

**International
Institute of
Social Studies**

Erasmus

**Bridging the gap between gendered access and
completion: The educational exclusion experiences of
girls in rural Tanzania**

A Research Paper presented by:

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(Tanzania)

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major:

Social Policy for Development

SPD

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December 2016

Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to God Almighty, the author and the finisher of my Faith

Acknowledgement

My deep appreciation goes to Almighty God for guiding me through my studies in Netherlands. To my Supervisor Dr Auma Okwany for her critical comments and incredible ideas that help in shaping this paper towards success. My gratitude also goes to my Second Reader Dr Kristine Cheney for her constructive comments throughout the research process and most especially during the writing of this paper. I thank Netherlands Fellowship Programme (NFP) for sponsoring my studies. A very special thanks go to my lovely Mother Tryphosa Simon Sanga and family members in general for their encouragement and prayers in this long and tough journey of my MA studies. Big thanks to my best friend Ruth John Magufuli for her support and prayers during my entire studies. Also to my friends Ayodamope Akanni, Manuel Nyanguwo and Peter Gamundani. No amount of words can express my appreciation to everybody that has supported me through the difficult times in ISS, but all I can say is that may Almighty God bless you abundantly. Last to my fellow SPD class members and all ISS students for productive and constructive interaction during my studies.

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List of Acronyms

DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative

Abstract

Several studies conducted on the factors responsible for the educational exclusion of girls in Tanzania and likewise, various actors at both international and national level have come up with many strategies towards attaining a higher level of female enrolment in secondary schools. In Tanzania, there are limited opportunities for a girl to be educated and efforts by the government to address the problem are outshined by the high percentage of non-completion of the mandated schooling years. The Government of Tanzania has attempted to implement the necessary policies and programs aimed at curbing the exclusion of girls from school. While the enrollment record for girls in schools appears to be impressive, the number of girls that are non-completers is quite alarming. Without critical examination of the process that leads to the exclusion of girls in school, the government will continue to chunk out statistics that did not resonate with the realities of rural areas in regards to why girls dropped out from school. For example, the 2014 statistics of Tanzania Ministry of Education suggested that truancy was responsible for 75% of students not completing their education. On the contrary, evidence gathered from the data collection shows that factors such as distance and pregnancy that were relegated to the lesser position by the government statistics are much more crucial to the understanding of the non-completion of studies. Therefore, this study attempted to investigate deeply the exclusionary factors that hindered girls education completion in Tanzania rural areas by exploring the experiences of the girls themselves to have a clear understanding how to address the issue of girl's exclusion from their perspective. To achieve the set objectives, a qualitative approach to data collection through the methodological tool of focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews were adopted in a purposively selected village of Tegetero in Morogoro

Relevance to Development Studies

In spite of all efforts and adopted strategies, girls are still excluded from education. There is little evidence from available studies on the issue of educational exclusion of girls in Tanzania that have attempted to look beyond the narrative of poverty and abolition of school fees as the main problem of girls exclusion from school. Therefore, the majority of policy advisors continue to promote poverty alleviation programs or initiatives to prevent or reduce the high rate of drop out from school. This study therefore looks beyond the issue of access and high enrolment of girls to education in Tanzania; it focuses on the understanding of the factors that reinforced the prevalent girl's non-completers of schooling years beyond the narratives of poverty most especially in the rural areas

Keywords

Non-completer, Girls, Education, Experiences, Exclusion, Gender

Chapter 1 Education of Girls: Understanding the Distinction between Enrolment and Completion

1.1. Introduction

Over the years, various studies have been conducted to identify factors responsible for girl's exclusion from education. Some of the documented dominant factors includes teenage pregnancy and early marriage (Kanuiwa and Yussuf, 2013:4), poverty (ADEA, 2003; Admassie, 2003; Ngao, 2011), cultural norms that prioritized male children education over the girls (Mishra, 2006; Lewin, 2009; Guo, Harris, 2000). Others include belonging to nomadic families (Dachi & Garrett, 2003:78), distance (Johnson, 2011: 96), and parent's perception of the relevance of secondary schooling (FAO and UNESCO-IIEP, 2006:28; Bhalalusesa, 2000: 22). Although, boys are also subjected to educational exclusion as a result of some of the factors stated above. Nevertheless, girls are more affected. For instance, early marriages, teenage pregnancy, and cultural norms that prioritise male children over female children affect girls more directly than boys (Kanuiwa and Yussuf, 2013: 4).

To achieve equity and human rights goals, many countries all over the world including Tanzania have made girls access to education a priority on their agenda. Regardless of this effort, girls still encounter numerous challenges, most especially in underdeveloped countries (UNGEI, 2005; HakiElimu, 2010). Access to basic education lies at the heart of development. "Sustained and meaningful access to education is critical to long-term improvements in productivity, the reduction of intergenerational cycles of poverty, demographic transition, preventive health care, the empowerment of women, and reductions in inequality" (Lewin, 2007:2). Tanzania has made notable progress in achieving high rate enrolment of girls at primary level with one of the largest increases in girls' enrolment from 49 % to 91 %, mostly attributable to the elimination of tuition fees in 2001 (DFID, 2006 cited in Mushi et al., 2011:2). However, the educational exclusion of girls can be understood in different ways as suggested by Lewin (2009). These include those that have never enrolled in school; the dropouts, and irregular attendees with low academic achievement that run the risk of not completing school (Levin, 2009:155-156 emphasis are mine). The problem with the adoption of the term of dropout by various academics and policy makers to describe students that stopped attending school after enrolment is that the terminology was chosen deliberately to jettison any aura of accountability from the school (Regal, 1971:4).

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, I will be referring to children that were termed as dropouts as ***"Non-Completers"***. The term non-completers might not have gained prominence in the scholarship around children education, but some studies (Winter & Harris, 1998; Halx, 2014; Zeidenberg et al.,2015) have since introduced the terminology as a replacement to the dropout that has occupied mainstream scholarship. According to the Regal "dropout suggests that a youngster has had an opportunity to consider many options and has made a decision not to attend. In the use of the term, there is little to suggest that years of disregard of the child's needs may have been a

critical part of current nonattendance”(Regal, 1971:4). I agree with Regal argument because the term ignored the factors that might have contributed to a child to stop attending school, this includes food, clothing, health among others things needed for a child to successfully developed cognitive skills. As a result, addressing the educational exclusion of girls is beyond access and higher enrolment rates, It involves looking at “attendance, achievement, and progression and completion at appropriate ages” (Lewin, 2009: 151).

However, girl’s educational exclusionary factors in rural areas can be understood best by a wide range of socio-political context, the system of education, learning environment and the learners themselves. It is imperative to follow this approach because the exclusionary factors manifest in different ways and they do not usually become visible until the time those excluded are much more visible. Without critical examination of the process that leads to the exclusion of girls in school, the government will continue to chunk out statistics that did not resonate with the realities of rural areas in regards to why girls dropped out from school. For example, the 2014 statistics of Tanzania Ministry of Education suggested that truancy was responsible for 75% of students not completing their education. On the contrary, evidence gathered from the data collection shows that factors such as distance and pregnancy that were relegated to the lesser position by the government statistics are much more crucial to the understanding of the non-completion of studies. Therefore, this study attempted to investigate deeply the exclusionary factors that hindered girls education completion in Tanzania rural areas by exploring the experiences of the girls themselves to have a clear understanding how to address the issue of girl’s exclusion from their perspective. To achieve the set objectives, a qualitative approach to data collection through the methodological tool of focus group discussion and semi-structured interviews were adopted in a purposively selected village of Tegetero in Morogoro.

1.2. What is the Problem

In Tanzania, there are limited opportunities for a girl to be educated and efforts by the government to address the problem are outshined by the high percentage of non-completion of the mandated schooling year’s (HakiElimu, 2010:6). The Government of Tanzania has attempted to implement the necessary policies and programs aimed at curbing the exclusion of girls from school. One such policy response is the abolition of tuition and related costs of schooling up to secondary school level. The Tanzania Basic Education Statistics report of 2014 shows that enrolment rates in secondary education witnessed an increase from 401,598 to 1,728,538 in 2013 (Prime Minister’s Office Regional Administration and Local Government, 2014:35). About the data above, enrolment of students in Tanzania is not a problem per se. The biggest problem is completing the required number of years in school. Unfortunately, the number of students that leave school early without completing their studies is increasing tremendously in rural community schools (Ntumva and Rwambali, 2013: 700). Girls are affected more than boys. For example, 17,000 girls did not complete secondary education due to pregnancy alone between 2006 and 2009 and more than 5,000 did not finish primary school as a result of pregnancy in the 2011 academic session (Robi, 2012: no page). While the enrollment record for girls in schools appears to be impressive, the number of girls that

are non-completers is quite alarming. Only 32% of girls in 2008 transitioned to the secondary level in comparison to 40% of the boys and the percentage of girls finishing a secondary education was at significant low of 0.8% in 2010 (GCE, 2012:17).

