



**Unlocking Youth potential in Farming activities:
Addressing barriers to Farmland access to youths in
Arumeru district, Tanzania.**

A Research Paper presented by:

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

Major:

Agrarian food and Environmental studies
(AFES)

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The Hague, The Netherlands
December 2024

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

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List of Acronyms

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
ISS	Institute of Social Studies
ANAPA	Arusha National park
LITA	Livestock Training Agency
NAIC	National Artificial insemination Centre
ASA	Agricultural seed Agency
HORTI	Horticultural research and Training institute
CAS	Critical Agrarian studies

Acknowledgement

The completion of this research paper was made possible through contribution of several individuals who devoted their time and knowledge to advise me on how to go about doing this work. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Almighty God for his guidance and protection throughout my academic carrier. My deepest thanks and appreciation to Professor Wendy Harcourt my supervisor and Julien Francois Gerber my second reader for their guidance and supervision of my research paper, I also acknowledge Anna Maria ,Deus kajuna and Tawfiq Mwijage my discussants who helped me to shape this work. Last but not list I acknowledge my research Assistant Mr.Maximmilian shija for his support during data collection process.

Abstract

This research paper presents findings about the barriers hindering young men and women from accessing farmland for farming activities. The study was conducted in Arumeru district within Arusha region in Tanzania. The overall objective of the study was to address barriers hindering young men and women particularly those who started to live a self-dependent life in Arumeru district from accessing farmlands for farming activities. Specifically the study intends to investigate the typical modes of transfer of farmland and property between generations, the division of farmland resources among sons and daughters, the existing land tenure systems available in the area and their influence to the accessibility of farmlands between different groups within Meru society, the way in which family social economic status influence access to farmland to the young men and women within the study area and the spartial distribution of land ownership in Arumeru district. The study adopts a critical agrarian studies theory and employ a qualitative approach research design. A semi structured interview was used to collect data from a sample of 12 respondents comprised of the group of young men and women and the key informants while data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that cultural and gender differentiation, population growth and land ownership pattern are the core factors limiting the accessibility of farmlands to the young men and women within the study area. This study recommends re distribution of land within the district to allow the marginalized groups particularly young men and women to access farmland and explore the potential available of investing in farming activities.

Relevance to Development Studies

Farmland has been a key factor of production in any agrarian societies which is mostly used for agricultural development worldwide. However, its accessibility remains within the hands of a few due to the complexity in power dynamics, this study incorporates the voices of the marginalized groups who have been denied from the access of farmland and fail to explore the available potential of investing in farming activities. The relevance of this study relies on its contribution of promoting justice within the agrarian societies particularly in Meru community and remove inequalities by encouraging the fair access and control of agrarian resources between different social groups.

Keywords

Youth, Farmland, Farming activities, Unemployment, Gender, Livelihood, off-farm activities Arumeru, Arusha, Tanzania. Power dynamics, class relation

