedom, he did not override her decisions (personal communication, 21 October 2010).

Although both Pascalina and Sisto felt supported by their spouses in their pursuit of their advanced degrees, they also acknowledged that this is not always the case. Pascalina expressed her opinion that some husbands who do not have advanced degrees do not want their wives to do so, "I see some families say 'no, my wife pursuing PhD when I don't have, no'. So some of them just want to be above women" (personal communication, 19 November 2010). Sisto stated that it was acceptable for her to get a Master's degree as long as her husband had a Master's degree or higher (personal communication, 6 October 2010). The notion that the amount of education can influence the power differential in a marriage was a recurring theme. Grace, who is not married, stated that, "if the husband is educated and she is not educated...her husband will be superior" (Grace, personal communication, 27 December 2010).

Both Grace and Mariam, who are not married, explained that one of the motivational factors to continue with education was to have more independence from their husbands. Grace assumed that she would marry an educated man and therefore have more opportunities to pay for goods and her children's education on her own than her uneducated peers who she believes, "will keep on waiting for husband to provide each and every thing for her" (personal communication, 27 December 2010). Grace also stated

that her parents wanted her to study because they saw the benefit of her becoming independent from her husband (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Mariam made a similar statement about not having to rely solely on her husband. She viewed having more education as a benefit for her family, “I can afford to pay school fees for my daughters and my son because I can have a job...I can afford to maintain my life and to make my life go different for other women who can't have any other ways” (personal communication, 20 December 2010).

The reality is that several of the participants recognized the differences between getting married before they reached a certain education level, namely after acquiring a university degree. Due to the power differential between men and women in Tanzanian society, these women wanted to continue with their studies to gain independence and have a greater sense of freedom in their marriages.

Women and Education as Investments

One of the strongest factors allowing these women to make their way to higher education, was their view of education as a long term strategy to benefit their futures. Further, the participants were viewed as investments. These women expressed their perspective of education, how they perceived the societal view of women’s education and societies willingness to spend its resources on women’s education.

During this study, Tanzania reached the UN Millennium Development Goal of universal access to primary education. This is significant because not only did the country achieve this before the 2015 deadline; but, participants talked extensively about their view of the changing landscape of education. Lucy, who is the oldest participant in this study, shared her view of why more women are in school today, “five years back...you would find a lot of girls working in families as housemaids. But today you find that at least, you find few. Because of this law of enforcing to go to school” (personal communication, 27 October 2010).

Five of the participants in this study are undergraduates – two of those are first year students and three are in their final year; while three of these participants are pursuing Master's or doctoral degrees. Their ages range from 21 to 41; thus, they have a variety of perceptions about how education has been viewed throughout the last 20 years.

Education as an Investment

Seven of the eight participants made statements about the value of education as an investment. They either viewed education as a long term gain for their future or they experienced their families and society treating education as an investment. In the following section, two perspectives will be explored: both the participants' views of education as a long term financial opportunity and how they believed their families or society values education.

Participant View

“If you value education, you will live well, but if you don't value education you will end with nothing.”

As stated previously, these women were motivated to continue with their education either because they wanted to put their time and energy in education or someone else thought it was important to use resources for education. This section will explore how the participants viewed investing in their own education. Dotto stated blatantly that she wanted to pursue education because she was interested in studying and she wanted to lift herself out of poverty, “I am continuing because I am interested, I like to study and according to the life of mine, according to the life of my family, I am so poor. According to that, I...I am ready to continue to study” (personal communication, 15 December 2010). Dotto had specific motivation to pursue education - to change her socioeconomic status. Mariam expressed similar reasons for using her time and money to put into her education, “if you have educated, you can be in a good space, in a good position in your life. You get a good job...and you have so respect in your village...one day I want people to respect me” (personal communication, 15 December 2010). Not

only did Mariam view her education as a way to get a better job but she viewed an increase in education as synonymous with gaining respect in her village community. Lucy's view of choosing education was in line with Dotto and Mariam. Lucy made a poignant but simple statement about how her perspective towards education. She stated that, "if you value education, you will live well, but if you don't value education you will end with nothing" (personal communication, 11 November, 2010). This is a simple statement about how Lucy viewed the role of education and the consequences if education was not valued.

Zaituni made several statements about the role of education as an investment. She stated that education is available for all and that education allows people to understand their rights, "I think this is the way, which enable an individual to achieve all the things" (personal communication, 23 December 2010). Zaituni also recognized that education does not guarantee job security; however, she stated that the knowledge gained trumps the potential job possibilities (personal communication, 23 December 2010). She eloquently stated that, for her, education was important as a means to achieve more:

For me, education enabled me to be AWARE about my own rights. If not only my own rights, the rights of others...I can say education is the key just for all. If you have education, I have said this is a big what? Investment (personal communication, 27 December 2010).

Zaituni did not pass her Form 4 examination and went on to teach for three years before taking night classes so that she could take her Form 6 exam and make it to the university. Her persistence is evidence of the value she places on putting her resources in education. While Dotto, Mariam, and Zaituni cited their views about placing their resources in education, other participants referenced how their families or society viewed education as an investment.

External Perspective

"They know that the educated one is going to be different from others who are not educated."

The women explained that they were able to persist in education because either their families' or society viewed education as a long term gain which positively influenced them. Lucy referenced the current law regarding all students being required to go to primary school as a reflection of the current leadership in Tanzania, "our leaders now try to educate about the value of education, the worth of education. So, and they have enforced even law to try to force some families to take their children to school" (personal communication, 27 October 2010). Lucy's comment is important because it shows a shift in ensuring all students are at least educated through primary school. Although Lucy referenced the current law regarding primary school as compulsory, Grace acknowledged that a families' willingness to use its resources on education depends on their economic condition (personal communication, 16 December 2010).

Zaituni shared her experience of her villages' view of education as an investment. She explained how members of her community viewed education in the following statement: "they know that the educated one is going to be different from others who are not educated. That is, they know that education is just everything" (personal communication, 23 December 2010). Further, Zaituni referenced investment in girls' education. She claimed that both boys and girls can make a difference in their families' economic status if they have education because of the opportunities for jobs which pay more money (personal communication, 23 December 2010). She also stated her own view, "you know that education, as I have said, is a big investment" (personal communication, 23 December 2010). Zaituni continued pursuing education because she was surrounded by the idea that an increase in education was a good use of resources.

Festo also explained that her parents encouraged her because they had "knowledge about schools and the importance of school and education" (personal communication, 16 December 2010). She continued by stating that, even when there was not a lot of money, her dad continued to work so that she could stay in school. She claimed that her parents wanted her to study so she could have a better life; they viewed

her education as an investment for their entire family (Festo, personal communication, 16 December 2010). The experiences of these women allowed them to understand the benefits if they continued to pursue education. In the next section, I will explore the idea of investing in women's education as opposed to just education.

Participant Experience of Women as Investments

In the previous section, I presented the participants' views of education as a long term gain; in addition to this, six of the eight participants identified with being viewed as an investment themselves. The participants explained the perspective of educating women and the reality that their families and villages believed this was an investment.

Pascalina, Zaituni, and Mariam explored the contrast of encouraging women to get married instead of educating them. In essence, these women explained that this was a difference in short term gains instead of a long term investment. Zaituni clearly identified the financial benefits that families receive when they encourage their daughters to get married, "most of people likes a girl maybe after finishing the primary school to be married. And they get some money or whatever" (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Zaituni referenced the dowry that many families receive from the men that their daughters marry. This is a short term gain; the family may receive cattle or other gifts when their daughter gets married. Pascalina did not cite the immediate financial benefits to the girls' families when women get married, instead she noted that, if a girl goes to school and then gets married, the long term benefits are for her husband's family, "because now is here but thereafter will get married, then is going...is going to serve the...her husband's family. So some of the...it will seem like you are misusing your resources (personal communication, 29 November 2010). Pascalina explained that even if families spend their money on educating their daughters, those women may get married and use their resources for their husbands' families which is viewed as a loss to the family of the girl. Mariam communicated a similar sentiment that when women study and go on to get married, "it will be a profit to the husband, and a loss to the parents"

(personal communication, 15 December 2010). Zaituni, Pascalina, and Mariam were fortunate to have their families invest in them, but they clearly stated a common perspective of why many families do not use their resources on women's education.

These same participants, Zaituni, Pascalina, and Mariam, also talked directly about the costs associated with educating women. Zaituni shared the common view that if women are sent to school there is a risk that they will become pregnant, and when they "come back, they realize that the cost used from the parents, they come to...what can I say...they don't get any benefits because they used their costs" (personal communication, 16 December 2010). This statement is a direct reflection of a cost-benefit framework that families take into consideration when deciding if they should send their daughters to school. Pascalina explained how her dad felt about education, "but girls' because I know it's just like 'I'm throwing my money away'" (personal communication, 13 November 2010). She continued by sharing her fathers' view of the risks involved in sending girls to school and the impact on the family economy:

My father was real negative especially for girls taking them to school. Because he was saying that if you take a girl to school, she may end up getting maybe pregnant while she is continuing then you, like you are losing your money...So he was real negative but especially for girls. But now because after seeing myself and my sister, we continued very well and now he is really proud (chuckles). And now I think he, when you talk to him, now he is really thinking different (personal communication, 13 November 2010).