Several studies conducted on the factors responsible for the educational exclusion of girls in Tanzania and likewise, various actors at both international and national level have come up with many strategies towards attaining a higher level of female enrolment in secondary schools. The government of Tanzania has also established many schools by encouraging each ward to have its secondary school, and female education is much emphasised (Mushi et al., 2011:2). In spite of all efforts and adopted strategies, girls are still excluded from education. There is little evidence from available studies on the issue of educational exclusion of girls in Tanzania that have attempted to look beyond the narrative of poverty and abolition of school fees as the main problem of girls exclusion from school. Therefore, the majority of policy advisors continue to promote poverty alleviation programs or initiatives to prevent or reduce the high rate of drop out from school. All available evidence suggests that addressing the issue of poverty in isolation did not necessarily translate to the success of making students to stay in school and complete their studies (Aikman and Unterhalter, 2005; Lewin, 2009).

This study therefore looks beyond the issue of access and high enrolment of girls to education in Tanzania; it focuses on the understanding of the factors that reinforced the prevalent girl's non-completers of schooling years beyond the narratives of poverty most especially in the rural areas. The voices of the girls are important because they are the one passing through the process that eventually led to their exclusion from education. It is unquestionable that it is an injustice and exclusion when a child is out of school. However, there are millions that are still suffering hidden exclusion despite the fact that they are in school as a result of the type and quality of education they are receiving (Save the Children, 2015:-:5-6). The girl's experiences will help in understanding both the clear and hidden exclusion in school and how it affects the girls from their perspectives to highlight implications for policy and practice.

1.3. Why is it a Problem

The Tanzania Basic Education Statistics report of 2014 shows that the enrolment rate in primary school increased from 7,083,63 in 2004 to 8,231,913 in 2013 while the secondary school witnessed an increase from 401,598 to 1,728,538 in 2013 (Prime Minister's Office Regional Administration and Local Government, 2014:35). Although, the Tanzania Basic Education report of 2014 did not differentiate from boys and girls non-completion rate, a closer look at the statistics in Table 1 and Table 2 below shows girls is more affected because there are specific factors that affect girls only. Some experiences "affect girls disproportionately or exclusively and may adversely affect their ability to attend and achieve in school, placing them at greater risk of exclusion" (Osler et al., 2002: 6-7), for example, the caring responsibilities and pregnancy. The reports show that "truancy causes the biggest proportion of school drop-outs (75.7 percent in primary and 76.1 percent in secondary education). Poverty (inability to secure basic school needs) also cause substantial dropouts

which are 5.8% in Primary and 12.8% in Secondary Education” (Prime, Minister’s Office Regional Administration and Local Government 2014:25 & 36).

Table 1: Pupil Dropout by Reasons, Level and Grade in Primary School 2012

Reason	Std I	Std II	Std III	Std IV	Std IV	Std V	Std VII	Total	%
Turancy??	9605	7511	10556	8607	1811	2539	1241	41870	75.7
Pregnancy			135	153	18	80	2047	2433	4.4
Death	394	301	324	283	50	57	34	1443	2.6
Poverty	658	642	1028	607	126	118	43	3222	5.8
Illness	299	235	296	218	19	31	14	1110	2
Others	1060	1117	1239	1055	216	286	251	5224	9
Total	12021	9857	13578	10923	2240	3111	3630	55302	100

Sources: National Data for Pre- Primary, Primary and Secondary Education Statistics 2013 (Prime Minister’s Office Regional Administration and Local Government, 2014:25)¹

Table 2: Pupil Dropout by Reasons, Level and Grade in Secondary School 2012

Reason	Form1	F orm2	F orm3	F orm4	F orm5	F orm6	T otal	T	%
Truancy	20062	24379	16051	11592	123	100	72307		76.1
Pregnancy	835	1351	1273	1246	6	7	4718		4.4
Death	294	314	241	189	13	8	1059		1.1
Poverty	3883	3895	2506	1886	19	6	12195		12.8
Illness	275	372	284	171	10	20	1132		1.2
Others	475	942	1164	871	96	27	3575		3.8
Total	25824	31253	21519	15955	267	168	94986		100

Sources: National Data for Pre- Primary, Primary and Secondary Education Statistics 2013 (Prime Minister’s Office Regional Administration and Local Government, 2014:25)²

From the data above, it is evident that truancy accounts for the main factor that is responsible for the high rate of non-completers in both primary and secondary school in Tanzania. The implication of the data above is that government tend to formulate policy response in addressing truancy without efforts to unpack the term because it is not only complex but also vague. A vast volume of studies concentrating on truancy has over the years depicts the problem as those that either emanated from individual psychological or social deficiency, or in some cases factors such as peers influences, parents, or guardians or environment (Ekstrand, 2015:461). Also, studies have always presented the narratives of what and who is responsible for truancy in two diverging views. While school managements blames circumstances at home, parents attitudes to education, social and cultural heritage for truancy, parents were of the opinion has always been the school fault with the treatment of students that serve as a discouraging factor for the students to continue attending school (Ekstrand, 2015:463). Therefore, truancy is a contested term; it can be defined

¹ <http://www.pmoralg.go.tz/noticeboard/tangazo-1023-20141229-Basic-Education-Statistics-BEST/FINAL-NATIONAL-27-MAY-2014.pdf>

² <http://www.pmoralg.go.tz/noticeboard/tangazo-1023-20141229-Basic-Education-Statistics-BEST/FINAL-NATIONAL-27-MAY-2014.pdf>

as missing classes or school without the permission of the school management (Kanga & Jagero, 2015:1).

To be precise, students consistently staying away from school or classes without any reasonable excuse and consent of the parents or school authorities to evade punishment or responsibilities such as examinations, assignments, test, and extra-curricular activities (Baker et al., 2001; Kanga & Jagero, 2015). On the contrary, the findings of this study discovered that scholars that consider truancy as a dishonest and delinquent conduct act by idle person, wretched lazy, and vagabonds that derive pleasure in going contrary to stipulated school rules by skipping school to attend parties, movies, and anti-social activities during school hours (Hopson 2006 cited in Ngohi et al., n.d:1) are mistaken. Rather, the findings of this study as I will be discussing it in details in chapter 3 and 4 of this study is in agreement with Baker et al., (2001). Baker et al. arguments was that not all students that miss classes or not regular in school are doing it intentionally. Baker and others maintained that some students are struggling with various personal issues that make attending school regularly challenging for them. For example, some students have the responsibilities of helping parents to take care of younger siblings, contribute financially to the family upkeep by working during school hours. Apart from factors mentioned, some of them are battling with severe physical health predicament in addition to the fact that the need or motivation for academic need might not be present in their mind any longer (Baker et al., 2001:4).

Apparently, the government statistics about truancy ignore the fact that truancy in some cases is part of strategies adopted by young people to cope with both visible and hidden exclusion as suggested by Osler et al. (2002: 11). This make is highly imperative to deconstruct the truancy argument as a major factor that excludes young people from school because policy makers tend to adopt a narrow definition of school exclusion. This is because “exclusion is usually taken to mean the process of official and recorded exclusion from school in response to a breach of the school's behavioural policy or disciplinary code. In other words, what both officials and researchers have tended to address are the exclusions that are recorded, rather than those which may go unrecorded” (Osler et al., 2002: 13). Some of the hidden exclusion that goes unrecorded as shown in the findings of this study includes the distance of schools to children homes, language of instruction, and attitude of teachers just to mention a few cannot be ignored in an attempt to make education for all and left no child behind. Thus, it becomes germane because there is a stark difference between enrolment and attendance, completion and performance.

Creating a conducive environment that will allow girls to access education without hindrance is vital for girl's education (UNGEI 2005:15). The policy of the government should not just be targeting enrollment it should also look into attendance, completion, and the teaching quality. This implies that either truancy can be catalysing by home-related factors or school-based factors. Truancy is a very vague term, and there is a need to talk to the girls and boys directly so that we can have an idea of the hidden exclusion in education that accumulated to truancy, which is very crucial in reorganising the Tanzania government data on where there are high rates of non-completers in secondary schools. Therefore, the broader issues around exclusion are examined in chapter 3 and 4 of this study, which gave us the answers to why completion is so difficult for girls from their perspective.

1.4. Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the educational exclusion of girls in rural Tanzania by identifying underlying factors that influence their non-completion of schools and how these factors shape the experiences of girls that are early school leavers. Discussions with teachers and parents on the factors underlying the will provide additional perspective on the factors underlying the high rate of dropouts among girls and the policy implications on rural girls' exclusion in education.

1.5. Research Questions

Main Question

- What did the education experiences of girls show about schooling for girls and high non-completer rates of secondary school in rural Tanzania?

Sub Questions

- From the girl's perspectives, what are the factors that shape these experiences of girls who are excluded from secondary schooling?
- What is the perception of Parents, Guardians and Teachers on the high rate of non-completion of school among girls?

1.6. Organisation of Study

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one has already covered the context, background, research question and problems. Chapter two focus is on the discussion of the theoretical and methodological framework for the data collection and analysis while chapter three and four covers the data collected from the field. Chapter three specifically focused on answering research question number one of this study and chapter four present and analyse data regarding research question number two and three. The last chapter which is five gives a brief summary and the policy implication of the findings

Chapter 2 . Theoretical and Methodological Framework

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is divided into two, the theoretical framework that talks about social exclusion and gender as an analytical tool that can help us to make sense of the data collected from the field about the experiences of girls that did not complete their studies. The second part of the chapter discussed in details how the data was collected, the ethical issues, and challenges encountered in the process.