Chapter 1

Introduction

Access to farmland has been a great challenge in many agrarian societies worldwide, Land is one of the most important factors of production in agrarian societies because members of the society depends on it for the agricultural production to sustain their livelihood. However, the access and control of agrarian resources including farmlands is based on the class and power dynamics through which some classes are on the disadvantage by being denied access over the agrarian resources and fail to explore the available agricultural potential. This study focuses on investigating the limitations facing young men and women in Arumeru district from accessing farmlands for investing in farming activities aiming to examine the struggles young men and women are going through in accessing farmlands. The paper adopts the critical agrarian studies theory to explore the social relation and power dynamics between different social groups existing within Meru community. The paper is organized in the following structure; to begin with chapter one it cover the background of the study, problem statement, study area, research objectives and questions, justification and relevance of this research and Theoretical framework .chapter two presenting research methodology and methods used, positionality, ethical consideration and Data analysis chapter three outline the key findings of the study, and chapter four presenting the conclusion and recommendation of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Youth unemployment in Tanzania has been a big challenge not only to the government and policy makers but also to the societies and families, due to high level of poverty in many families Childrens are expected to find jobs and contribute to the family income (Msigwa & Kipsha 2013). It has also been noted that the problem of unemployment is more prominent among the youth population than adult population due to various factors including lack of experience and skills (Adams 1997). Currently the government of Tanzania is facing pressure from the university graduates who are increasing in number with high expectation of being employed to the formal sectors but are still unemployed. In the current system of employment in Tanzania an employed government officer retires after 60 years of age that means youths must wait for a long time to be employed in the formal sectors of the government. In response to youth unemployment the government through the prime minister's office – Labour, Youth, Employment, and persons with disabilities (PMO- LYED) encourages youth to employ themselves through the informal sectors including agriculture, trade, transport services and household works. Nevertheless, the government of the united republic of Tanzania has initiated some of the programs in the country to encourage young men and women to access land and engage in farming activities, the first program introduced was the provision of loans to the young men and women who intend to invest in farming activities organized by the district councils in all regions in the country under this program young men and women were required to form a small groups of about five people then allocated with loan of simple conditions to buy a farm land and start the farming projects of their choice, the program worked and helped many young men and women across the country including those of Arumeru district to employ themselves in farming sector. However, the program had some limitations as well, for instance, in Meru district council where this study is conducted the program lacks consistence and the amount of loan given was not enough to start

a farming project, moreover the loans were allocated only to the few people in some few areas of the villages due to budget constraints. Therefore, there are still many young men and women in Arumeru and the country in general with ambitions to invest in farming activities, but the program couldn't manage to cover them all.

The second program was introduced under the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of livestock and Fisheries of Tanzania the Program named as building a better tomorrow Youth Initiatives for Agribusiness (BBT YIA) that aim to promote the engagement of Tanzanian youths in Agribusiness for a sustainable improved livelihood, the program recruits 155 to 310 young men and women every year. The participants are well trained about agriculture and given knowledge on crop production and animal husbandry from special agricultural colleges within the country to gain important agricultural knowledge and there after they are given land about 5 to 10 Acres per youth and capital to start their farming businesses and connected to the market within the country the program. The introduced program observed to work and help many people to employ themselves in farming activities and improve their living standard. However, the government has not been able to extend this program to many of the young men and women in the country, only few among them have been able to be recruited and benefit from the program due to budget constrain.

The agricultural sector plays a pivotal role in the economy of Tanzania, employing a significant portion of the population and contributing substantially to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Mlambiti & Isinika, 1997). The agriculture sector has a potential of providing a solution to the challenge of youth un employment as it contribute 65% of employment, 29% of gross domestic product and 30% of export earnings (Ng'atigwa, et al, 2020). Moreover, it has been estimated by FAO (Food and Agriculture organization of the United Nations) that today agriculture provide employment for 1.3 billion people worldwide.

Tanzania boasts abundant natural resources and a favorable climate, enabling the cultivation of diverse crops. However, the agriculture sector is dominated by people over 35 (Ocheng, 2020). Literature shows there are many challenges that limit youth from engaging in farming activities such as access to land and high expectations after graduating which limit youths ability and interest to participate in farming activities (Ocheng, 2020). Ng'atigwa, et al (2020) in their article on Youth- occupational choice argue there are three categories which limit youths participation in farming activities: economic factors such as market availability , land access, and credit access., social factors including low level of education., and environmental factors such as emergence of pests and diseases, and un predictable weather condition. Furthermore, in a study conducted in Njombe region Tanzania by Nyamba et al. (2022,18) it was found that lack of land, lack of capital, poor agricultural infrastructures, poor input supply and many more are among the factors influencing youth engagement in agricultural activities.