Pascalina's father had a shift regarding women's education. Other participants made similar statements about the positive change towards education for women. Mariam made a similar statement about her grandfather's view of education. Mariam's mom did not go to school because her grandfather believed if you "give a daughter education, you probably throw money away" (personal communication, 15 December 2010). One of the reasons Mariam's mom wanted her to go to school, was because she did not have the opportunity. Mariam also stated that, for the most part, educated parents are the ones who are more likely to put money in their daughters' education and she was fortunate that her

parents wanted to invest in hers. Lucy also talked about the importance of the family economy and its influence on women:

If the family has many children, the boys are the one who are considered first for higher education. Then, the girls follow (chuckles). And, if the family has a shortage of money or the economy of the family is not sustainable then it's natural that the females will remain, will stay at home. Where the brothers at least if they are not going for higher education, at least they get something do to, even vocational school. (Lucy, personal communication, 20 October 2010).

Lucy explained that her family was different from others because she was encouraged to study. Lucy's father, who lived in Kenya and sent money home, financially supported her, while she received encouragement from her mom and an aunt. She shared that members of her village were unsure what would happen if women became more educated, she heard members of the community ask questions about the benefits of sending her to school; they asked what the end result would be and in the end realized that "Oh, this girl can do! Can continue even to higher education" (personal communication, 20 October 2010).

As mentioned previously, Pascalina stated that her father, who now has two college educated daughters, changed his opinion about education for women as his daughters successfully continued through the educational ranks. Participants disclosed that many members of their families or villages have a changing view of educating women. Sisto, who struggled to find monetary support and encouragement, and who did not see role models in her community shared that her extended family currently views education as follows: "Nowadays, they acknowledge that 'Oh, if you educate a woman, you can do something good!'" (personal communication, 14 October 2010). However, Sisto had only one relative, her uncle, who supported her as she was moving from primary through secondary school. Sisto also acknowledged that she is the first woman from her village to continue with her Master's degree (personal communication, 14 October 2010). Mariam also acknowledged the evolving view regarding educating women. Mariam is the youngest of five children and the only girl. She said her family is

different because both of her parents wanted to see her continue with her studies (personal communication, 15 December 2010).

Several of the women expressed the benefits of educating women in terms of the overall society. They emphasized that the more women who are educated, the more women would give back to their communities. Additionally, they shared their experiences with equality and their ideas about how to further ensure women are being treated equally. Zaituni made a poignant statement about the communal benefit of investing in women, “if you educate a woman it means you educate the whole society because things are going to be good. Building the family, if not the family, but within the society in general” (personal communication, 23 December 2010). Zaituni referenced the benefit that educated women can add to their communities.

Grace cited the importance of treating boys and girls equally in the home environment as a means for moving women’s education forward. She stated that if women are educated, they will become more aware of gender issues and be able to instill positive societal changes and eliminate unequal treatment based on gender (personal communication, 27 December 2010). Grace also tackled the issue of providing equal access for boys and girls in rural areas and the positive ramifications this could have:

For example at the rural area...girls have a lot of things to do compared to boys, therefore I think in order to provide quality education to both children, they have to treat them equally. Girls they have ability, they have ability of performing well in academic studies but the problem is how they are treated in their families because they have a lot of things to do so they don't get extra time for studying and they are tired (Grace, personal communication, 27 December 2010).

The message of equality that Grace alluded to was repeated by Zaituni, who stated that it is important to start at the family level to ensure that all family members are treated equally (personal communication, 27 December 2010). She shared her ideas about the importance of women’s education, “something which can help women to change...is just the provision of educational equality” (personal communication, 27 December 2010).

Zaituni experienced someone else investing in her education and it has broadened her idea of how women should be viewed.

Throughout the course of my interviews with these women, they consistently shared the difficulties they encountered in terms of pursuing their education. However, they also expressed gratitude that they were able to continue with their education. These women were continuously pushing against the boundaries in their communities and because they valued education and were viewed as investments, they were able to persist.

Conclusion

This findings of this study bring to light the experiences and successes of first-generation women and their ability to pursue education in Tanzania. Specifically, the eight participants discussed how they moved from primary school through secondary school. The women candidly shared their backgrounds, information about their families, and their educational experiences. In sharing this information, they identified several tactics that helped them stay focused on their education. These ideas fall into three main categories: strategies for success, emotional and financial support, and the idea of education as an investment.

One of the ways the women described their success was by identifying strategies for success. Namely, they believed it was important to avoid social temptations associated with getting married at a young age or at becoming pregnant. Further, they shared their abilities to navigate the societal roles they were expected to play in their families and home communities. Often, this meant finding the balance between household duties and their academic studies. Further, the women identified the role of confidence and how it positively influenced their ability to continue with education. They stated the increased importance in their confidence as they moved from primary school through secondary school.

Secondly, the women shared the role of emotional encouragement and financial support. The women clearly delineated the difference between where they received emotional encouragement, stating that there is an absence of role models in the lives of young women. Further, they shared their thoughts on how to find financial support and the importance of navigating relationships, usually with fathers or uncles, who could help financially support their education. Finally, the women talked about the importance of reciprocating both emotional encouragement and financial support back to their home communities.

Finally, the participants used language that specifically communicated their experiences in being viewed as investments. They shared their own views of how they viewed using resources for their education and they continued by stating how other people in their lives viewed either them or their education as a long term investment. The next chapter will address how these findings fit with the reviewed literature and the implications of this study.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This study sought to answer questions about how first-generation women, that is, students whose parents did not attend a college or university, explained their success of persisting through primary and secondary school as they moved towards university-level education in Tanzania. The eight participants, who all identified as having grown up in rural areas, shared stories which provided insights into their various educational trajectories. Although this study is limited to the experiences of the women participants; the collective implications of their experiences could shed light on how women view factors associated with the successful pursuit of education in Tanzania.

This chapter will summarize the findings, articulate the connection between the study with previous literature, describe the study's implications, address limitations, and articulate directions for future research.

Summary of Findings

The women who participated in this research were asked questions about their views of various personal, cultural, social, and policy factors that contributed to their educational persistence. Further, they answered questions about the role of peers, family members, and their overall educational experiences as they progressed through primary and secondary school. The stories they disclosed and the tactics they identified to help them persist fall under the following themes: social and academic strategies, emotional and financial support, the outcome of positive social pressure, resisting negative pressures, and the view of their education as an investment.

The participants credited their educational success as a result of identifying social and academic strategies which helped them persist. They explained factors that enabled them, such as avoiding social temptations resulting in teenage pregnancy and not becoming involved in romantic relationships that would detract from their education.

Further, they pinpointed academic tactics that allowed them to stay focused. These strategies included finding ways to engage in their academic pursuits, even when their household responsibilities dictated that much of their time out of the classroom be spent on domestic work. While all of the women shared their opinions teenage pregnancy, few of them referred to other academic policies, such as teacher preparation or financial issues at the regional level, and the overall educational environment in Tanzania. The women identified confidence as a major factor for their success. This was especially important as they moved from primary to secondary school and the relationship between educational success and confidence became intertwined.

The participants communicated the importance of receiving both financial support and emotional encouragement in their educational development. Often, this meant the women relied on family members and teachers who would either help fund their education or provide them with positive messages. Many of the participants referenced either their inability to pay for school fees, or their doubt about where they would receive funding. Some of them approached school officials for financial assistance, while others recruited sponsors. Further, the women needed more than money to continue in school. They also cited the significance of hearing messages of encouragement from family members, school officials, and even community members. Encouragement was often lacking from female role models in rural areas, although most participants readily identified the importance of role models in a young girl's development. The participants made little reference to the influence of peers in their educational attainment. In essence, the women stated that the role of family members and teachers was essential in their ability to continue with education

The women also articulated their desire to give back to their communities as they gained more educational credentials. Their families and communities had elevated expectations of the women's future collaboration as they continued with their education and they verbalized the result of positive social and cultural pressure. These expectations

of help spanned a wide spectrum including future financial assistance and the reciprocation of positive role modeling.

Finally, the women expressed that because they viewed education as a good use of resources and because someone viewed either them or their education as an investment, they were able to persist. In essence, the women verbalized their success as a result of someone wanting to invest in either human capital or cultural capital. These women communicated their expected future earnings and contributions as a concept that was important to invest in. Further, the use of resources for women is noteworthy because, as a social group, they have not always had equal access to education. This is interesting because some of the participants articulated either family or community members' desire to invest in them and their potential, while a few participants believed in the gains they would receive if they found their own educational resources.

Integration of Findings with Previous Literature

Various aspects of the research findings reported here reinforce information from previous studies. This section will explore both the convergent and divergent findings as they relate to the literature reviewed in Chapter 3. In addition, this study's contributions to the current literature will be explored. Generally, both concepts of patriarchy and women as human capital overlap with previous research on women's access to education. While other notions explored in the literature such as, religion, proximity to schools, and initiation rituals emerged during this study, but not in a significant manner – these topics did not appear to positively or negatively influence the participants' ability to pursue education. Finally, isolating the experiences of first-generation women sheds light on a dimension that is often omitted from research on access to education in developing countries.