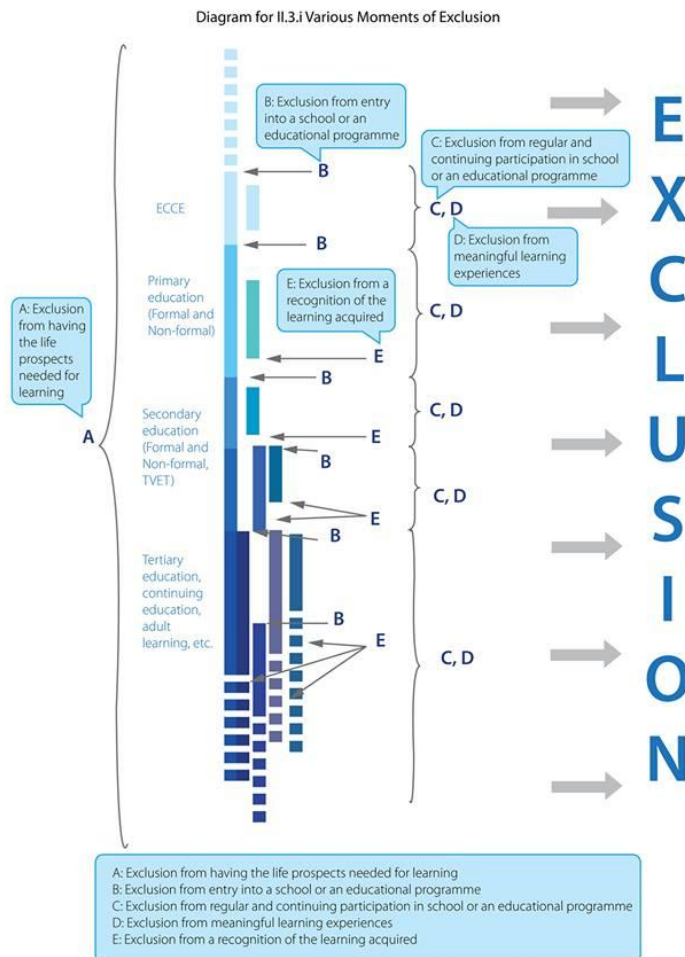
2.2. Theoretical framework

2.2.1. Social Exclusion

In interpreting the data that will be acquired in the field, the social exclusion framework will be adopted to help highlight the most important exclusionary factors that have kept girls out of school. Although, “social exclusion is a contested term, not only is it used to refer to a wide range of phenomena and processes related to poverty, deprivation and hardship, but it is also used in relation to a wide range of categories of excluded people and places of exclusion” (Peace, 2001:17). Regardless of the contested definition of social exclusion, the concept can be understood as the accumulation or aggregate of the structural processes that are causative to social segregation and the stripping of individuals of social participation at a different domain (Silver, 2007:1-2). Over the decades, the social exclusion concepts have been used in various fields to explain why some groups have not benefited equally as other groups do from the core state provisions. Nonetheless, “being excluded from social relations can lead to other deprivations as well, thereby further limiting our living opportunities...thus, be constitutively a part of capability deprivation as well as instrumentally a cause of diverse capability failures” (Sen, 2000: 4-5). For Sen, education is one of such capabilities and not just a right, and it is very crucial for students most especially women and girls to be able to participate fully without any hindrance. While social exclusion connotes constraints of an individual to participate and benefits from the state provision of basic needs for their well-being. Saith (2001:4) argued that not everybody that did not participate or benefited can be argued to have been socially excluded and he argues that there are two types of exclusion, the voluntary exclusion and non-voluntary exclusion. For Saith (2001), many groups decide not to participate in activities for reason best known to them, religion, or as a form of protest. This is a kind of voluntary exclusion, examples of such can be seen in students that burn their books and exclude themselves from formal education that is not in line religious doctrine (Crabtree, 2012). Therefore, before one can be considered to be excluded from school, it is crucial to understand when and where the exclusion is likely to take place in the process of the education arena

The UNESCO 2012 Guidelines for addressing exclusion in an education system outlined six ways in which an individual can be excluded from educa-

tion with indicators that can be used in assessing the process of the exclusion. From the guidelines as demonstrates by the figure below; a child can be excluded from education if the child is denied the required basic life prospects needed for learning, denied enrollment, cannot participate or attend school regularly, excluded from meaningful learning experiences, and did not receive respect and recognition for the learning acquired (UNESCO, 2012b: 3).



Source: UNESCO (2012:9). “*Addressing Exclusion in Education A Guide to Assessing Education Systems Towards More Inclusive and Just Societies*” <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002170/217073e.pdf>

From the figure above, the different categories and stages of exclusion validate the choice of social exclusion concept to investigate whether the girls are passively or actively excluded based on Sen’s (2000:14) categorization of exclusion. This implies that the girls can be actively excluded from education as a result of deliberate state policies. For example, expulsion and non-entry policies of girls that got pregnant in school, while the passive forms of exclusion may be unintentional, lack of awareness of the needs of the girls. According to Okwany (2010: 137), passive form of exclusion is “a subtler form in which there is a lack of awareness of the needs of groups by governments and other

institutions” (Okwany 2010: 137). This type of exclusion falls under the type C and D shown above. Okwany argument reflects in Osler et al. (2002) position that school management did not always consider girls as a priority in schools when it comes to behavioural management and school exclusion. As a result of gender imbalance in school enrolment that tends to favour the boys, much attention is put on the boys while the girl's difficulties become invisible as they are considered less problematic. “Since the problem of exclusion amongst girls is seen as so small in comparison to boys, resources are targeted on the latter. The nature of help on offer assumes that provision is equally available for both boys and girls (Osler et al., 2002:2). For Osler et al., the consequences of this subtle neglect of girls in school have led to girls to developed a propensity to adopt coping strategies which involve a “sense of ‘escape’ or ‘withdrawal” (Osler et al., 2002:2).

2.2.2. Gender

Another concept that is relevant to the understanding why the educational exclusion of girls’ through the non-completion of school is higher than that of the boys is Gender. Although the concept is by tradition and predominantly used to describe female and male individuals, it is habitually adopted to assign roles, behaviours and activities to men and women in the society (Scott 1999). Thus, gender can be understood as what people believe and practice about cultural distinction and social division of labour that give meaning to everyday interaction and actions and interactions with a subjective interpretation (Jackson 2006). Due to assigned gender responsibilities in the community, girls can be denied their fundamental right to education (Mhehe, 2002; Kisija, 1994). As noted by Daniels (2015), the school most likely reinforces the existing social relations in a community. He maintains that “when the appropriation of dominant social values and normative relations in communities are patrilineal, they might be engaging with girls as if they are neither smart nor worthy of education” (ibid, 2015: 159). With this, schools indirectly promote the thinking that relegates the status of girls to the defined community subordinated assigned caregiving roles in the family. This is as good as corroborating the ethnic and cultural pressure on girls to drop out of school. (Daniels, 2015: 160). The gender concept makes it more logical to understand why there is so much disparity in girl’s education when compared to boys. This is in line with Bowman and Anderson (1980) argument that education of a girl is deemed meaningful by the thinking (or expectations) of the effects of schooling on jobs, on acquisition of a "better" husband, on quality of domestic life, on the daughter's personality development, and on the well-being of her children” (Bowman and Anderson, 1980: 14). Whether the girls will be supported to stay in school or not is dependent on the relationship between the girls and the parents. This argument was supported by Obafunso (2014: no page) that majority of students that continue to stay in school to complete their education is based on the moral and social support they received from their parents.

It without a doubt that the UNESCO Guide, Osler et al. (2002), Sen (2000), Okwany (2010), and Daniel (2015) arguments are useful in making sense of the experiences of the rural secondary school girls. It will enable me to determine if girls are actively excluded from education through government policies or passively excluded from education by government and society misdiagnosing the needs of the girls in the educational environment. “The lack of

critical understanding about diverse learner populations and inclusionary practices in the class sets the stage for the social exclusion of the girl students” (Daniels, 2015: 167). This implies that inclusion of all girls into the education means addressing the various needs of all learners by reducing exclusion within and from education (UNESCO, 2005:13). Against the backdrop of the argument in this section, analysing the high rate of non-completers among the girls from the school in Tegetero village through the social exclusion and gender lenses will help in the critical examination of existing and potential barriers that responsible for high non-completers rate of girls in school.

2.3. Methodology

2.3.1. Study Area:

The study area is Tegetero village in Morogoro Municipality in Tanzania. Morogoro Region is one of the 20 Regions in Tanzania Mainland, the third largest after Arusha and Tabora Regions in Tanzania. Available data shows that the region has only three secondary schools (public), 92 primary schools with a total enrolment 33,073 Number of secondary schools (URT, 2009:1 & 220). I chose this area because it is a rural area and there are specific education-related challenges in rural areas such as the inability to recruit and retain teachers due to the living conditions in the rural areas, in adequate classroom facilities with a shortage or lack of furniture and blackboards, and overcrowded classrooms (Cobbold, 2006; Wedgwood, 2007). This problem is persisting tense and affects many girls as they end up being uneducated.