In this study I will look at the Arumeru district which depends mostly on agriculture and has a huge potential for investing in farming activities, most of the farmers in this district produce crops for subsistence and for sale. Youth are also interested in engaging in farming activities, but their ambitions are limited as they do not receive access to land, and this forces them to engage in other off-farm job opportunities such as bodaboda and petty trades which are not profitable. The few who practice farming rent small pieces of land that are not enough to produce a bumper harvest, or they sell their labour to older farms owners. The political and economic historical background of Meru society in Arumeru district during colonial era and even after independence played a key role in the distribution of land within the district and has great contribution in today's land access scenario. To begin with colonial era in 1885 German was declared as the official colonial power of Tanganyika, in 1890 Lutheran missionaries and European coffee farmers settled in Kilimanjaro and started expanding their project in Arumeru in early 1900s (spear 1997). During 1900s, Meru land was under colonial

administration, at this time the prime land around the mount Meru granted to German and Boer settler farmers and within this time is where arusha and Meru people evicted from their own land and find themselves surrounded by settler's estates and plantations that prevented their expansion to the more productive land. After the first world war British replaced German as colonial power and start ruling Tanganyika through league of nation mandate (Matthews1998). The British policy of land distribution was like that of German. However, during this time the population of Meru people increases rapidly and start raising demand over their land, this leads to notable land conflict case in 1950s. Land case was not a solution over land distribution problem, but it rose political awareness especially by the few educated people of the Arumeru district who emerge to political power. The land case led to the formation of Tanganyika African National union (TANU) and the upcoming movement for independence. Another impact brought by land case is more land was offered to Meru people on the plains away from the mountain, the area was mostly used to produce food crops and grazing of their animals. In 1950s was time for economic progress in Arumeru following the high market demand of coffee crop outside the country for export after the world war, therefore, this makes the small holder coffee production in Meru to flourish and even after independence Meru people had better living standards as compared to other societies in the country. Not only this but also During colonial era, the Lutheran church played a significant role in the development of meru people by providing them with education and health care, meanwhile spreading new values and norms of conduct as a result today majority of the Meru population are the believers of the Christian faith. However, after independence the government took over the development responsibilities and finally the church importance declined. Tanganyika gained independence in 1961 and form union with Zanzibar in 1964, jointly they form united republic of Tanzania. Tanzania as a country followed the socialism way of governance which focused on equality and social development. The government of Tanzania started a program of villagization through which scattered rural population brought together to a village system, it has also implied a new system of land legislation allowing for privatization of land. After independence Meru people acquired land from settlers through purchasing, whereby Meru district council provided them with loan security in 1965 to enhance their purchasing power. In 1967 the country government under the president Julius Kambarage Nyerere nationalized all land in Tanzania and abolished the free hold title in favour of lease holds on a 99 years or 33 years basis. Following this, majority of the European settlers left their property particularly land and other assets and were taken over by government Institutes or parastatal companies. Land privatization and land titling officially sanctioned in February 1999 (Havnevik, 1999,88). Following this Meru people where free selling their land to whoever they wanted to sell to. Subsequently land remained under the custody of few people who had wealthy enough to own the land and cause majority of the Meru people with their families to become landless, the scenario pass through many generations and affect them by creating classes between those who own land and others who are landless. The landless young men and women who wanted to do farming had to rent or buy the land from the landowners which is very expensive. It was also observed that after many years of rapid population growth farmlands have been subdivided and fragmented to the extent that many people became landless, and Livelihood sustenance based on agriculture started to decline especially to young men and women who are limited by the small holdings and forced to adapt other off farm activities to generate their daily income for survival (Larson, 1997). Therefore, there is high reliance of off- farm activities currently that has been accelerated by land scarcity. Moreover, for many years the social organization of the meru society practiced a customary land tenure which caused many conflicts in the society, due to many shortcomings the system gradually evolved and now all land on the mountain has permanent individual

land ownership whereby the land is cultivated and inherited. This study aims to address barriers that young men and women from in Arumeru district encounter in accessing the land for farming activities and suggest way forward to reduce the problem.