Convergent Findings

Given that this research was conducted taking into account the critical lens, wherein the notion of power was given special consideration, it is not surprising that the

concepts of patriarchy and women as investments came to light. Patriarchy is an informal system whereby men hold the power in a given society and while informal, it is very influential on young women who seek to continue with their educational pursuits. Several studies addressed the idea of patriarchy as a factor regarding women's education (Hood, 1988; Kwesiga, 2002; Egbo, 2000; Kiluva-ndunda, 2001). Gender is a determining factor in how resources are distributed and because patriarchy permeates Tanzania, the role of men in the lives of the research participants became a recurring theme (Hood, 1988).

Several participants acknowledged relationships either with their fathers, uncles, or husbands in relation to their ability to continue with education. Kwesiga (2002) noted that although men are the ones with access to money, it is often women who are responsible for paying for fees associated with education. Pascalina reinforced this point when she spoke of her mother encouraging and financing her education while her father was blatantly against it (personal communication, 13 November 2010). Moreover, in her current educational pursuits, Pascalina noted that her husband does not prohibit her from working on her doctoral degree, but nor does he provide her with any financial assistance. The idea of patriarchy is deeply embedded in society and continues to shape how women perceive their ability to continue with their studies. Festo credited her dad as the one who promised her that if she performed well she could continue with her education (personal communication, 16 December 2010). Lucy turned to her dad who was working in Kenya at the time, for permission and assistance in continuing from Standard VII to Form 1 (personal communication, 27 October 2010). In essence, the women frequently alluded to men in their lives and the weight that those male perspectives can hold over women continuing with their education.

Another main finding that mirrors the literature, is the notion of using familial resources for education, resulting in education becoming human capital. The idea of human capital, or the value of skills and knowledge individuals possess in a given society, was addressed by the women who felt as though their education was important

for future returns. Previous scholars studying women in developing countries used human capital as a way to explain economic decisions about how a family uses their resources (Bendera, 1999; Kwesiga, 2002). These studies describe how families use their resources to educate one gender over the other and how they engage in a cost-benefit analysis in their decision making.

My study reinforces the idea of education as an economic decision; the difference is that previous studies cite women's education as being less important than men's. These findings indicate that educating females is important, but the difference is between whether or not the women viewed their own investment as critical or whether their families made these decisions. Some of the participants did not have familial support but they believed their education was worth pursuing. Other participants were fortunate enough to have the support of someone who believed their education was important. Mariam's experience provides the perfect example of the changing attitudes of families using their resources for girls' education. Mariam was the youngest and only female of five children and she is the only child to move from primary to secondary school. Her persistence in higher education is a testament to the value her family places on her human capital.

The participants also voiced their opinions about their education as an investment. As stated previously, seven of the eight participants verbalized that either they or their families consciously made a decision to use resources for education. The participants also stated that their families made these decisions with the long term benefits in mind while considering the short term loss of money invested in schooling, the short term loss of a dowry for marriage, or the girls' inability to work for the family because their time was devoted to academics. The idea of sacrificing short term gains in lieu of long term ones is an example of families perception of the participants' potential and their human capital.

Non-Central Findings

Throughout the research process, the women articulated a wide variety of issues which either inhibited or enabled them to continue with their education. As mentioned in the Chapter 4, the Methodology Chapter, 17 codes were identified. Some of them were not salient enough to be main findings, although they did surface in both my research and previous research. The following concepts were identified in the literature as factors that influence, either positively or negatively, women's educational pursuits: religion, initiation rituals, and proximity to schools. The women alluded to these factors but they stated that these concepts did not significantly influence their educational persistence.

The women were asked not only to identify how they were successful, but to explain their academic and home environments. Religion was a socio-cultural factor that surfaced in previous research as a limiting circumstance for women's education (Beoku-Betts, 1998; Kwesiga, 2002). Of the eight participants, one identified as a practicing Muslim, one grew up in a Muslim home but is now Christian, and although the remaining six identified themselves as Christians only Festo and Lucy spoke about religion as a factor that aided in their pursuit of education. Many of the Christian participants had pessimistic opinions about Muslim women and their ability to pursue higher education. However, neither of women with Muslim backgrounds cited religion as a factor preventing them from continuing with their education. Pascalina, who grew up Muslim but who is now Christian, shared the experience of her father not supporting her education, but her mother did. Zaituni, who is a practicing Muslim, was fully supported in her academics. Overall, the role of religion did not appear to be either an inhibiting or prohibiting factor regarding educational persistence.

Another socio-cultural factor that was prevalent in the literature but did not stand out as a central theme, was initiation rituals. Several researchers acknowledged that while initiation rituals are not happening with the same frequency as during the last 25 years, they are still occurring (Bendera, 1999; Bhalalusesa, 2000; Stambach, 2000; Sutton,

1998). Initiation rituals are more prevalent in rural areas, but all of the participants from this study come from rural areas and none of them discussed participation in initiation rituals. Of the eight participants, only Sisto addressed the role of initiation rituals in the lives of young Tanzanian women. This does not necessarily mean initiation rituals are declining in Tanzania, only that the women in this study did not identify with being involved in this cultural practice.

When asked to divulge an average day during primary school and secondary school, most of the women acknowledged the distance they traveled from home to school; however, this did not seem to influence their ability to pursue education. Other studies claim that proximity to schools was an inhibiting factor for women's educational pursuits (Kwesiga, 2002; Bendera, 1999; Grown, Gupta, & Kes, 2005). Some of the participants shared their good fortune at not having to travel a long distance to get to school and others cited it as something they had to consider. But none of them talked about proximity to schools as an inhibiting factor associated with their education, even when they cited their domestic responsibilities on top of the time that was required to travel to school. The most noteworthy aspect of proximity to schools as a factor associated with success is that a few of the participants recalled the difference in attending a boarding school for secondary school. Those who attend boarding schools frequently have extra time allotted for studying while their peers who attend a day school for secondary school travel back and forth from home to the classroom.

Each of the aforementioned issues surfaced during the research process but either did not reinforce previous literature or play a big enough role to influence women's educational persistence. Perhaps with more exploration or more participants, these areas may have become more pronounced as influencing women's education either positively or negatively.

Contributions to the Literature

The bulk of my findings extend previous literature by adding a new dimension. Current literature does not overtly address several concepts that arose throughout this study, including: the experience of first-generation students, the role of women's confidence, the importance of staying single, and the difference between support and encouragement.

This study adds the voices and experiences of first-generation women which are rarely cited in the research on education in developing countries. Grown, Gupta, and Kes (2005) acknowledge the increase of educational attainment to subsequent generations when women are educated. This study provides a framework for understanding support systems for women who continue with education when their parents have not had the experience of navigating the educational system to the same level. Further, the women cited the cultural pressure they felt to reciprocate the support they received to their home communities. In essence, the women acknowledged the educational gains they received and their desire to provide not only intergenerational benefits to their children, but also to women and family members who remain in their home communities. Tanzanian social norms dictate that extended family members take care of each other; further, the sense of community is more fluid than in most Western countries. However, there is currently a lack of research that takes into consideration how these supportive cultural practices influence students' educational pursuits, or how first-generation students perceive the cultural role of giving back to their communities.

Additionally, the literature reviewed as a foundation for this study did not reveal information about the role of confidence in women's ability to pursue education. My study adds to the literature by adding new knowledge about how women perceive confidence and the role it played in their educational trajectories. Five of the women made reference to confidence as a motivational strategy. The idea of confidence is integral as it relates to the women identifying role models in their home communities and

understanding their full capacities. The women repeatedly mentioned that becoming confident in one's own abilities was a way for them to continue with their education. Finding confidence in the classroom spilled over into their personal lives.

The participants in this study spoke emphatically about their desire to stay single until they reached higher education. Many of them felt it was important to stay single until after they received their Bachelor's degrees. Only one participant, Zaituni, was married while pursuing her Bachelor's degree, and she is 29 years old. The findings of this study, based on the experiences of eight rural female students, suggest that the intersection of marriage and education results in the stifling of women's education if the women are in either primary or secondary school. Further, the women perceived both benefits and drawbacks of being more educated as it related to their ability to pursue a husband. This extends the knowledge of how patriarchy comes into play in Tanzanian society because the role of men was unequivocally connected to how the women viewed their success.

Finally, the results of this study articulate the difference between financial support and emotional encouragement in pursuit of tertiary education. Specifically, the results acknowledge the role of school fees and how financial support may be viewed as increasingly important as women persist through education; fees rise as students move through their educational paths, and the financial burdens compound making financial support indispensable near the end of secondary education. Further, the women verbalized the role of emotional encouragement. This encouragement did not always originate in the home. Frequently it came from teachers or other community members. Regardless of the source, women identified the importance of hearing messages of encouragement throughout their educational journeys and did not necessarily differentiate between when it was the most important.

The findings within this dissertation add to the research literature about women's pursuit of education. Primarily, this study includes the unique variable of first-generation

females. The results add to the literature on: first-generation students, women gaining confidence, how marriage influenced women's perceptions of their ability to pursue education, and the role of financial support and emotional encouragement.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Several implications arose as a result of this research. Given the experiences these participants shared and the previously known information about women's persistence in education, it can be deduced that empowering women is essential to their educational development. Women can be empowered in a variety of ways including: finding confidence, providing them with role models, and using resources for their educational benefits. Further, this research suggests policy implications to enhance the opportunities that women have to continue with their education.