2.3.2. Data Collection

The methodological approach for this study is qualitative. Both semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion were used for study participants who include the girls, government officials, parents, and teachers. The data collection started with the girls through the use of focus group discussion with those that are presently in school then followed by those that have stopped going to school. I also conducted a focus group discussion with boys that are still in school to know their perspectives on the factors behind girls dropping out from school. The choice of focus group discussions was informed by the fact that the method is useful in facilitating collective dialogue or a group conversation that helps in identifying how a group of people feel about a particular issue which in one way or the other affects them as a group (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013; Liamputtong, 2011). The high rate of non-completers is a problem that affects girls as a group in the society, to have a comprehensive understanding of the problem; I have no doubt that the approach is the most suitable method of data collection. However, the purpose of using focus group is not to produce a consensus information and data (Hennink, 2007). Rather, it is to inspire a plethora of viewpoints that can assist me to have a clear perspective about the difficulties the girls that end up not completing their education encountered. The second data collection method used in this study was the semi-structured interviews. Interviews are important in a situation where there is little information about the study, and there is a necessity for full perceptions from the respondents (Gills et al., 2008:292). The method was deemed to best suit collecting information from the parents and

the teachers in the village. This was done to ascertain whether the parents and teachers relate to the experiences of the girls as a systematic form of exclusion that takes place gradually or they perceived the girls as unserious truants that just decided to skip school at will.

2.3.3. Sample

In my sample procedure, I used purposive and snowballing sampling technique to select the study participants from secondary schools in Tegetero village for the focus group discussion and interview. To have a fruitful group discussion, I conducted three focus group discussions with a minimum of 8 participants and maximum of 10 participants. One focus group for the girls that have dropped out, the second one for girls that is still in school and the third for boys that are in school and the total number of the focus group discussion participants was 24 (16 girls and eight boys). The multiple focus group discussions for the girls offered me comprehensive and diverse perspectives on their experiences and process that led to their early exit from school. Purposive sampling was used for the selection of both girls and boys that are still in school. This sampling technique fit the aim of this study because it includes 'selection of a sample with a precise purpose in mind (O'Leary 2010: 170). It enables me to access respondents with specific experiences that are needed to answer my research questions since the target of this study is to look into the experiences of girl's school non-competition in Tegetero village. Besides, it assists in gathering the perspectives of parents,' government officials, and teachers on the factors that make more girls to leave school early before the end of the required number of years. Unlike random sampling techniques, adopting purposive sampling methods guarantee that all the study participants are in possession of useful information about the experiences of the girls that did not complete their schooling in rural Tanzania relevant to the study objectives. Although, snowball sampling was used to select the girls that are no more in school, the girls still in school linked me with two of their friends that have stopped schooling, and from there the other two girls linked me to others.

In addition to the focus-group discussions, I also interviewed teachers and parents. I conducted interviews with eight parents; I was conscious of gender, so I tried to include as many possible female heads of households but was only successful in getting three female to participate in the study. In addition to this, six teachers were also interviewed. The main objective of selecting parents based on gender is to understand the impact single motherhood has on the education choice of the children and since the perspective of the parents is one of the identified factors that reinforced the educational exclusion of girls. I found it imperative to see if there is any difference in the experiences of girls that lives with their mother and those that live with both parents. Similarly, the choice of parents, the teacher's selection was also based on gender. Teachers views are important because they are first to notice the early symptom of a student becoming a non-completer. But since the study focuses on girls, my assumption is that the perspectives of the female teachers might be different to that of male teachers on the factors that lead to the high rate of exclusion from school among girls

2.3.4. Ethics and Challenges

In conducting this study, I adopted the Participatory Research (PR) approach that involves the views of the children that are subject of research in the research process. PR methods are tailored towards development and conducting the research process “with those people whose life-world and meaningful actions are under study” (Bergold and Thomas, 2012: 192). As a result, PR covers the aspect of both the practice and science of the research. In reality, PR technique manifests itself in various research strategies, which cannot be canonised into a single form of cohesive methodological approach, for example, the qualitative content analysis or the narrative interview. Before considering the adoption of PR as a method, its appropriateness to the subject under study is even more important than in other approaches to qualitative research (ibid). Apart from the fact that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) Article 12 clearly stipulates that children do have the right to express and share their opinion on issues that affect them. Uprichard (2010) argued that there is no reason not to involve children social research as knowledgeable and competent informants because of it more beneficial in exploring and knowing about issues of causality. PR is important to this study because “through focusing on children as competent, individual social actors, we might learn more about the ways that ‘society’ and ‘social structure’ shape social experiences and are themselves fashioned through the social action of members” (James and Prout, 1995 cited in Uprichard, 2010:9). Therefore, addressing the issue from the girl’s experience will offer a platform for a clear understanding of the underlying factors that are responsible for high rate of non-completion of schooling among girls in rural Tanzania. Besides, relying solely on the adult’s perspective is a disservice to the children because of the way the adults view the children that in turn marginalises their position on issues affecting them. This is in line with Punch’s (2002:324-325) argument that children should be put at the forefront of a study that concerns them, “not to impose the researcher’s own views and to enable the research subjects to express their perceptions freely” (ibid). However, both Punch (2002) and Cahill (2007) position were corroborated further in the guiding principles of Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC).

The ERIC guiding principles accentuated the necessity for a researcher to seriously consider issues related to ethics in the process of carrying out research that pertains to children. I am aware of the fact that my study and approach must be able to promote the right and dignity of the child, equitable and just, must be in the child interest, and not put the child at risk while allowing the voice of the child to be heard as suggested by Graham (2013:23). Bearing this in mind, during the data collection, I already promised the participants that I would maintain the anonymity of the young people that participated in the focus group discussion and ensure that the group discussions were conducted in a safe place with a complete assurance of confidentiality. Although, there were situations where the children became emotional and upset as suggested by Graham et al., (2013: 51-52). I was able to handle the issue because I already prepared for this by going with a lady friend that was able to talk to those that breakdown was crying when they were sharing their experiences. For example, two of the girls when explaining circumstances that made them become a non-completer; it was a sad story that I felt the pain in their voices. It is my responsibility as a researcher to make sure that I disengage with the

meeting, make sure that Identify what the problem is, and if they still want to carry on with the process. Consent is an ongoing process during research, and I ensure they understood that they are free to withdraw at any time of the research. “Within a situated ethics approach, attention is paid to informed consent as an ongoing process to create spaces for information sharing, choice in participation and dealing with the complexities of doing so” (Ebrahim, 2010:291).

2.4. Conclusion

The most suitable theoretical framework and data collection approach was employed in this study. The data collection process also followed the ethical rules and guidelines expected of a research to follow when dealing with children. Although, the data collection process encountered a number challenges, the challenges are not enough to hamper the acquisition of the data needed in answering the research questions of this study

Chapter 3 The Exclusionary Experience of Girls in Education

3.1. Introduction

This chapter addresses the first research question which is the first step to answering the central research question of this study that seeks to understand the educational exclusion experiences of secondary school girls in rural Tanzania. The findings of this study as discussed in this chapter revealed that distance, poverty, and teenage pregnancy are the dominant factors that shaped the experiences of the girls. However, these factors are not mutually exclusive as they reinforced each other. The findings show that although distance plays a significant role in the girl's continuation of schooling, on the other hand, there are those that are living near to the school that did not complete their studies as a result of poverty and teenage pregnancy. To corroborate the findings, the experiences of girls that are in school and the boys that are still in school were also included in the analysis. This help to understand why the factors that shaped the experiences of the girls that are non-completers of school did not affect those that are in school, in particular, the boys. The purpose of this chapter is to make the voice of the girls to be visible so that we can understand the process that leads to their non-completion of school. The chapter is organised into four sections, the first section focuses on the experiences of the girls non-completers of school, the second part focus is on the experiences of girls that are still in school while the third part is on the experiences of boys that are in school. The last part is the conclusion.

3.2. Girls Non-Completer

In the course of the data collection for this study, three key interrelated factors are deduced from the experiences of the girls non-completer of school. These are mainly, school proximity to the girls home and geographical location, poverty, and pregnancy. In relation to the girls experiences on distance to school, studies have shown that school geographical proximity to students home did not only have a significant impact on their academic participation and performance but also had a remarkable possibility to serve as a major factor that reduce the pre-existing gender inequality in rural areas (Burde & Linden, 2009). The probability that a girl will enrol, attend and complete school is more likely if the location of the school is within a reasonable distance from her home (UNGEI, 2014:3). During the focus group discussion, some of the girls told me that they stopped schooling school because of long distance to they have to walk to school and back home. Two of the girls used to walk about 15 kilometres every day, and another girl walks for about 17 kilometres every day which is too much for them to take. These girls are be-tween ages of 13 and 15, and they have to embark on a journey that typically takes a motorcycle 35 minutes to cover per trip. They shared their experiences on how the distance made them give up schooling. Annabel, 16 years old that stopped going to school when she was in form 3 said that;

“Walking such a long distance to school every day is a harrowing experience with a lot of consequences. I am always tired after walking for about 2 hours to school every day, and when I get to, school the class would have started and missed like two periods or 3 in some cases. If the teacher in class that day is nice, I will not be flogged for coming late, but if it is a nasty one that doesn’t want to listen to any explanation, I will be flogged. Because am tired and probably beaten, the next thing is to fall asleep, or I excused myself from the class. This affects me a lot that my performance in class was woeful and I repeated form 1 and two twice, and by the time I was in form 3, I couldn’t cope again, so I decided to quit.”