1.2 The Study area.

This study was conducted in Arumeru district which is one of the seven districts of arusha region of Tanzania located in northern part of the country. The district is bordered to the North by the longido district, to the East by Hai district of Kilimanjaro region, to the south by Simanjiro district of Manyara region, and to the west by Arusha Rural district and Arusha urban district. It covers an area of 1,266 km² and the administrative capital of the district is a small town known as Usariver. Moreover, the district is further divided into small administrative units namely wards, villages, and sub villages. According to the National Bureau of statistics (NBS, 2022) the district has a population of 331,603 with the dominant ethnic group known as meru tribe. The economy is almost entirely agricultural, consisting mostly of subsistence farming and livestock keeping, the common crops grown in the area are coffee, banana, Maize, beans, Irish potatoes and vegetables. However, due to land scarcity many of the households engage in off-farm activities to sustain their livelihood. In addition, there is existence of Mount meru, an extinct volcano rising 4,566m above sea level, is the hub of Arumeru district, located adjacent to the Kenyan border in Northern Tanzania. The eastern and southern sides of the mountain hold some of the most fertile soil and well-watered agricultural lands in the country. The slope of the mountain is irrigated by water channels flowing from the mountain where there are plenty of water sources including rivers and springs, this makes the area covered by a green belt of coffee and banana showing the history and importance of these crops as the main sources of income and food in the area. Furthermore, many economic activities are going on along Moshi-Arusha Road which border the southern part of the Meru land and separate it from the large scale farms and estates. Majority of the Meru people leave their homes every morning and move along the road where there are plenty of productive activities, some seek for the transportation to arusha town for business or working, some bring vegetables to the nearest market of Tengeru and Usariver and others go to do farmwork or collect fodder for their livestock at home. Meru people had higher per capital income compared to other rural areas of the country acquired through their agricultural activities linked to the market and supported by well-watered and fertile soils, also the good infrastructure to Arusha town where they used to sell their agricultural produce (Larson, 1997). In terms of the society organization the meru society follow the patrilinear structure and residence system is patrilocal



Figure 1 showing some parts of Arumeru district. Source: Google Map

1.3 Problem statement

Considering the crucial role of agriculture in arumeru's economy and the challenges faced by smallholder farmers, particularly young men and women in accessing the land for farming activities there was a pressing need to investigate and understand the barriers hindering young men and women in Arumeru district from accessing the farmlands. There should be opportunities in investing in farm activities for young men and women who lives in Arumeru district (Ngatigwa, et al, 2020). However, despite the potential, participation of the young men and women in farm activities is significantly limited due to lack of access to land. Different scholars presented different opinions to why land as an important resource in arumeru district is currently not accessible particularly to young men and women. Ngailo and others in their studies finds that due to the rapid increase in population of Meru society land became a scarce resource among Meru individuals and continued to be fragmented into small holdings that are not enough for profitable production to the extent that young farmers opt to shift to new areas to search for more land to cultivate (Ngailo, et al 2001). Moreover, it has been also revealed that the big problem for Meru small holders is land scarcity mainly caused by rapid population and colonial legacy of land distribution due to this majority were forced to do off-farm activities for their livelihood (Larson, 1997). Essentially all land on the mountain is under the private form of individual ownership although the land may be sold by the landowner. Therefore, young men and women of Arumeru district seek to access land through either buying or renting from the landowners for growing crops for subsistence and for sale. However, few among them afford to do so while majority can't afford and remain landless. Furthermore, Ocheng (2020) in his article observed that due to land in accessibility majority of the young men and women instead forced to participate in other off-farm livelihood activities such as motor cyclic (bodaboda), pretty trades, carpentry, and service enterprises such as barber shops, and beauty salon to sustain their life (Ochieng, 2020). Despite

their engagement into off-farm activities most of the young men and women in Arumeru are still very poor. Taking this challenge into consideration, apparently there was a need to examine in a broad context the barriers that hinder the accessibility of farmland to young men and women in Arumeru district.