Given that the women spoke strongly about how essential it was for them to have confidence, it follows a general logic that finding ways to empower women is key to helping them move forward with their education. This is especially important in terms of women pursuing science subjects. Females students need to be confident in the classroom and with the subjects they are studying. The women in this study also cited the importance of role models, even though several of them could not identify consistent, successful women in their daily lives. As the participants stated, they saw teachers as the female role models in their communities, but only a few of them were able to see women in business or leadership positions. The issue of confidence and empowerment is a new dimension that needs further consideration.

Women's confidence and empowerment cannot be considered without taking into account the patriarchal society in which these women live. Men hold the power at all levels of society: at the family unit level, in small communities, and at the national level. As the women explained, the role of men in their lives influenced their ability to pursue education. In order for women to become more empowered or feel more confident, both males and females must acknowledge the potential of female students and their abilities.

A potential policy implication is to create a program whereby women leaders in the community visit primary or secondary schools to talk to female students about their successes. A simple mentorship program or even a speaker series that exposes young girls to opportunities after they complete their schooling would provide greater exposure for female students. It is apparent that Tanzania does not have an abundance of resources to spend on social policies, but there are a myriad of ways that policies or general practices could be enhanced to better serve the needs of female students. Additionally, greater outreach programs could be introduced to students in Form 5 and Form 6. Although the Gender Center at the University of Dar es Salaam previously had funding for a program that included outreach and visits by current female students to students in A-level, funding for that program is no longer available. Pre-college outreach programs serve as a way to introduce students to tertiary education and could serve as strong motivating factors for students.

Further, the conundrum of teenage pregnancy needs to be delineated. The participants had a variety of perceptions about the role of pregnancy as it related to girls' ability to continue with their education. A few of the participants had female family members who were unable to continue with education because of getting pregnant at a young age. One participant knew a woman who became pregnant but who was allowed to finish her secondary schooling and who was attending university level education. Another participant witnessed a young student who left school for six months but who was allowed to return to take the Form 4 National Exams. That student failed, likely because she had missed six months of classes. Given the wide array of participant views and experiences with teenage pregnancy, it is clear that this issue needs to be refined.

There is a large spectrum of how teenage pregnancy is treated throughout Tanzania and no clear cut policy exists for how to handle women who become pregnant. Education about preventing pregnancy for boys, girls, and parents is an issue that warrants further attention. Currently only females endure repercussions for pregnancy.

There are no ramifications for the boys or men who impregnate the women; yet women suffer severe consequences. The policy needs to be revisited to ascertain how it is impacting female students. Additionally, the policy should be refined towards a more inclusive position that does not discriminate against women. It would be helpful to have more information on both teacher and female student perspectives about this issue. The findings of this study suggest the need to create a more inclusive policy. The ambiguity of the current policy appears to work against women and their ability to pursue education.

The implications of this study reveal that more attention needs to be paid to how women are empowered, how women's education is treated in a male dominated society, and the reality of what happens to young female students who become pregnant.

Limitations of Study

Inherent in all research projects are limitations that extend beyond the control of the researcher. I have taken as many steps as possible to ensure this research is sound, but potential limitations including generalizability and participant retention/time will be discussed here. It should be noted that researcher bias and limitations can be found in Chapter 4.

Generalizability

One of the main limitations of the implications of this study, is its generalizability to various populations. It is not known if the results of this research are indicative to other first-generation women in Tanzania. Nor is it known if other women at the University of Dar es Salaam would use similar language to explain their educational experiences. However, this study serves as a deep slice for understanding women in a developing country and their ability to pursue higher education.

Participant Retention/Time

Another potential limiting factor to this research is the amount of time that I allotted to conduct the study. Given my financial resources which dictated my total time spent in Tanzania, I did not have the luxury of recruiting more participants. I had four

additional women enrolled in the study; one opted out, one became ill and returned to her hometown, and two were unable to meet until the middle of January. At that time I was wrapping up the interviews and beginning analysis. Further, this study represents the experiences and perspectives of eight rural first-generation women. This is enough to draw conclusions about their educational experiences, but not enough to draw conclusions about the entire population of first-generation females. It should also be noted that of the eight women, seven identified as Christian, of those seven, one came from a Muslim background. Only one participant was not Christian, she was Muslim. This is not representative of the Tanzanian breakdown of Christian and Muslim members of society, which hovers around 30% Christians and 35% Muslims (World Factbook, 2009).

Future Research

The topic of access to higher education Tanzania is one that is ripe for future research. A wide array of approaches could be used to better understand the experiences and perspectives of access to higher education resulting in a much deeper knowledge of how Tanzanian's persist in education. Future research could be either qualitative or quantitative depending on the issues or variables studied. Specifically, the following areas warrant further attention: male student persistence, a more in-depth look at first-generation students, the role of teenage pregnancy, classroom policies, the notion of role models, and parental views of investing in education.

Although this study focused on rural first-generation female students, a similar study could be done on first-generation men and their access to higher education. The study looked at women because of their historical oppression, but a study that looks at just men or one that parallels men and women together could add to the understanding of gender differences and perspectives in education in Tanzania. Further, a study that includes men could differentiate between how men and women view their abilities to gain access to higher education.

Further, isolating first-generation students, either men, women, or both, to understand how they are supported could add to the knowledge of how to help students move through educational dimensions. First-generation students comprise a majority of university students in Tanzania and understanding their support systems or who in their communities answers their questions about attending higher education could provide a greater foundation for moving students through primary and secondary school. Frequently, first-generation students are not well versed about issues of financing education, application processes, or long term considerations for studying a specific topic. Learning about what current first-generation students would have found helpful, could greatly increase the resources available for future first-generation resources.

The topic of teenage pregnancy was prevalent throughout my time in Tanzania. Not only did the participants reference it as an issue, but it was on the radio, in the newspapers, and on television news shows. It was a common topic among Tanzanians who expressed opinions about women and education. Research about whether or not the policy regarding pregnant schoolgirls is being implemented throughout Tanzania would be beneficial to understanding women's retention and persistence rates. A study looking at how each region in Tanzania deals with teenage pregnancy or even gathering rates of pregnancy in schools would provide greater analysis for which areas need further program development on this issue. Further, the views of women who have been removed from school as a result of pregnancy would provide an understanding for how this issue influences the lives of women who are removed when they are pregnant. Finally, further knowledge is needed about how teenage pregnancy influences male students and the education that boys, girls, and parents receive regarding the prevention of pregnancy.

In addition to policies such as teenage pregnancy, additional areas such as classroom environment, teacher preparation, English as a medium of instruction warrant further consideration. During the course of this study Tanzania hit the UN Millennium

Development Goal of universal access to primary education, a goal set for all developing countries by 2015. The ramifications of Tanzania reaching this goal mean that secondary schools will become more crowded than when the participants were in primary and secondary school. It should be noted that many of these participants explained that overcrowded classrooms were an obstacle in their education. A look at teacher preparation and classroom crowdedness is warranted based on the combination of what the participants shared coupled with Tanzania's success of reaching the aforementioned Millennium Development Goal. With the crowding of classrooms, a study regarding what is being done to prepare and support teachers could positively impact student experiences. Currently, many teachers are only educated at the Form 4 level. A study about teacher preparation would shed light on teaching practices and challenges; the results of the research would be especially useful to help teachers prepare for such full classrooms. Many of the participants mentioned the challenge with switching from Kiswahili to English as a medium of instruction when they moved from Standard VII to Form 1. One participant, Pascalina, did her Master's research on student and teacher perceptions of the difference between English and Kiswahili as a medium of instruction. More research on the best medium of instruction for students is needed. A multitude of classroom issues presented themselves to the participants; much more knowledge is needed on these areas to understand how they impact student persistence and retention.

As the participants noted, they were able to identify female role models in broad scale Tanzanian society, but not many of the participants could name women who had served as role models for them on a personal level. Specifically in villages, more information is needed about the influence of female role models influencing students to pursue education. A study about the difference between male role models and female role models might help isolate where women are viewed as leaders in society and whether or not men or women see more role models and how this influences them.

Finally, given that so many participants talked about education as an investment in human capital, a study about parental views of education could provide more information on the number of students that pursue education. Specifically, is there a difference in views between parents in rural and urban areas? This could work as a study done by region as well. Further, research that discerns how parents view education based on the number of children they have might provide background into understanding how parents perceive investing in education or how they view the use of their resources in education. Research focused on parents could answer questions about differences in attitude or willingness to support female education.

Overall, there is a myriad of ways that research could be extended to learn more about the overall landscape of education in Tanzania and the various students, policies, and practices that influence educational attainment and persistence.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore experiences the women identified with their success of reaching tertiary education. Ethnography was used to understand how women overcome the social and societal roles expected of them, and how they balance those roles while pursuing academics. A total of eight rural women were interviewed multiple times to understand their perspectives and experiences.

A variety of strategies emerged as the women shared their educational trajectories. Women's ability to pursue education does not exist in a vacuum; in order for women to be successful in their educational attainment they needed strategies to help them move forward. Namely, the women learned how to avoid social temptations associated with teenage pregnancy and getting married at an early age. They voiced their intentions to stay focused on their academics. They also expressed their methods for finding ways to balance their studies with the societal expectations placed on them. In addition to the previous internal strategies, the women also credited the external financial support and emotional encouragement they received from family members and

community members. The importance of role models emerged as important for these women, although they also noted an absence of older females with whom they could talk to in their villages. While many of the participants did not feel as though they could see role models in their daily lives, they felt the need to serve as role models for their home communities. Further, the women acknowledged the importance of having time and money used on their education for their long term gains. Their education was viewed as an investment in human capital because of their expected future contributions to society.