Grace, a 14 years old who become a non-completer when she was in form 2 supported Annabel point of view on how the distance to school contributed to non-completion of her education. She told me that she always get to school very late, missed some classes, and usually slumbering in class as a result of fatigue. She explained further that

“It is tough to learn or concentrate in the class when you are tired, and this does affect my performance as I can say I am just sitting in the class for sitting sake. The thoughts of walking back home after school are even more painful and killing than when thinking of walk to school. At least when you are leaving home in the morning you will still have some strength and energy to walk but when going back in the afternoon, you are already tired from school activities and hungry, so walking back home a distance of 15 kilometres is a daunting task. At first, I decided to be going on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays to school so that I can use the Tuesday and Thursday to rest but after a year that I have been doing that I decided to stop going because it amounts to a waste of time. Now I am making use of my time efficiently by helping my mother and learning trading.”

When a child as young as 14 years old have to walk or travel 17 kilometres to and fro to school to acquire basic knowledge, then one ought to question government sincerity and commitment towards the education of the citizens. The United Nation 2012 report on women that was conducted in four African countries of Zambia, Malawi, Uganda, Nigeria shows that, the chances of a girl to enrol in school decrease by 20% the moment the proximity of the school to a girl house increase by a half-kilometre (UNESCO, 2012: 105). In the context of Tegetero in Tanzania, the kilometres increase is far beyond what the UN report suggested. Therefore, students that have to endure such a long distance to get to school are the losers because they come to school late misses classes and in many cases, it might result to truancy and might end up to dropping out of school (Ngao, 2011: 27). For Ngao, when the government is planning to locate schools in rural areas, they don’t consider the geographical implication of establishing it in a place that might exclude some of the students that the school is meant to serve.

Another issue that was raised from the experiences of the girls is teenage pregnancy. The problem of adolescence pregnancy among school girls is a worldwide phenomenon not limited to low-income countries but also in developed countries such as Canada, United States, United Kingdom e.t.c (Darroch et al. 2001: 246). Documented evidence has shown that unwanted pregnancy among teenagers in Tanzania is one of the major contributors to the high rate of the non-completion rate in secondary school (Sekondo, 2015; Makoye, 2016). Nevertheless, the findings of this study revealed that although girls

dropped out of school as a result of pregnancy, however, the majority of the girls are either pushed into circumstances where they are vulnerable to pregnancy or a result of gender violence. That means there is a wide range of structural forces shaping the schooling experiences of the non-completers rather than narrowly categorising factors that led to high rate of non-completers under vague categories, for example, truancy. During the focus group discussion with the girls, Prisca, an 18 years old mother with a two-year-old son got pregnant after being persuaded by a particular guy to start a love affair. The guy happens to be a boda-boda driver (motorbike driver who is doing the business of carrying passengers) that regularly conveys her to school. He promised to marry her so that she will not be worrying about spending money on transport or walking to school every day. Unfortunately, the guy was deceiving her into having regular sex. She took her time to share her experiences, according to her words

“I don’t think I can forgive him because he has ruined my life. I remembered the first day he asked me to leave the transport fare and go; I was like this man is very kind. He said that he just pities me because he has two sisters like me in other towns, so he sees me as his sister. Then he continues transporting me to and from school for free even gives me money for about one week. I was thinking how a man can be so helpful to a fault like this. So when he said that he would like to be my boyfriend because he is planning to marry me, I couldn’t say no when I considered how easy it was for me to arrive at school early every day and the money that he gives me. Walking 1 hour to school is not healthy for me and the transport fare is too much, it is either I walked to school and took transport when coming or take transportation to school in the morning and walked back home because my parents can’t afford the transport fare for both trip. When I told him that I was pregnant, he chased me away and denied his responsibility for the pregnancy. Later he disappeared and didn't know where he went to; I then heard from some of my friends that some people saw him in Dar es Salaam”.

Another girl from the group discussion backed Prisca story with her experience; Noela was pregnant when she was in form 2 but now married to a man that already has three wives. The man agrees to marry her with the pregnancy when the man that impregnated her absconded. She explained in details how she was manipulated by a boda-boda driver whom claimed to love her and will support her with all her needs to finish her education with ease and she will end up having a real life. It was not until she becomes pregnant that she realised that all the promises were all lies concocted for an original purpose to the benefit of the man. She maintained that she doesn’t have any regret because there was nothing she could have done then to refuse the proposal of the man.

“I have listened to many that mocked me that I was stupid to fall for such a guy, I always tell them that it is not their fault because they were not in my shoes. I walked more than 1 hour 30 minutes to school every day and sometimes during walking it might start raining with nowhere to hide. Many times with empty stomach and I have to do the something when going back home. Tell me, if you were in my shoe, and a boda-boda driver stopped and offer you free to school ride and offered you money to transport yourself back, and this continues on a regular basis, if that kind of man now tells you that I am in love with you, will you said no. If he stopped doing what he was doing then you are going back the horrible experience of walking with hunger. They also make a mockery of me of becoming a fourth wife but do I have a choice;

I never planned to get married at the age of 16 years, my plan was to finish my study and move university. But when my parents don't have money, what did you expect me to do.”

Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world, in particular in the rural areas when compared to the urban areas. The wide gap in poverty between the two areas makes the inhabitants of the countryside have lesser access to quality education as the children from poor households have little or no chance of getting an education (Robi, 2016). The girls that participated in the study made me realise that that poverty is an essential factor that forced them to drop from school. Rather than going to school, they choose to remain at home looking for jobs which can help them to afford to have food because the majority of them did not have the means to eat three meals per day. Other girls were stopped by their parents so that they can help them with the farming activities which they depend much on getting some money after selling their crops. However, Fatuma, a 16-year-old that was already in form 3 before she dropped out of school two years ago explained how difficult to cope with empty stomach in school despite the fact she only has to walk for 30 minutes before getting to school

“I can't remember a day that I have breakfast before going to school in the morning, and I can say that any class that is after the break time doesn't have any meaning to me again because I can't concentrate again as a result of hunger. So in most cases, I just have to go back home because the food waiting for me at home is meant to give some energy that will make me active on the farm as we always go to the farm in the afternoon and come back in the evening. The only reason I will stay back to finish classes was when there is rainfall. I continue this pattern until one day I just decided to stop going because I cannot say that I am gaining anything from going to school.”

The parents of Fatuma prioritising food for farming activities over schooling is a reflection of the economic structure of most households in rural Tanzania that rely on agriculture as the primary source of livelihood, most especially the low-income families. Moulton argued that low-income families that are not financially buoyant to hire farm labourers would rather prefer to prepare their children to assist them in the farm than sending them to school (Moulton, 2001:10). Another student told me that her mother told her to leave school and help her in agriculture activities to grow crops for food consumption and business. So most of the time she was in the farm with her mother, and sometimes she was working on other people's farms and get paid. When I asked her if she was okay with that, she told me that. First, she felt bad, but as days went on she felt good because she earns a little money by working on people's farms. Also with her mother they make some money from selling their crops of which they were able to meet their day-to-day needs. However, there are those that don't work on the farm but do help their parents selling petty things in the market. The girls revealed to me how they found life difficult at home and instead of going to school they decided to help in selling in the village market. One of them that stopped schooling three years ago emphasised further by saying;

“It is tough to sit down and do nothing when there is no food to eat at home, walk a long distance to school on an empty stomach, and still come out with a failed result at the end of the year. Nobody needs to advise me before I know that it is just a waste of time as I repeated a class twice, I am getting

older, and there is no be deceiving myself. After all, we have seen those that are not educated that made it in life. When you come to my shop to talk to me about this meeting, you can see the number of customers that I have, at least I can decide on who I want to marry rather than following a man because of money. If have accepted my destiny” (Mary, 17 years old)

Farida situation was a little different to that of Mary, but the outcome was the same. She was asked to drop from school, not because of performance but because her father cannot afford to send 4 of them to school at the same time.

“I am the eldest of the seven children, three girls and four boys but only 4 of us are in school by the time I was asked to drop. My dad called me one day that I have to make a sacrifice for my junior ones; after all, I have acquired the basic education because I was in form 1 then. I cried for more than three days but when I considered how it was difficult for the family and moreover if I don't drop my junior twins' brothers that were about to enter into form 1 then will lose the opportunity. So, I don't have any other choice than to drop and allow my immediate junior brother in form 2 and the twins that just enter form 1 to continue schooling (Farida, 16 years old).

The experiences of Mary and Farida helps us to understand that the girls from poor household frequently miss classes as a result helping the family in doing small scale businesses. For example, selling of farm produces or water at the marketplace in a bid to raise money that will be used in taking care of the household general living expenses (Evans, 2002; Admassie, 2003). In some cases, the eldest of the children might be asked to drop from school so that there can be enough money to send the junior ones to school. However, girls in most circumstances were commonly asked to drop as a result of financial incapability (Samarrai & Peasgood, 1998; ADEA, 2003). Be that as it may, there are those that were pushed into poverty as a result of an income shock. A 17 years old girl named Judith was so sad about her experience because she was doing fine in her academics before dropping out of school. From her point of view, there is no reason for her not to be one of the best students if she is still in school. She was going to school but stopped when a disaster happened to their family farm which makes them poor.