1.4 Research objectives and questions.

Research objectives.

The objective of this research is to address barriers hindering young men and women who started to live a self-dependent life in arumeru district in accessing farmlands for farming activities and suggest strategies to reduce the problem for enhancing youth participation in farming activities as the potential area for them to employ themselves and sustain their livelihood.

Main research question.

What are the barriers limiting youth in Arumeru district from accessing farmland for farming activities?

Sub research questions.

- i. What are the typical modes of transfer of farmland and property between generations?
- ii. How are farmland resources divided among male and female youths?
- iii. What are the existing land tenure systems available in the area?
- iv. How does family socio-economic status influence access to farmland to young men and women in Arumeru district?
- v. What is the spatial distribution of land ownership in Arumeru district?

1.5 Justification and relevance of this research.

This study will contribute to address the barriers that limits young men and women in Arumeru district to access farmland and propose effective strategies that will give insight towards reduction of the problem and helps majority of the young men and women to employ themselves in farming sector and enhancing their livelihood, as it was evidently shown in a study conducted in Arumeru district concerning the contribution of carrot farming on livelihood improvement at household levels which shows that investing in farming activities particularly production of carrots is a profitable activity that improves farmers livelihood by recording a gross profit margin of 23.1% per acre (Sewando, et al. 2022). Furthermore, through this study we believe that more land will be accessible to young men and women and increase their participation in farming activities and contribute to the development of meru community as it has been revealed in another study that the contribution of agriculture activities to the community development depends on the active engagement of youth who are the potential labor force (Brennan, 2015).The targeted audience of this study are young men and women who lives in Arumeru and Tanzania in general, local administrators, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), community-based organization (CBO'S), scholars and other private sector actors.

1.6 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework that guides my research is critical agrarian studies. The historical context of the Critical agrarian studies showed that the theory evolved from classical agrarian studies that mostly originates from Marxist tradition of political economy (Borras, 2023). According to Borras, “the critical agrarian studies focus on the way social structures, agrarian institutions, and political agency of social classes and groups are constructed, reproduced, and transformed across space and overtime” (Borras, 2023:451). Moreover, it has been also observed that the theory focuses on understanding how social relationships especially those which relates to the class, power and labor dynamics affected by the ways in which agricultural production is organized (Bernstein, 2010). The core objective of the critical agrarian studies is to promote social justice through investigating the way in which marginalized social groups become aware of their oppression and strive to attain the justice particularly in agrarian societies. I find CAS as more relevant approach to the study of farmland access in Meru community as it emphasizes the impact of social injustice and inequalities in the distribution of farmland access in agrarian societies. By applying CAS, this study intends to understand the struggles of young men and women concerning farmland access in Meru agrarian society, where there is power dynamics between different classes in accessing farmland resources and create inequalities within the society. The power relations referred in this study is based on the access and distribution of farmlands resources between different social classes existing within Meru society including Men and women, landed families and landless families, Meru and non-Meru ethnic groups, Married and non-married women, Old and current generation, Rich and poor villagers. Previous studies have applied CAS, for instance Bernstein (2010) have shown how gender relations influence the access and control of farm resources. However, the critiques of CAS argue that the theory focus more on exploitation in agrarian relation particularly the exploitation of agricultural related resources in agrarian societies, this focus may prevent the positive side of agricultural development not to be recognized because it does not fit to the exploitation framework. This study is quite relating to the CAS theory because the key concepts which underpin the theory are also exhibited in this study, two key concepts of critical agrarian studies have been identified to be relevant to this study the first one is the concept of class, power, and inequality and the other one is the concept of Land ownership and access. According to Akram- Lodhi et al. (2021:3) “on the critical agrarian studies approach, class is a key, though not the only, but also involve other category of social structure and identity”. In CAS, class structure in agrarian society means the hierarchical organization of social groups in agrarian society which has the influence on the access and control of agrarian resources within the society. Furthermore, it has been observed that despite several emerging analytical criteria, class dynamics on land and labor found to be the key categories under critical agrarian studies (Akram-Lodhi et al., 2021:5). Adhering to the CAS framework, this study employs a qualitative methodology focusing on semi structured interview to capture participant’s experiences and thoughts on farmland access by young men and women within Meru community. Moreover, Using CAS as analytical lens, this study focuses on patterns of land access and control, showing how these aspects reflect general perspective of class relation and power dynamics in agrarian society.