It is my hope that the research presented here will help others understand more thoroughly how first-generation rural women in Tanzania are able to successfully pursue higher education despite a wide array of cultural and academic obstacles. The participants in this study were successful largely through the strategies they employed, their tenacity for achievement, and their discipline.

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ **Phone Number:** _____

Email: _____ **Home Region:** _____

Home Town: _____ **Number of Siblings:** _____

Type of high school attended: public or private

Number of people who lived with you when you were growing up: _____

Number of family members who are currently in University: _____

Mom's highest level of education: don't know Standard 7 Form 1 Form 2
Form 3 Form 4 Form 5 Form 6

Dad's highest level of education: don't know Standard 7 Form 1 Form 2
Form 3 Form 4 Form 5 Form 6

Highest level of education you expect to attain:

___ Bachelor's ___ Master's ___ PhD ___ MD ___ LB

Primary Reason for attending university:

_____ Increased earnings after graduation

_____ Intellectual curiosity (I like to learn)

_____ Family expectation (My family expected me to attend university)

_____ Ability to get a more diverse job

_____ Degree is prerequisite for job

_____ Opportunity to do research

_____ My friends are all attending

_____ To be independent (to create my own path)

_____ To be respected by society (be seen as an equal)

Career Goals: _____

Why did you decide to attend the University of Dar es Salaam?

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Social Factors

1. Who influenced your decision to attend college?
2. What does your family think about you attending the University of Dar es Salaam?
3. Who encourages you to pursue your education?
4. Who are successful women in Tanzanian society? What kind of occupations do they have? What was their path to “success”?
5. How many people from your extended family have attended any kind of college or University?
6. What motivated you to go to college?
7. What do your peers think about higher education and how it relates to marriage prospects?
8. Do you think it is harder for women to pursue advanced education than men? Why?

Cultural Factors

1. Tell me about a typical school day when you were in Standard I or II.
2. Tell me about a typical school day when you were in Form 3 or Form 4.
3. What changed between Standard I or II and Form 3 or 4?
4. Does going to college change how you feel about raising a family?
5. As a woman, do you feel supported in your college setting?
6. Is there support for you as a first-generation student?
7. What would you like to see change with regard to women’s rights in Tanzania?
8. What benefits can women get in the job market after receiving a college degree?
9. Will you expect your children to go to college?

Policy Factors

1. What made you decide to go to college?
2. What organizations provide support for students with background similar to yours? (Religious organizations? Government Scholarships? NGO's?)
3. How does it feel to be the first woman in your family to go to college?
4. Is there more opportunity for women to participate in advanced study than in the past? If yes, why is this the case?
5. What is the current policy regarding pregnant girls in O-Level or A-Level?
6. What do you think about this policy?
7. Were your secondary school teachers equally fair to male and female students?
8. Can you think of a young woman whose background was very similar to yours who did not study further? Why was this the case?
9. How are you financing your education?

APPENDIX C
RESEARCH INFORMATION FORM

I invite you to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to understand how women move through primary and secondary education and pursue higher education. I am inviting you to be in this study because you are a female University student. Approximately 12 people will take part in this study.

If you agree to participate, I would like to meet with you two or three times for about an hour each time. I will ask you questions about who and what helped you decide to pursue a college degree. You will be able to skip any questions you wish. If you agree, I would like to audio record our interviews. I will make a transcript of the interview and I will destroy the audio tape after the transcript has been made and checked. If you do not wish to have your interview recorded, I will not record our conversation but will take written notes. I will ask you at the start of each of our meeting whether or not you agree to the recording. After I have made the transcript of your interview, I may ask to meet with you to review the information and let me know if the information is correct and accurately represents what you said during the interviews.

We will keep the information you provide confidential, however federal regulatory agencies and the University of Iowa Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. I will create a fake name for you and will use this instead of your real name to identify your study information. I will not include your real name in any information about my study. I will keep a secured master list linking your real name to your study name. I will keep the study materials in locked offices or files and in password protected computer files.

You may be uncomfortable talking about your life and your family with the researcher. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer and you may end the interviews at any time. You will not benefit personally from being in this study. However we hope that others may benefit in the future from what we learn as a result of this study. You will not have any costs for being in this research study. You will not be paid for being in this research study. Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you won't be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

If you have any questions about this research study, I would be happy to answer them. I can be reached by email at megan-p-johnson@uiowa.edu or by calling the number I have given you. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects, you can contact the Human Subjects Office, 300 College of Medicine Administration Building, The University of Iowa, Iowa City 52242, (319) 335-6564, or through email at irb@uiowa.edu

Thank you very much for your consideration. If you agree to be in the study, please tell me now. If you need time to consider your participation, please contact me by e-mail or the number I have given you. If you do not wish to be in the study, tell me at any time.

APPENDIX D
SAMPLE INTERVIEW WITH FESTO

INTERVIEW WITH FESTO II

20 DECEMBER 2010

CHAI BANDA UNDER KISWAHILI BUILDING

UDSM

M: ok. so, um did you get my text message yesterday?

T: yes. yesterday.

M: it was really...Festo, i REALLY, REALLY enjoyed transcribing your notes. um, i think you, i think you have a really cool perspective, and so i do have, as i was listening i realized that i interrupted you and i apologize because when we were talking about teenage pregnancy, at this point in my research i have so many people tell me things that i am starting to form opinions, and i need to stop that. so i want to ask again, so is teenage pregnancy is an issue here in Tanzania, yeah?

T: yes.

M: so we, you tell me what you think about it. or what you saw, did you have peers, colleagues, and school classmates that dealt with teenage pregnancy? and what do you think, how do you think it's being handled? is progress being made to eradicate teenage pregnancy...what's your view of what is happening?

T: eh. NA SWALI NGUMU (is a hard question)

M: if you use Swahili it's ok, but will you speak very slowly? because when i listen to the parts in Swahili you speak very, very fast and it was very difficult.

T: KWA HIYO UNATAKA KUJUA KWAMBA NI MADHARA GANI AMBAYO UNAYAPATA KUTOKANA NA (therefore you want to know that what kind of effects you can get due to...)

M: POLE POLE. POLE. (slowly, slowly, slowly!)

T: you want to know the effects? the effects?

M: yeah or did you, did you know women that you went to school with

T: yes.

M: that were pregnant?

T: yes.

M: and what happened to them?

T: OK, what happened to them of course they were, they were WALIONDOKA SHULENI. WALIONDOLEWA (they left school).

M: they left school.

T: yes. by that time...YAANI KWAMBA HAWARUHUSU MTU ALIYEKUWA NA MIMBA ABAKI SHULENI (that is they don't allow anyone who is pregnant to remain in school).

M: so when they were pregnant, did they return?

T: supposed to leave school.

M: yeah.

T: yes. NA MADHARA. the effects.

M: the effects yeah

T: the effects that way, of course they were girls getting again the chance of going to school. cuz the other parents they have, they are not well. so they WANASEMA KWAMBA UKICHEZEA chance MARA MOJA HAUURUDII TENA (they say that if misuse the chance one time, you will not return again). therefore, you can't go to school if you lose the first chance. so, they, they stay at home, until today

M: yeah, so they lose an opportunity.

T: yeah, they lose...but there are few which KWA MFANO KUNA DADA MMOJA (for example there is one girl) who have brother and sister because they are girls, up to this time she is here at this school. she was getting pregnant at Form 2 level, but her parents, her parents YAANI WAZAZI WAKE WALIMKUBALI TENA KURUDI SHULENI (that is, her parents allowed her to return to school).

M: her parents allowed her to return.

T: yes. to go to school. so until this day she is here and she is studying until this day.

M: so after she gave birth.

T: yes.

M: then she returned.

T: she have one children up until this time.

M: yeah. ok. so is it changing? is, um, are things changing for women who get pregnant? is teenage pregnancy changing? so you just gave a good example of a woman who went back to school.

T: yes, i have.

M: is it, is it getting better? are more women doing that?

T: what?

M: are more women able to study even though they have children?

T: yes! YUPO, NA BAADA YA KURUDI SHULENI ... SOMA YAKE. she was, she was doing well. (they are and after they return to school ... their studies)

M: yes. and so she was able to return.

T: yes! in our school, she was getting maybe a 1st, 1st, she was performing well.

M: yeah.

INTERRUPTION

T: that girl of course, her mind it was very, very bright. she was very bright and as, as i told you at girls secondary we were 120, she was, she was succeeded to be the 1st girl or 2nd or 3rd.

M: oh, because didn't you say they would put, they would recognize the top 10

T: yes, top 10

M: and she was one of them. so she was successful.

T: yes!

M: so why was she able to go back to school? did her parents allow her? did the headmaster allow her?

T: um...she was getting pregnant when she was Form 2 and that school was private, so she continued to, to, to...her education in private schools

M: so she stayed

T: yes. and Form 4 she was passed well and then allowed, she was chosen to government school which was in UGALA.

M: Form 5, 6.

T: yeah. of course she was very

INTERRUPTION.

T: sorry. KWA KWELI ALIKUWA NA AKILI YULE DADA (actually she was so smart, that girl).

M: oh, that woman.