“I am an above average student, and my marks are always around 65-75%, I never have 65% below before we lost our farm to fire outbreak. How the fire got to the farm, I don't know, but since then things have not remained the same. After the incident, I still managed to attend school for two years, but it was hell because at home, many times we do eat one meal, few times we eat two or three meals, and sometimes we eat nothing for the whole day. That was why I thought of dropping from school; support my mother in the market and save money so that I can have all that I need when I go back to school. But I am getting scared that the reality of going back to school might not come through as my mates are now in Form 3, it is now going to 3 years that I stopped schooling”.

The condition of Judith resonated with Admassie (2003:168) argument that struggling family that suffer income shock usually find it difficult to come up with alternative solution to raising funds as they don't have properties to sell or to that they can use to take loans to finance the education of their children, girls in particular. Especially, such households lack the required diets and micronutrients that are essential for the girl's cognitive development which in the

long run have a negative impact on the girl's performance in school that usually lead to dropping out from school (Guo, Harris, 2000: 86).

From the analytical perspective, the experiences of non-completers of education among the girls show that the process that led to the social exclusion of non-completers as suggested by Beall and Piron is not only multidimensional but also overlaps with a range of social disadvantages such as gender and poverty (Beall & Piron, 2005: 11). Beall and Piron (2005:14) argued that it's hard to measure social exclusion because of the challenges involved in capturing the multidimensional factors that are involved in the process of exclusion. Be that as it may, the findings as demonstrates above from the experiences of the girls are not mutually exclusives, they reinforced each other. For example, lack of money make the girls to travel long distance on foot and therefore exposed them sexual predators and paedophiles that tricked them into a sexual relationship; many non-completers did not experience frequent repeating of grades as a result of irregular attendance caused by the long distance of school to home. Therefore, serves as de-motivating factors that contribute to girls giving up on their academic pursuit. Nevertheless, if the non-completers experiences distance, poverty and pregnancy as a barrier to their education, why are some girls still in school. Are they not affected by the distance and poverty, after all, they reside in the same village. The next section discusses the experiences of girls in school. This will offer an in-depth insight into the whole process that leads to exclusion from school

3.3. Girls Still In School

The findings of the education experiences of girls still in school are not really different from those of the non-completers. The vast majority shared the concern of distance and poverty as impediments to their academic success. The findings of the study revealed that those that are in school walk between 1-5 kilometres to school or probably have a senior brother in the senior class that knows how to ride a bicycle which commutes them to school daily. Neema, a 15 years old form 2 student that participated in the study said that, she had not missed any class since she enrolled in the school despite the fact that she has to do some households chores early in the morning before coming to school.

“I always get to school early because my house is just a 10-minute walking distance to school, in fact, I usually hear the sound of the school bell calling for assembly, and by the time the morning assembly starts, I am already in the school. During break time I go home sometimes to eat and wait behind after school hours for extra lessons which are organised by some senior students for the junior ones. But I have friends that immediately they finish from school; they have to leave immediately. Because they will have to walk for 2 hours if they don't have money for transport before it starts to get dark and I always pity them as it affects their performances in class”.

Neema school experience was similar to that of Immaculate, a 15 years old form 3 student. She expressed her concern about how many of her friends have dropped out of school because of the distance they had to walk on a daily basis. However, a fascinating part of immaculate story was not how many of her friends are non-completers from school but how she was able to save two of her friends from becoming a non-completer of school by convincing her

parents to accommodate her friends from Monday to Thursday so that they will not be subjected to walking for more than 2 hours to school every day. She accentuated further that:

“My case is very peculiar because I only walk 5 minutes to school if I run then will be in school in 2 minutes. That was why I was made the timekeeper prefects since the time I was in form 1. I am one of the first to get to school and probably one of the last. But two of my best friends stopped coming to school when my dad started asking after them because he did not see them with me for quite some time as I used to go with them at home in the afternoon for lunch and he likes them a lot. I told him the situation that the girls couldn't cope with the transport fare and walking more than 2 hours is too much for them because they reside at the outskirts of the village. So my father asked my mother to follow me and talk to the girl's parents to allow the girls to be staying with us from Monday to Thursday. That means they will come to school on Monday morning stayed behind and went back on Friday. Therefore, the girls were able to concentrate on their studies”.

The experiences of girls that are in school and those that did not complete their education are proof that the nearer the school, the higher the chance of girls staying in school. This is not just an assumption that is limited to low-income countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Studies have also shown that even in advanced countries such as Canada, students that are raised in the families situated very close to schools do save money by staying at home rather than hostels and avoid another related cost that is associated with going to school. Unfortunately, “students living “out-of-commuting distance” don't have this option, and may thus be less likely to attend university, especially if they are from a lower income family”(Frenette, 2006:1). The implication of this in general, whether in advanced or developing countries is that prompt arrival and regular attendance is not just the key factor in the performance of students, but the panacea to address the negative social issues that a poorly educated child can cause (Raychaudhuri et al., 2010: 35).

The revelation of the focus group discussions with the girls in school and the non-completers was that 10 out of the 16 that participated in the process have slept with a boda-boda driver for the purpose of free transport to school, and two currently having a boda-boda as boyfriends among those in school. Although, only two of the girls that participated in the study become a non-completer of school as a result of pregnancy, however, all the participants attest to the fact that they have sisters, extended family members, and friends that are non-completer of school because of pregnancy. One of the girls in school explained how her sister got pregnant after getting herself involved in love affairs with a particular guy who is a sungusungu (night village security guy). Just like the other girls I discussed earlier, the man promised heaven and earth and willing to take her out of poverty. Because their parents are poor, her sister doesn't have any other choice than to accept and after three months, she became pregnant, and she doesn't have any other option than to stop schooling to nurse the baby. She explained further;

“I need, to be honest with you; those of us that are living in a far place to school and that our parents are not that financially secured are left with little or no other choice than to use what we have to get what we need. Anybody among us here that says she doesn't have a man supporting her financially, especially the Wafanyabiashara wa mbao (The Timber Businessmen) and bo-

da-boda drivers will be lying to you. I can tell you that, we have girls that targets rich men to get money anytime they enter the village for their businesses” (Evodia, 17 years old, Form 4 Student).

I was expecting Evodia position to be countered by other girls, but to my surprise, they all nodded in agreement. The findings, as shown above, is concomitant to previous study (Brock & Cammish, 1997) that attributed adolescent from poor households involvement in a sexual relationship with older men are motivated by the goals of raising money to support their families and to further their education. While the older men are mostly businessmen that are economically secured, the girls can also be lured into sexual relationships by poor men with fake promises and small gifts. The lesson derived from experiences shared by both the non-completers and those in school was that the economic situation of the child parents of the household cannot be ignored when addressing the social exclusion of the child (Klassen, 1999:10). Despite the display of enthusiasm and determination to acquire the basic education, the girls that are non-completers and the vast majority of those in school could not participate fully in the process of learning as a result of various barriers that are not their making. This is tantamount to social exclusion because there is robust scholarship evidence that suggest that when a child or the households could not fully participate in the activities of the society, for example, education is nothing else but social exclusion (Mohanty, 2014: 1088).

3.4. Are Boys Not Vulnerable?

One thing that stood out from the findings was how the boys were able to negotiate long distance to school. The interaction with boys during the focus group discussion revealed that most of the boys could endure walking long distance every day compare to girls. Moreover, the boys during weekends worked to earn money and were able to get bicycles which they only use to carry their girlfriends or sisters. Benjamin, a 16 years old form 3 students that participated in the study shared his experiences of how he tackled the problem of walking a long distance.

“I used to walk for more than 2 hours coming to school and going back home and this was like torture. It is not as if walking to school is a bad thing, but it should not be a matter of every day. My friend and I came up with an idea of buying a bicycle that both of us will be using to school. We knew that if we are going to be educated in this village of ours, we need to address the problem of distance, so we decided to work for one month non-stop to raise the money. After we purchase the bicycle, we have a time table of how to use it. When I used the bike in the morning because I have to take my sister along with me, my friend will use it back home after school also carrying his junior bother with him. Today, I am riding the bicycle back home because he came with it in the morning, we will soon buy another one by the end of the year because we are saving money from our weekend's work.”

The solution that Benjamin adopted to address the problem of distance which allows him and his sister to be still in school was clearly associated with a cost. But the question is if the boys can figure out solutions to the long distance issue, why the girls can't do the same thing. One of the boys, responded by saying that;

“The girls don’t really have spare time to work because of other domestic responsibilities, moreover as a boy, it their responsibility to look after their sisters while the sisters support the mother at home”.

The statement above captured why the girls from poor households are likely to become a non-completer than the boys. The poverty and distance affects both of them, yet the gender assigned role that limit girls to home care responsibilities hindered their chances of working to earn money that they can also use to buy bicycle. The boys are allowed to go and work because it serves a form of training that prepare them for their gender role as the breadwinner of the family. Having said that, the problem of distance is not peculiar to Tanzania or Africa countries, studies have shown that school proximity to students home it a big issue in India, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan (Muralidharan & Prakash, 2013; Raychaudhuri et al., 2010; Burde and Linden, 2009). Although, studies in US, UK, Russia and Canada has shown that walking to school can serve as a form of physical exercises which is good for the cognitive development of the students (Cohen et al., 2006; McDonald, 2008; Panter et al., 2010). What studies have not revealed is how walking or biking such a longer distance are beneficial to student cognitive development. I am not sure that walking to school in the context of Tegetero is reasonable to be suggested as a panacea to the problem.