Chapter 2 Methodology and Methods

2.0 Introduction

This chapter explain the methodology used for this research, Methods used to collect data, the sample selection, ethical considerations and limitations associated with the study. The chapter also give description of participants and the way the exercise of data collection was carried out in a study area.

2.1 Critical agrarian study's Methodology

This study adopts the critical agrarian studies approach that considers class, gender and generational inequalities. The approach mainly focuses on issues of power dynamics, inequality and social justice, as it considers class, gender, and generational inequalities, it gives insight into how those interacting parameters shape the life of rural communities and agrarian livelihoods, nevertheless the intersectionality of class, gender and generational inequalities intersect to shape social differences in rural areas. Bernstein (2010) reflect that critical agrarian studies focus on the power relations and inequalities that exist within agrarian contexts, including examining how different social groups interact and context power. The approach has been selected because the collected data shed light on power dynamics and class relations. I decided to engage with the young men and women and the key informants who lives in Arumeru district to understand the limitations that young men and women of the study area are going through in accessing farmlands for investing in farming activities.

2.2 Research design

A qualitative approach was employed in this study as the general structure for conducting a study which involves developing a questionnaire guide related to the sub research questions that was used to collect the primary data through a semi structured interview method. Selection of this approach is very relevant as it enables a researcher to explore the experiences and ideas of participants and give them chance to express their feelings concerning the topic under discussion especially for the study like this which involves the class relation and power dynamics on the access and control of the key factor of production in agrarian society which is farmland. Qualitative research is normally conducted to explore participant's views and behaviour (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2020). Normally the oppressive lower-class groups within the society have a lot to say about their perceptions and struggle their going through probably in farmland access, therefore by adopting the qualitative approach the research questions will be answered effectively.

2.2.1 Questionnaire guide

Prior to the interview the questionnaire guide was derived from the five formulated sub research questions that meant to answer the main research question of this study that ask about the barriers limiting youth in Arumeru district from accessing farmland for farming activities. The questions were divided into three categories introductory questions thematic questions and conclusive questions. To begin with the introductory questions respondents were asked about farming and the accessibility of farmlands in general to build rapport to the respondents before introducing the key intended questions. On the second category of

thematic questions the guide involves the questions related to the access to credits among young men and women to see if there is external financial support to help them to acquire farmland, another question was related to land ownership aiming to know the distribution of land within the district through identifying who owns land in the district and the way historical background shaped the current land distribution. In addition, another question covered was about the generational related questions aiming to know the common methods used in the transfer of farmland between generations and if there is any cultural norms and value that influence the farmland access in the area. Nevertheless, the respondents were also asked about the family classes related questions aiming to know the way in which different family classes influence the accessibility of farmlands in the area. Furthermore, the questionnaire guide also covered the land tenure systems related questions with the intention to know the way in which the existing land tenure systems determine the accessibility of the farmland in the area. Moreover, the guide covered a family land distribution related questions aiming to know the way land is transferred at family level and if the land is fairly distributed among the family children. Lastly under the conclusion part the questionnaire guide covered the questions that provided room for the participants to ask anything they would like to know more from the researcher about this research.