T: she was bright.

M: yeah.

T: until today she is here, studying PSP. of course PSP is a hard subject.

M: what's PSP?

T: PSP, political science and public administration.

M: oh.

T: yes! she was performing very well.

M: do you know her?

T: i know her, she is called Adella.

M: can i meet her sometime?

T: i will try to find his number, then i will...

M: yeah, or sometime i would like to meet her and just hear...because that is a positive experience

T: that's right.

M: and i think many women that get pregnant, don't have that experience.

T: i will find.

M: yah, ok. so just now before we started you mentioned that you went to church twice this weekend

T: what?

M: you went to church twice this weekend.

T: what? oh yes, it was very, very good.

M: and in your interview you mentioned God a little bit. you said 'if God wills it i will...

T: yes

M: ...be able to study Sociology later' and, so will you tell me a little bit about your religion?

T: i am saved at a good church Pentecostal Tanzanian Assemblies of God.

M: Pentecostal Assemblies of God

T: yes, Tanzanian Pentecostal Assemblies of God.

M: and, did you are you, is your family religious?

T: yes.

M: because you mentioned one of the women who was a role model for you was a woman in your church, so one of the things i'm interested in learning when i talk to women, is about the religious influences and their education. so did that, did they overlap? did your, how do i...in church you had a role model that said 'it's important to keep studying'. there was a woman in church who said 'young girls do as i did. this is what i did to be successful'.

T: yes, yes, yes.

M: so, did you hear a message of encouragement in church?

T: in church.

M: to get education.

T: yes. in church. yes, um of course in schools, they, there is a second organization called CASFETA

M: what?

T: CASFETA.

M: CASFETA.

T: yes CASFETA is Christian Ambassador Fellowship Tanzania. ok, that is CASFETA. and this CASFETA is the organization which organize all students which have served, all students which are Pentecostal religion. so this organization they tried to teach the certain subjects like educational information.

M: oh.

T: yes, so they tried to educate that, to educate, to give us a certain things through educational information. so, they encouraging us, they giving us the good things about education, depend to guide.

M: ok, so that's very helpful. so then your religion influenced

T: yes, yes, very much.

M: because you mentioned that you were disciplined. you said at one point 'i am very disciplined' and so i thought 'oh, where does she get that discipline? where does that come from?'. so some of your discipline is because you heard those messages in church.

T: yes.

M: ok, can you say more?

T: (chuckling) um....

M: wait, so tell me, the education piece of that group. of the group of, what did you call it? what's the name of the Pentecostal group? the group that you just told me about...

T: CASFETA.

M: oh yeah, write it for me. C A S F E T A...Christian Ambassadors for, for?

T: Ambassador student

M: oh, Ambassador Student Fellowship Tanzania.

T: yes.

M: ok. and that's part of the reason you're so disciplined

T: yes!

M: because you heard messages there

T: and there is student called TAYOMI, TAYOMI, so it is CAFESTA, TAYOMI.

M: what's TAYOMI mean?

T: TAYOMI means, Tanzania Youth Ministries.

M: ok.

T: so that is, most youths they are engaged in this ministries in this, this part of TAYOMI. so from primary school up to university level.

M: ok, so they help you with education. they encourage you with education? so that's a big deal!

T: (chuckles) yes!

M: because, again, as i listen to your interview, your, your dad supported you financially and your mom encouraged you and then you were able, really quickly to name two women in your community that encouraged you. the wife of your headmaster and this woman in church and then, and then your religion and all of that comes together, means you're probably going to be successful, yeah?

T: yeah.

M: so then i, i, i wonder of all of those, so of the Christian, of the Pentecostal education, of your parents who supported you, of the role models you had, and the positive schooling, positive school experience, which do you think was the most important in helping you get to college? pursue university?

T: which things?

M: which one was the most important? if you had to say, this was the one thing that helped me the most to get to university, what would you say?

T: ok. yes. ok. what i can say, there is a lot of things which were, were, were, were helping me to be here, but the most is...religion.

M: religion.

T: yes. because many people they have, her parents or they parents and teachers and woman they tell you to encourage them but they fail to go ahead, but the most things is just the fear of God in my heart. this only is the one which helped me to reach here. and this, and according to my, let's say when i was in Form 6 in my division, i was succeeded to get the discipline what? certificate. this was, it was not easy. if i, if i was SIYO RAHISI (it was not easy) because KWAMBA (that) to the, to the girl who is doing bad things, it was not easy to get this certificate, but because of fear in my heart, this was helped me to get that.

M: ok.

T: and, and, eh, as we know that discipline, education without discipline is nothing. discipline without education is nothing.

M: ok, that's good i like that. that's really good. so then can i ask you about, um, can i ask you about women who are Muslims. what's, what's the, what's your impression...

T: Muslims, hmmm!

M: and education and women.

T: of course about Muslim, i don't have any experience about them because um, KWA KWELI SIWAFHAMU VIZURI (actually, i don't know them well) um, LAKINI most of girls of Muslim they are very yes, TUNASOMA NAO LAKINI YAANI SINA USHIRIKIANO NAO MZURI SANA WALE, YAANI SINA USHIRKIANO NAO MZURI Muslims (we study together but i don't have a good relationship with them, actually i don't have a good relationship). YAANI i haven't a good relationship with Muslims.

M: you do.

T: i don't have.

M: you don't have. why? you said SIYO FAHAMU (I don't understand) because you don't...

T: of course the Muslims sometimes they are, they are segregating themselves, so what...

M: yeah. and that's why i ask because when i do the reading. when i read about other people's studies and other people's research, one of the things that comes up is religion. so that's why i wanted, and you just said 'religion is really important for your discipline and it's important for education'. but then i look around and i see, but there are Muslim women here, so i wonder how they made it. and i have a few Muslim women in my studies, so i will ask them that. but i'm always just curious to know what, what your perception is of them, but you think that to an extent, they segregate themselves.

T: they segregate, most of them, of course from, from A level i have used to see many, many, many Muslims, but cooperation, to cooperate with them is difficult because a lot of times they need to stay alone and they study even here in school, even here at this university there are a lot of Muslims, most of them, i don't know why, but it is out of my, out of my range. i don't know why.

M: yeah, i understand. um, i'm, um...tell me, so i want to go...what i'm interested in learning is how women are in Tanzania and the roles that you are expected to play at home, so the cooking, the cleaning, the washing and then the, how that crosses over with education. so can you tell me what is the role or what is the responsibility of a woman in Tanzania?

T: what is it?

M: what's the responsibility or the roles...

T: all woman

M: of women, yeah?

T: ok. the responsibility of the woman. of course it WANA...the washing, the have even my mom they try to go in the farm, my mom. i think you know that my mom, she haven't work.

M: yeah.

T: yes.

M: she took care of the children.

T: yeah, she is going there to farm to cultivate for us, because dad, the money which dad gets it's used to make us to go to school and not for other issues. so my mom is the one who used to go there to farm. and, another work of my mom is just to find the firewood and to fetch water and to fetch water and to make care, to make care, to his family.

M: to his family.

T: to his family.

M: so to your dad's family.

T: yes, there's even dad, but mom is very, very good. is YAANI is mama NDOA KWAJO is more considerate. mama will appear there, not dad because dad most of time he is there to the, to the work. so mom is the one which is responsible for the home.

M: yeah. um. so, we, um, so will have a college education when you are done, maybe a Master's degree in Sociology.

T: maybe!

M: maybe! so will your role be different? will your life be different than your mom's life?

T: yes, i think so it will be different.

M: how?

T: because by that time, i will be having my work, so um, i think in my house i am going to have a certain girl or boy who lives with me to work in my house.

M: so you'll have a house girl or house boy

T: yeah, house girl or house boy to clean my house to wash my different things, to, to lot of works. to clean, maybe to my garden to add what, what, and what. to help my children.

M: to help!

T: i think THAT will be different from my mom.

M: so do you think the expectations of women are changing? the expectations? so when you grew up it was expected that your mom would get the firewood, would fetch water, she would clean, she would raise children, and so then when you have a degree, you will work and you will have someone who helps you, but will your husband or the rest of, like

um, your community, expect that you still take on the, that you're still the leader in the home?

T: me?

M: yeah.

T: of course in Tanzanian culture, even the house is being constructed, the woman is the one who will be considered, not her husband.

M: will be considered.

T: yes. YAANI KAMA NYUMBA ITAKUWA HAIPO VIZURI, (that is, like the house it will not be good) the woman is the one to be, conse...

M: consequences if the house is not good.

T: yes. so, ok fine, i know that this time i am more educated. i will change most of things, like that i have mentioned you at this time, but to care about family, that is compulsory

M: yeah. so do you think, do you think because you have education, because you will have a Bachelor's degree, and maybe someday a Master's degree, will your relationship with your husband be different than if you didn't have higher education?

T: no. because you know sometimes these things about maybe woman right, what, what, ok fine. they tried to say that a woman...first then the raise first. they tried to follow her of his rights of woman. but when you turn back to the Bible, what the Bible says about, about it. The Bible says that the men will be the head of the family and the woman will be his side is walking, his helper...the, who will help, i don't know what to say...

M: sure, sure. i understand.

T: yes, so the, to respect woman is there, but not to be exploited. to respect woman, to respect man is there, we must respect men, but don't men exploit that is not good.

M: does that happen?