3.5. Conclusion

In this chapter it was established that the education experiences of girls are not homogenous, the experiences differ but are not mutual exclusive. Distance, poverty, and pregnancy are the leading factors that shape the education experiences of the girls. However, the education experiences of non-completers and those in school are not that different they face the same problem but those that are living near the school stand the chance of completing their studies. The boys are also affected by the factors that hindered the girls but they are able to deal with the problem because of the society gender role that cut them some slacks which allow them to work on part-time without worrying about domestic chores that would have limit their chance of raising money for bicycles. By and large, the conclusion of this chapter is that it is just a matter of time before those in school also become a non-completer

Chapter 4 . Parents and Teachers Perspectives on Girls Education

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the data collected from the field study about the research questions two and three will be presented and discuss in details. The findings of the study regarding research question two that seek to understand the parents and teachers perspective on the high rate of non-completion of school among the girls in rural Tanzania not only confirm the experiences of girls as discussed in the last chapter but also highlights key issues such as language of instruction as significant factors that contributes to high rate of non-completion. The chapter is divided mainly into three parts; first part talk about the parents' perspectives, the second part focus is from the teacher's perspective, the third part is the conclusion of the chapter

4.2. Parents Perspective on Non-Completers

Similar to the girl's experiences on why they could not finish their studies because of school proximity to their homes, the parents that I interviewed shared the same sentiment about the distance to school as a key element to girl's exclusion in education. The only difference is while the girls were concerned about the physical and the mental effect of walking a long distance to school on their academic performance; the parents were most concern about the safety of their children and the propensity of getting pregnant because of the inability to monitor them. For example, one of the parents that I interacted with stopped his daughter from going to school because he believes that she was involved in illicit sexual activities rather than going to school. In his opinion, the long distance to school is a getaway card for his daughter to do whatever she wanted. He continues by saying;

“I can cite two instances that I was opportune to checked on her in school when I went for a job just 10 minutes' walk from her school and did not meet my daughter in school when she supposed to be. In fact, the teacher told me that she is not regular in school and yet she leaves home every day to school and comes back late in the evening. When I confronted her, she gave the excuse of the distance and that she need to work to raise the money that she can use for transport, but unfortunately, she could not show me where she is working. To be honest, the distance is too far, so instead of exposing her to unnecessary exploitation from work or following men around, it is better she works with me on the farm and earn money.”

In another interview with Helen, a single mother of 4 children, she stopped her daughter from going to school when she was raped on her way to school. Although the girl did not get pregnant as the result of the rape, she was traumatised, and Helen was so scared about the safety of her daughter. Helen has three daughters and one son, only Sakina, was in secondary school before she was stopped by Helen from going to school because of safety, the remaining three children are still in primary school which is located near her residence. For Helen, it is better to be safe than to be exposed to constant danger

in the name of going to school. She said that the traumatic experience of having a daughter that was raped is not an experience that she wished for any mother, the child did not do anything wrong than trying to get education but waylaid by hoodlums that have studied the movement of the girls because they used to pass through a shortcut to reduce the distance they have to walk.

“My daughters and two of her friends use to go through isolated route to school because it is shorter; it will only take them 1hr instead of two hours to school following the usual route. Some hoodlums attacked them in the bush and raped two of them; the third one escaped and came back to the village to break the news. My daughter was severely injured but lucky not to be pregnant; I don't have any other choice other than to stop her from going to that school. When I have enough money, I will send her to Dar es Salam to go and continue her study with my relatives because she is a brilliant girl. I can't allow her to continue to this village because after her rape incidence, there more than 20 cases of school girls being raped on their way or when coming back from school”.

The conversation above shows that parents will always be sceptical to send their children, girls in particular to school when the distance of the school is too far from home. Although, Johnson (2011:96) argued that most parents hide under the pretext of danger and safety of the girl child as result of the unfavourable location of the school to home to withdraw the girls from school on the one hand. On the contrary, as the findings revealed, the concerns of the parents are legitimate, especially when juxtaposed the parent's perspectives with the girl's experiences on the role of distance as an exclusionary factor in their education realisation. The situation of Tegetero village is a common phenomenon in rural areas in general where school are scarce, and the few that are available are inaccessible for a broad range of families because the children might be required to travel as long as 10 kilometres to attend (Burde and Linde, 2009:1). Undeniably, “attending school in such conditions requires significant investments in time, transportation, or alternative housing strategies like arranging for children to stay with relatives for periods of time” (Burde and Linde, 2009:1). Apart from parents scepticism of allowing girls walking a long distance to school, in most low-income countries most especially in Sub-Sahara Africa, investment in girls education is considered as a loss for some reasons. These includes, slim chance of employment in comparison to the boys (Nekatibeb, 2002; Rihani, 2006) and the girls will end up in the kitchen of her husband not using the knowledge acquired from school (Obafunso, 2014).

From the conversation with the parents, gender discrimination was all over their perception even though the majority of them laid claims to poverty and security issues that arise from the long distance the girls walk to school. Mr Obert, a farmer with six children (3 girls and three boys) perception of girl's education, oozed cultural and traditional prejudice undertone. He was of the opinion that he couldn't afford to send all the children to school but when I asked him why is it that the boys are in school and not the girls, he replied by saying;

“Sending the boys to school is a guaranteed investment that will yield return and moreover, it is the man that provides for his family. Regardless of the education of the level of education of a woman, the husband can decide that she should stay at home as a full housewife. So tell me, what is the usefulness of wasting the meagre resources that I managed to raised by selling one of my

farms on a child will end up not using it. It is better to secure the future of those that will not get help from anybody because they are expected to provide for their family.”

This type of Mr Obert perception to prioritised the education of a male child over that of a female child as a result of financial incapability are well documented in various studies (Patrick and Ugwu, 2013; Obafunso, 2014; Shahidul & Karim, 2015:26). But what the statement of Mr Obert shows is that it is not the issue of poverty per se that make him to prioritised the male children education over the girls, the less value attached to a female child play a more significant role in such decision. Unfortunately, this kind of narratives is what the Mr Oberts and other parents that shared his perception of girl child will feed to their daughters. What I can deduce from Mr Obert's argument was that many of the non-completers that stated poverty as the main reason for them stopping going to school might not be entirely accurate. It is what the parents told the child that the child will believe, so we can imagine that a parent that attached lesser value to a female child will not want to speak the child that I don't appreciate you as my child, but I am just not financial buoyant enough to send you again to school. However, there are others that are not influenced by cultural or traditional prejudice but the general societal factor that favours male employment over the female. Mr Mkude believes that all the children are equal, but he couldn't continue investing in the girl's education because the previous investment has not yielded results. Mr Mkude has ten children (4 boys and six girls). He has successfully sent 5 of the children (2 boys and three girls) beyond secondary school; only the boys got employment while the girls are yet to get employment. So he decided to focus on the boys and enrol the girls to learn the trade because the ones that he invested in end up to learning trade despite their education. He said to me,

“I love all my children because God gave them to me, but I have to be realistic there is no money to gamble around. I have to make sure I invest the little that I have on the ones that will yield return and so far it was the boys that were successful in doing that. It was even the boys after getting a good job that assisted their sisters in starting a small business that they are also using to support their families. So, I believed that rather than wasting years going to school I would rather enrol them as an apprentice to learn trading so that after five years they can be independent”.

The value attached to time spent on education is one thing that was common from the parent's position because the majority of households in the rural areas are resource-constrained. This made them rely on child labour to support family income; therefore, having a significant effect on the families decisions about children's time use (Vuri, 2007:5). Although, the parental choices over their children's time use and returns to education, as well as child productivity, can depend on children's age and gender, but also on parental characteristics (parents' education and presence in the household). From the findings, all the factors mentioned above were visible from the parent's perspective, although the most dominant view shared was gender related.

4.3. Teachers Perspective

The outcome of the interview session with the teachers aligns perfectly with the girl's experiences and the perspectives of the parents. All the teachers

I discussed with confirming distance, poverty, pregnancy, cultural and traditional prejudices on the role of girls as a major factor that pushes girls out of school. The teachers, however, elucidates further on the importance of proficiency in Language of instruction as a salient factor that most people ignored. From the teacher's perspective, a child can go through the rigour of distance and make it to school, work extra hours to raise money for the indirect cost of education and still perform in class at least on the average level. But the lack of proficiency in English that hindered their performance is always what serves a knock-out blow. Mr Issaka, a Chemistry teacher, was of the opinion that

“Many people might want to argue that, for the fact that there are students from a poor household that travel a long distance to school daily and still make it to the end of their study shows that with a strong will all things are possible. But they forget that what keep poor parents struggling to finance the education of their children is when they look at the reports card and see that the money they have been spending is not a waste. A child that struggle to comprehend what he/she is being taught in class because she is not used to the Language of instruction will not produce good result”.

Mrs Florencia supported Mr Issaka point of view that on many occasion both of them has approached some parents that they knew struggling financially to encourage them not to give up in investing on their daughters, but the response of the parents is something that is difficult to fault. She continues by saying,

“These parents cannot stand the fact that their children are not different from those that did not go to school because they practically show no sign that they have acquired any knowledge that can be useful to the family. So it will be better for them to stay at home because there is no difference in going to school and not going”.