2.3 Sampling method

In this research, sampling was done on the two different categories namely the selection of the study villages as well as the selection of the participants involved to the study. To begin with the sampling of the two villages, the Arumeru district is apparently too big in size comprised of 71 villages therefore collecting data from the entire district could not be possible instead this study decided to sample two villages from the district to represent the entire district, in order for the study to have a good representation the sampling procedure considered inclusion of one village from the highland part of the district and the other one from the low land area. The selection of the two villages was carried out through a simple random sampling technique using lottery method where I created a list of all villages from thirty-seven wards of Arumeru district and each village was assigned a number from one to seventy-one. Number of each village was written on slips of the paper then placed in a container and mixed. Two numbers were drawn from a container randomly one after another, automatically the two villages corresponded to the two selected numbers were chosen as planned in a research design that at least two villages had to be selected to represent the entire district taking into consideration one from the high land part and the other from the low land area. From the highland area Sura village was selected while from the low land area Nambala village was selected.

Selection of the required participants involved in this study was done through purposive and snowball sampling methods. Purposive sampling was done by the help of the village chairmen whereby my research assistant went to the villages chairmen's offices who are the leaders of the village and ask for the targeted participants, he was directed to the household where he found them while for some participants, he was given their contact and manage to meet them and started planning for data collection. In addition, I was also able to access some of the participants through my personal network and manage to do conversation with them through WhatsApp call. Snowball sampling method was also applied by consulting the few available participants to recommend other individuals who met the required criteria of the study. Snowball sampling technique facilitate easy access of respondents especially when it is difficult to obtain a sufficient number of the targeted participants (Hossan, Dato'Mansor& Jaharuddin 2023). I was very careful in sample selection knowing that it would affect the findings of the study.

2.4 Data collection Method

I carried out semi structured interview to the group of six young men and women (three young men and three young women) with the age ranging from 18 - 24 and six key informants with different professionals and status in Meru community including executive officer of the ward, villages agricultural extension officers, village chairmen and the community elders. The interviews were conducted online on zoom and WhatsApp call between July and August 2024. Set up of the interview was done by the research assistant who visited each of the recruited participant before the interview and introduced to them about the study and the need to involve them to the interview for data collection, he requested for the interview on my behalf and they agreed upon the common date of an interview that could be convenient to each side as suggested by Roulston (2010:99) who said that “ normally interviews are scheduled at the convenience of both interviewer and interviewee ”. The participants were informed that the interview could take about 20-30 minutes. Next was selection of place for conducting an interview where a very comfortable places were selected to ensure a smooth data collection including participant's homes and offices. Since the participants were scattered in different villages and different places the research assistant had to travel to meet the participants where they were available and introduced me to the participants and set a zoom call through his personal computer and give it to the participant and shared a zoom link with me ready for me to conduct an interview with the participants. The interview was conducted by me, the research assistant was there just to facilitate the exercise. I started the interview by introducing myself and familiarize with the participants, I shared the purpose of my study and explain its importance to their society and seek for their consent to participate on my interview and record our conversation, a research assistant provided them with a consent form and request them to sign before the interview and I manage to get the consent from all participants involved .I told them I would like to get their knowledge and experience about various issues concerning with my study in Arumeru district because they are more familiar with the study area and they have been there for a long. I started interviewing them by starting with the general questions about their personal introduction and the general life in their district to build rapport, the questions asked involved their occupation, their family size, the status of their land ownership, their originality and their status in the community and the time they have been living in Meru community.