T: yes! yes! sometime it happen because the men are used, even the Bible say that, men they, men they are head of the family, but men tried to use that chance to exploit woman. so that is not fair.

M: yeah.

T: and for my life, i will make sure that man does not exploit me.

M: ok, so you think that would happen regardless of whether or not you went to get university degree or not? so for you, because you have such a strong faith in your religion, if you went on to get a university degree or if you didn't you think the expectations would be the same at home.

T: yes.

M: it's very, cool. i'm just curious to know.

T: SIJUI KWAKE LETU, i didn't get you, you say that maybe until i go to university or....my expectation will be the same about marriage.

M: yeah, about marriage. and his expectations will be the same. so if you think about some of the women that you went to school with, maybe that you went to Form 4 with and then they did not go to Form 5 or Form 6 and they are at home now, that are married, do their husbands have different expectations of them? or is there marriage different because they're not educated, as educated as you will be?

T: yes. (chuckles)

M: is it different?

T: yes it is different. ok. what i can say here, that the girl which have Form 6 level, Form 4 it depend at the level of the men's education.

M: oh.

T: because sometimes if men have higher education than girl. other mens, this is the source of exploitation to women. so the level of education, the faith or religion. not faith, let's say the YAANI the, the knowledge about God. even this it can help the woman to, the man to exploit her, her children. ok fine, YAANI KWAMBA INATEGEMEANA NA ELIMU YA MTU KUHUSU ELIMU KWA KWELI YAANI KAMA NI KUBWA SANA (that is, that it depends on the education of the person, actually that is, if it's high).

M: ah hah, you have to go slower. it depends on the education of...

T: it depends the education of a woman. thus, if it can be, it, it can be, it can be low or no level of education. other women this is the source of her exploitation and about religion also, if man he doesn't know well, or he doesn't have a fear of God in the heart, this it can be used to exploit the woman.

M: so then, is it possible in Tanzania for a woman to be married to a man and she has more education than him?

T: yes! this is what i have been talking about.

M: it's ok for a woman to have more education than their husbands.

T: ok, fine. it's not the rule, but this is what YAANI SIYO SHERIA LAKINI IPO (that is, is not a law but it happens). other men they say that, if you can get a wife which is, which having more education than you, they believe woman can exploit you but i am not sure about that.

M: so then it's not ok.

T: it's not ok, LAKINI WAPO (but it is)

M: it happens.

T: it happens, there are few. but most they, most they have higher education than women.

M: Ok, so um, are women's issues, so general women's issues, social issues um, are they addressed in Tanzanian society? in your culture are, do you feel as though women's issues are addressed maybe on the news or on the radio or in newspapers? or like, when i drive around i see HakiELIMU, HakiELIMU billboards and there's i don't remember which newspaper it is, but every Thursday in this newspaper they put out just a woman's section only. and when i listen to the radio i hear announcers talking about issues of teenage pregnancy, so do you think that women's issues re being addressed in Tanzanian society, in your culture? does that make sense?

T: women, about gender?

M: yeah, about gender.

T: in Tanzania, yes it's practiced. of course the government is starting to educate us about it, they try to educate about the right of....about gender and...in Tanzania we have much, much aid in each year, we have the day of woman. this is day of woman. out of that, they tried to educate us about gender in Tanzania. we have not segregated between a man and woman or boy and girls.

M: that we all have rights

T: yes. uh huh, it's not rights, it's not right to segregate or to discriminate women and maybe girls. both of them they have rights to get school and to do like activities of home or whatever.

M: yeah.

T: yes, this is true that they have tried to educate but in real sense it is not in the world
(light chuckle)

M: tell me why! why?!

T: mmmmmhmmmm (chuckles)

M: because that's what i wonder! because i see it on billboards, i read about it in the newspaper, i hear about it on the radio, but then i think 'is it really happening?'. so you say 'no, it's not really happening, women don't have the same rights as men'.

T: no, they have the same rights yes, WANA HAKI SAWA LAKINI SASA...NASEMA KWAMBA issue YA edu...YAANI about (they have the same rights but....)

M: issue...yeah.

T: if people, have not educated, it can do BASI (enough). if a person have no fear of God can do that bad things, but if she, if she or he have all that knowledge which i have said to you, it can...she or he can do well things. because, of course getting like this, yes but i think it's not good.

M: it's not good.

T: yeah. NIMECHANGANYA. i have contradicted you.

M: it's a hard issue yeah? it's not easy to talk about because there, because yeah. it's just, i wonder if it's changing. i wonder if it's getting better. so if i did this same research 10 years ago would women say 'i don't have any rights. i can't succeed. i can't move forward'. and now women are saying 'i can. i can move forward. i can succeed'.

T: yes!

M: so that's just what i'm try to find out, is where on like a spectrum of 'no, women have no rights' and 'yes women are very, women have a lot of rights'. where...i'm just trying to figure out where you think women are. are they 'here' in terms of 'no things are not equal. men have more access to education, men have more rights in society' or are they over 'here' where 'no, women have lots of rights and women are treated equally in society'. so where are you? where do you think?

T: me?

M: yeah.

T: of course what i know, most of them have rights and things which cause Tanzania to be like that...um, LABDA NINGESEMA KWAMBA (maybe i would say that) it's due to culture. our culture. it effect us much.

M: yeah, i understand. i like talking to you, i think you have a really interesting perspective. it's very nice. please you can eat!

T: (chuckles)

BRIEF INTERRUPTION AND SMALL TALK ABOUT CHRISTMAS

M: i think today i have asked you many questions, yeah?

T: ah, yes.

M: Festo, when you arrived here at the university did you feel prepared?

T: about what? financial or what?

M: oh yeah, all of it! did you feel like, when you started your classes did you feel prepared for classes, did you financially...yeah, tell me about it.

T: of course...um, financial it was, it was not good to me at that time. because a lot of money they are needed at the same time. and as you know, at the government school, when the school is open i was paying to go to school, maybe 70 hundred for school fee. and sometimes my dad was giving me maybe half the school fee maybe 35 or 25 just to go and, and...

M: to pay a little bit at a time.

T: yes. but for that time, it was MUST to have more than, LAKI TATU MPAKA NNE (300,000 up to 400,000Tanzanian Shillings)

M: more than 300,000 or 400.

T: yes. PAMOJA. (together)

M: together, all at once.

T: KWA KWELI (truth). i was coming with just a little amount of money that was helping me for the first days

M: transportation and

T: yeah, and as you know that i was...WAGENI (visitor)

M: you were a newcomer to the area

T: yes, i was a newcomer to the area, dar es salaam. my, there is my uncle, stay there at (somewhere)

M: i don't know there!

T: at, Nyerere airport, at there.

M: yeah, that is far

T: yes, very far. i was trying to use up, if there i was using a lot of costs to come here and to go back there. of course, it was hard life by that time. and by that time, after money which are provided by the loan board we were given at ah, at four weeks or five, we are given the money by loan board. yeah, we are provided the money which we are given by the loan board i was trying to, to, to pay some fees which were ...

M: yeah, tuition

T: yes. i was paying some school fees and buying books, pens, and different things, maybe paying about accommodation for the first year i was staying there at hall 1 and so, that it was (chuckles)

M: did you feel prepared for classes? so when classes started, your first few weeks, maybe your first month you were taking classes, were you nervous, were you scared? did you think 'i can do this! no problems'? what did you think or how did you feel about classes?

T: by that time? of course about classes, it was taking me many times...of course to do the situation which i was facing here at this university it was quite different from what i was thinking when i was staying at my home, so it, because i was thinking about where can i get money. so i was not well for the first days of, this first few weeks of, before

M: yeah, but when classes started, did you feel academically prepared?

T: yes, but not much.

M: not much.

T: ah, because the money, i have some which loan boards have provided to me, MILIONI MMOJA (one million (Tanzanian Shillings))

M: one million

T: MILIONI MMOJA (one million) but loan board, WANALIPIA LAKI NANE (they paid 800,000)

M: they only gave you 800,000

T: 800,000, but that remain two i am supposed to pay me. and this, my dad, he doesn't try to pay for me and as you know that they tried to pay what um, the money which i have get from loan board it's not much SIYO NYINGI (it's not much) but i tried to pay myself that main one, but not from home. so of course by that time i was thinking where can i get another money to pay?

M: yeah!

T: where can i get another money? how can i go to leave for all time here, so i have a lot of thinking in my head.

M: where did you find the money?

T: um, of course i was, the money which i was, the, the money for me which i was get from loan board that is the one which i was used to pay until today. so after getting that money, i take the some of money to pay to bank, the remain one that is make me to continue to live.

M: you used that money.

T: yes.

M: so they give you money for classes and they give you money for food and living expenses, yeah?

T: what?

M: when they give you all that money, you should use it for classes...

T: for classes, for living, for accommodation, for transport. this time i'm at MABIBO.

M: yeah, you're at MABIBO.

T: yes, so for transport, for stationaries, for buying my things maybe oils, maybe to go to make my hair or whatever, to buy shoes

M: everything

T: everything!

M: and so you, just used all...not the leftover, but the money that you should be using for accommodations and for transportation, you used for tuition, yeah?

T: that is money for my means, that have provided from loans board

M: yeah, and when you sat down in the classrooms, did you think 'oh! i can study this, this is easy?' or did you think 'oh, this is a hard class'? did you feel ready for classes?