Despite the fact that there are a number of studies on Tanzania that shows how crucial the proficiency in the language of instruction is to the child motivation to learning, Tanzania government policy making make English language a language of instruction in secondary schools as not only contribute to low performance but has also led to frequent repeat of grades (Qorro, 2006: 4). According to Qorro (2006), it only when both the students and teachers have a better understanding of the language of instruction that they will be able to have communication regarding asking for clarification, answering questions, discuss, debate and engage each other effectively in generating knowledge. "These are activities that are a pre-requisite to learning and whose level determines the quality of education"(Qorro, 2006:3), therefore, the language of instruction is a major factor that determines the quality of education. Although, I was not opportune to spend some times in the classrooms to observe the level of English language of the students, but the fact that the vast majority of both the non-completers and those still in school find it difficult to communicate with me in English language during the focus group discussion is enough evidence to validate the teachers perspective on how language contributed to the high rates of non-completers in rural areas. A similar conducted by Kinyaduka and Kiwara (2013:90) in Morogoro Region of Tanzania, it was gathered that about 70% of students could not comprehend the English language taught lessons. Also, approximately 79% of teachers are of the opinion that English as the language of instruction is a disadvantage to student's education performance and development, and more than 71% of students would prefer that

classroom instruction is done in English. Also in the study conducted by Komba and Bosco (2015), it was concluded that “using the English language as a medium of instruction contributed to poor academic performance among students, thus resulting in poor quality education” (Komba and Bosco, 2015:150). The use of English language is a learning disaster for many students that are unfamiliar with the new language of instruction in secondary school after being subjected to learning in Swahili at the primary level. The swift change from Swahili to English put a lot of learners in an awkward position in expressing themselves (Nyamubi, 2016:118).

The results of this study are in agreement with Amadi et al. (2013:126) previous studies that show that girls from wealthy households and with educated parents are most likely to attend and complete school on the one hand. On the other hand, it was also shown in the findings that the exclusion of the girls from education is not limited to poverty, there are those that the parents are ready to finance their studies that become a non-completer of school because they could not cope with the language of instruction. It undeniably that girls social exclusion in education is closely intertwined with households poverty (Hallman and Roca, 2007; Okwany, 2016). At the same time, efforts that will successfully address the problem is far beyond a narrow approach to tackling poverty but an all-encompassing approach that will accommodate a broad range of issues (Hallman and Roca, 2007; Atkinson & Marlier, 2010; Okwany, 2016).

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter bring to the fore the hidden factors that shaped the education experiences of girls in rural Tanzania. It helps to understand that what the girls expresses as poverty of their parents as a reason that make them to stop schooling is not always true. This chapter revealed that the perception of parents on the value of education, value placed on the time and money investments on a girl child are fundamentals elements that should be taken into consideration. In this chapter, it was also discovered that student just don't stopped schooling because of distance and poverty but they are most likely to stop coming to school when they don't they feel they are learning anything as a result of language of instruction that is strange to them. In the next chapter, i shall discuss the policy implication of the findings of this study while i reflect on the analysis done so far.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

5.1. Reflection on Research Question one.

My reflection of research question one that seek to understand from the girl's perspectives, what are the factors that shape these experiences of girls who are excluded from secondary schooling is that the term exclusion has several expression and forms; it does not only imply out of school children only. It involves those that are excluded from standard and continuing involvement in an educational program or attending school. An example of such exclusion includes the inability to go to school regularly as a result of proximity, incapable to consistently pay for participation; not capable of attending school because of other life demand that did not give room for spare time for educations, injuries or illness, or when the program or school is closed down. There are other sources of exclusion in the teaching as identified by the UNESCO report; this is "exclusion from having the life prospects needed for learning; For example: living under conditions inadequate for health and well-being, e.g. inadequate housing, food, and clothing; living under limited security and safety"(UNESCO, 2012:3). All the forms of exclusion stated above are a perfect reflection of the experiences shared by all the students that participated in this study. The interesting part of it was that those in school are subjected to the same experiences of those that have stopped schooling.

The findings of this study revealed that both categories of girls (in school and out of school) encounter the challenges of walking for hours up to 30 kilometres in some cases. This affects their performance that leads to many grade repetitions to the extent that it takes some of them four years to get to form 3 instead of standard three years. The consequences are to become a non-completer of school because 1) they are not learning anything and 2) it was considered as a waste of time and resources. Some of them attempt to tackle the problem by themselves, the only option that they had was to enter sexual relationships with older men with financial capacity so that they can have money to cater for their needs and that of their education. Those that couldn't get rich men were manipulated by poor men, mostly boda-boda drivers, security guards, shopkeepers with a small gift all in the promise of love. The result of this approach, which they enter without their voluntary volition, was pregnancy, which in turn represents the abortion of their education pursuit. The boys were able to negotiate the challenges by working part-time on farms to raise money for a bicycle. Even at that, only a few were successful in doing so; it was believed that the boys are stronger and they can walk a long distance. The major factor that reinforced all other factors that shaped their experiences is poverty. Many of the girls even, those that stay closer to school exhibited truancy by staying behind at home to assist their parents in farms or village market to sell farm produces.

Also, not all students that dropped out shows incompetency regarding academic performance, as the findings revealed there are those that were doing fine academically before the families witnessed income shock. In conclusion, I will say that the results of this study necessitated the need for the Tanzanian government to approach girls dropping out of school from the girl's experiences; at least it helped us to understand why truancy was rated 75% as the fac-

tor responsible for students not completing their studies. Moreover, the main difference between girls that in school and those that have stopped their education is a matter of time when they will also drop out because they face the same thing in Tegetero village

5.2. Reflection on Parents and Teachers Perspective on Girls Non-Completion of Studies

I must say that the benefit of having conversation with the parents and teachers about the education experience of girls in rural Tanzania was demonstrated in the findings in a way that did only not corroborated the experiences shared by the girls but also bring to the fore hidden factors that are essential in answering the central research question of this study. While it was established in this study that poverty plays vital role in the determinant of whether a child will continue going to school or not, the perspective of the parents helps us to understand that poverty is not a barrier if the parent view about the girl's education is not deeply rooted in cultural and traditional prejudice. Although, there are those that are not influenced by the prejudiced but considered the investment in the formal education of girls based on previous experiences as a waste of time because the girls stand little chance of getting employed. Rather, they will prefer to invest in the informal education of learning trading so that they can become an independent woman doing entrepreneurship businesses. The findings also show that the low education performance of students that make many of them not to complete their studies or the parents withdrawing support from sending them to school is not limited to poverty or distance of school to home. The language of instruction does not help matters as the vast majority of the student's boy or girls, non-completers or those still in school cannot communicate in the English language not to talk of comprehending what they are being taught in class. Many students give coming to school after struggling with poverty and distance to school and yet could not understand what they were being taught. These factors will not have been discovered if the parents and teachers voices are missing in the data collected because the girls did not referred to issue of language as an impediment

5.3. Policy Implication of the Findings

The findings of this study have a number policy implication for the Tanzania government. First, the findings raise fundamental question about the veracity of the government 2014 statistics as demonstrated below for secondary school.

Reason	Form1	Form2	Form3	Form4	Form5	Form6	Total	%
Truancy	20062	24379	16051	11592	123	100	72307	76.1
Pregnancy	835	1351	1273	1246	6	7	4718	4.4
Death	294	314	241	189	13	8	1059	1.1
Poverty	3883	3895	2506	1886	19	6	12195	12.8
Illness	275	372	284	171	10	20	1132	1.2
Others	475	942	1164	871	96	27	3575	3.8
Total	25824	31253	21519	15955	267	168	94986	100

Going by the findings of this study, the statistics did not represent the real picture of the education experiences of the girls in rural Tanzania. Therefore, there is a need for the government to conduct a study that will put into consideration of the factors that this study has identified. If one apply the findings to the table above, it is apparent that truancy will occupy the lowest % or disappeared from the table. Statistics like the one above inform government response to girls education, and when the statistics are wrong, the policy cannot be right.

Another policy implication is that the government response to poverty need to be re-evaluated because the findings have shows that free education, textbooks, uniforms are not enough to address poverty. Parents need to be supported with various social protection program that will alleviate the poverty condition of the parents because the social exclusion of a child is closely tied to the economic status of the households. Moreover, there are those were not poor before but fall into poverty by witnessing income shock as a result of unforeseen circumstances. Ordinarily, the best way to solve the issue of distance is for the government to build more schools in the rural areas but as usual, the no money excuses are expected. Therefore, addressing the means of transportation is a critical issue the government should consider if they want to tackle high rates of non-completers. As shown in the findings, the use of bicycles has proven to be effective for rural areas that don't have good road network. The government can make provision of bicycles at a subsidies rates for the communities, and it will go a long way to replaced the huge amount of money spend on commercial motor-cycles

Also, the government need to look inward and decide which language best suit the students learning. The mixture of Swahili in primary school and English in Secondary schools has failed the test of time, especially in the rural areas. For effective learning that will prepare and produced quality graduate for the labour market, the language of instruction needs to be reconsidered. Without reconsideration, many students will not be motivated to send their children to a school that they are not sure that will lead to employment because of the low performance of their children that fail to comprehend basic academic teachings because of deficiency in the language of instruction.

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