T: ok, yes, sometimes there are courses which are easy but there are some courses that are very hard. even teacher cause to be hard.

M: yeah, i understand. but overall, did you feel prepared? did your experience at O level and A level help you to be successful at university?

T: oh, no! don't you know that some subject which we are studying here, there is no relationship to this subject to O level or A level subjects, but there are a few. not all. the most courses for me it's new things. from first yeah up to this time, YAANI there are courses which are very new to my mind, but are ok fine. but there are other, that they share maybe knowledge not in all areas of the course, to some courses you just supply the knowledge from ...

M: yeah, i wonder um, because we talked about, you had a couple, you had a few really good teachers when you were growing up and so then i wonder when students arrive at the university do they feel prepared? i talked to someone who said, she didn't feel prepared because when she came here, she was expected to talk a lot, to speak a lot in front of her class and she wasn't ready for that because she had never been taught how to stand up in front of a group of people and to speak.

T: oh, ok.

M: and i talk to people that when they come here, there's a lot, they're not expecting to reach so much or maybe they read more, they studied more and prepared more in A level and then they come here and classes are easier, so i'm just wondering how classes are for you.

T: of course, even me, i see that this changes, YAANI (that is) this area is different than that area, because here you used to study a lot of things for a few times, maybe for a few months, and you study each hard, there is the composition of a lot of things for a few times. and, of course, it is a challenge maybe to stand in a room and to speak in English for almost one hour and to speak in front of your, of your fellows and to teach maybe, it's like to teach maybe or to tell about, something which you have read research. it's a challenge, but it's good it make us to improve English. it's good and it gives us

confidence because it cause us to teach, we stand in front of student for more of what, it give us confidence, but for the first time it is challenge.

M: it's interesting because some of the women in my study this is their first year on campus and when i talk to them they are very quiet and shy and then i talk to women like you and you are very comfortable, you know your way around campus, you feel very good about yourself, and then i talk to graduate students and they talk even bigger, so it's very interesting to see how the more educated women i talk to here at the university, the more confidence they seem to have. and you are saying that is one of the things that happens because in the classroom you stand up in front of the room and speak and you become more comfortable with your environment, yeah?

T: mmhmmm (agreeing)

M: so can we meet one more time?

T: this week

M: next week. do you think next Monday at the same time? will you be back from Dodoma at that time?

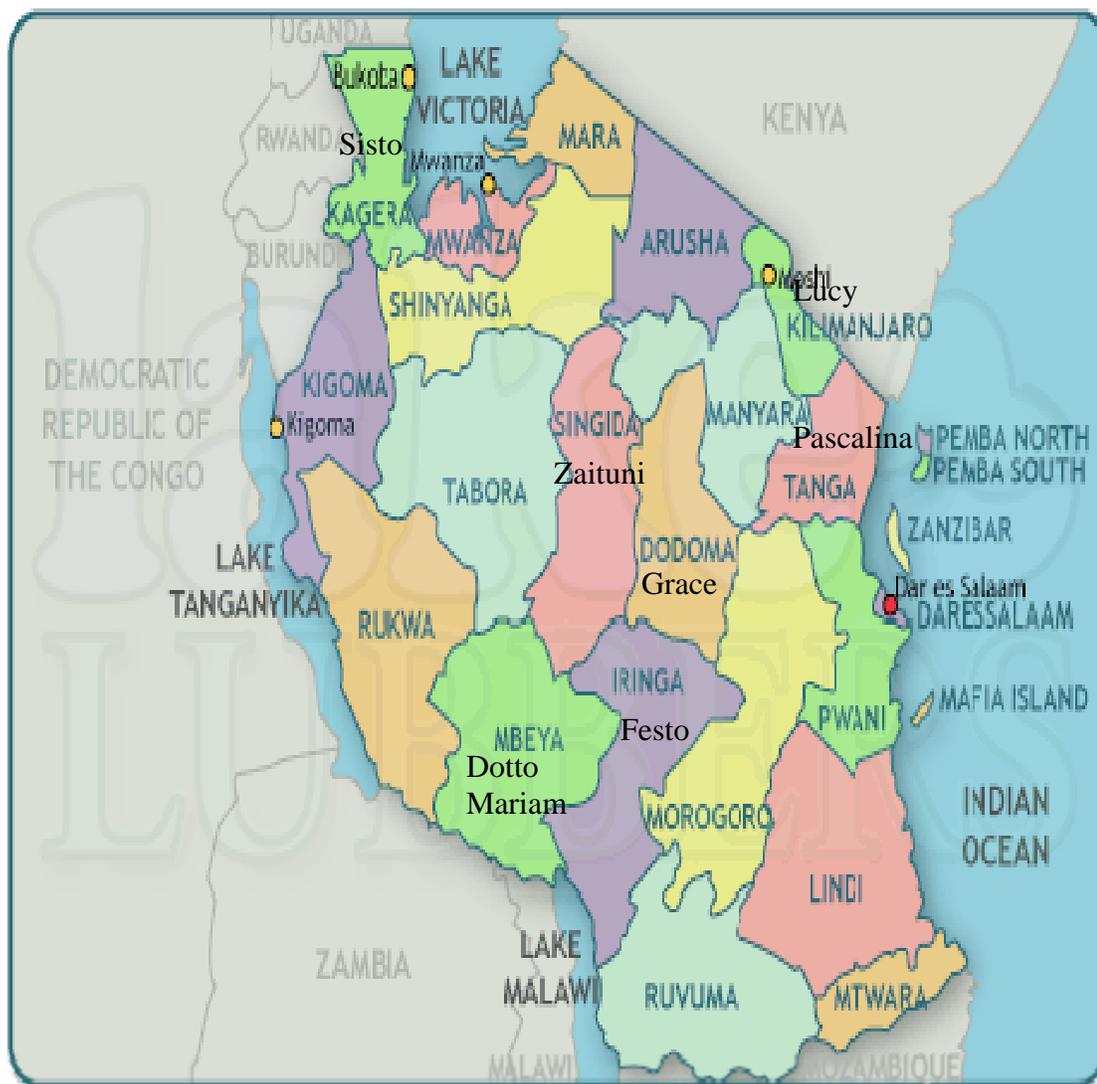
T: no, no because Dodoma is very far.

M: let's find time to meet...

WORK THROUGH NEXT MEETING TIME AND DATE

APPENDIX E
MAP OF TANZANIA BY REGIONS

Figure E1. Map of Tanzania by Regions



APPENDIX F
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Table F1. Participant Information

Name	Age	Degree Pursuing	Marital Status	# of Siblings & Rank	Region	Proverb/Quote	General Background
Lucy	41	PhD	M (2 kids)	6 siblings 1/7	Kilimanjaro (North)	Education is like a sea. (Elimu ni bahari)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong primary school teacher who talked to mom & encouraged in Standard 7 - Confidence played a big role in education - Catholic background helped with focus
Pascalina	33	PhD	M (2 kids)	18 siblings (3 moms)	Tanga (Northeast)	Education is light. (Elimu ni taa)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grew up Islamic, now Christian - Dad didn't value girls education, but does now - Only 2 kids (her and sister) went to Higher Education - Has two Master's degrees - Husband encourages pursuit of PhD, but doesn't support financially - Mom had no education, but encouraged it
Sisto	29	Master's	M	1 sister 2/2	Kagera (West)	Education is war. Education can be my mom and my dad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orphan at the age of 1 - Sold goods/services to pay for school fees - Had one uncle who supported educational pursuits – he lived in Dar, not hometown
Zaituni	29	Bachelor's (3 rd year)	M (2 kids)	7 siblings 5/8	Singida (Central)	Those who struggle in the sun, reap the benefits at the table. (mchumia juani hulia kivuluni)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asked district level officer for help with school fees for Form 3&4 - Didn't pass O level exams (Form 4) - Took private school at night (while teaching) for A level - Taught in Dar es Salaam schools before returning to University - Islamic – husband supports education
Grace	25	Bachelor's (3 rd year)	S	3 siblings 1/4	Dodoma (Central)	Education is like a sea (Elimu ni bahari)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lived with Grandma for primary school and O level in Kigoma - Failed Form 4 exam but repeated the year - Stayed at school late to study and avoid working in the family store

Table F1 (continued)

Name	Age	Degree Pursuing	Marital Status	# of Siblings & Rank	Region	Proverb/Quote	General Background
Festo	23	Bachelor's (3 rd year)	S	4 siblings 1/5 (only girl)	Iringa (South)	Education needs discipline Education needs tolerance Education needs awareness	- Christian background had positive influence on education and discipline - Believes discipline is key for education - Classmate gave birth and returned to Form 2 - Father promised he would fund her education up to University
Dotto	22	Bachelor's (1 st year)	S	4 siblings 2/5	Mbeya (Southwest)	Those who move quickly make haste (haraka haraka, haina baraka)	- 1 st child to go to Form 5, 6, & University - Dad had problems with crops and paying for her school, went to headmaster of A level and asked for help with school fees
Mariam	21	Bachelor's (1 st year)	S	4 siblings 5/5 (only girl)	Mbeya (Southwest)	Education is the key to life (Elimu ni ufunguo maisha)	- Older brothers did not encourage education, but mom and dad did - Uncle financially supported A level education - Two teachers in secondary school encouraged education

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