The interview proceeds by asking them questions from the prepared questionnaire about various matters required to answer the main research question and the follow-up probes after the key questions, a list of open-ended questions was used as a guide for our conversation during interview for the participant to fill free and comfortable to express their ideas and views about the raised topics of the study and the conversation flowed smoothly. Edwards and Holland (2013) argue that the main objective of qualitative interviewing is to evoke the experiences, perceptions and feelings of the research participants. The interview questions covered from the questionnaire were divided into the following categories: access to credit, Intergenerational transfer of farmland, Family classes, Land tenure systems, Family land distribution and land ownership related questions. Some participants were very curious to see the final product of the study, I promised them that the findings from the study will be shared to them upon its completion by December 2024. During the interview I took more time to listen to them and guide them to focus on the study topic. The interview was conducted using Swahili language to facilitate easy communication between interviewer and interviewee as both parties were familiar with the language. Soon after finishing the interview I wrote the field notes to capture the burning issues that emerged during conversation while the interviews were recorded through my personal computer and phone sometimes as it has been recommended by Bernard (2017) who suggested that it is essential for a semi structured

interview to be recorded and keep memory since the recorded interviews provide a permanent source of primary information and can be used by other researchers in the future.

2.5 Who are the participants?

The participants in this study were a group of six young men and women which comprised of three young men and three young women as well as six key informants including executive officer of the ward, villages agricultural extension officers, village chairmen and the community elders. The sample size consisted of 12 participants from the two randomly selected villages namely Nambala and Sura. Sample selection was based on the following criteria for the first group of participants which involves young men and women the selection criteria was based on age limit from 18 to 24 years old and a participant was supposed to be a resident of the selected study villages, for the other group of key informants the selection criteria was based on their experience of working or living with Meru community, the more experienced participants had more chance to be selected to participate in a study.

More details concerning the selected young men and women participants, this is the most affected class in this study with the limited access to farmland within a study area, their participation is important as it gives insight of the situation and the struggles, they are going through in accessing farmlands. The age of participants referred in this study are those aged from 18-24 based on the reality of the study area it takes long for the people to start their own dependent life because of the complexity of the existing countries systems particularly in education and employment opportunities, the proposed age category has been also used in many different parts of sub-Saharan Africa with slightly variations. Young men and women who participated in this study had different occupations including young farmers, farm laborers, office attendant, and small business entrepreneur. Sampling strategies used in sample selection of young men and women are both purposive and snow balling. Purposive sampling was done by the help of the village chairmen of the village who guided us to the households where we can meet the required participants while snow balling was applied by asking the few participants who were first available to connect us with other participants who are eligible to participate in our study. I worked with them in answering the prepared questionnaire that required their views and experience. Based on the knowledge and experience possessed by them concerning the study area, this study finds very useful to include them to participate in this study as their contribution was significant.

Furthermore, concerning the selected key informants, these are the people who currently live in Arumeru district particularly in Sura and Nambala village where this study was conducted and they are well informed about the land issues in the district. Most of these informants have been in Arumeru for more than a decade now, live together and interact with Meru community in their daily life this gives them opportunity to understand the challenges facing Meru community about the accessibility of farmlands and their life in general. Moreover, They occupy different positions in the society including community elders who are also experienced farmers who have been practicing farming activities for so long in their villages therefore they know a lot about the land access issues in Arumeru district. Another category of key informants involved village and ward leaders including the village chairmen and ward executive officer who deals with their village and wards management respectively, they also manage land issues at their villages and wards including farmland businesses, farmland ownership issues, struggle of the community with land access and many more. Another category of key informants was Agricultural extension officers who work close with the community by extending agricultural knowledge to them, these people are well informed about the land access issues, they also know the dynamics about farming population and the

struggle people are going through in implementing the farming projects. I found these informants through both purposive and snowball sampling methods. Purposive sampling was done by the help of the village chairmen of the village who guided us to the households where we could meet the required participants while snowballing was applied by asking the few participants who were first available to connect us with other participants who were eligible to participate in our study. I worked with them in answering the prepared questionnaire that required their views and experience. Based on the knowledge and experience possessed by these key informants concerning the study area, this study revealed that it was worthy for this study to involve them.

2.5.1 The role of the research Assistant.

Collection of the primary data from the field was conducted under supervision of the research assistant who was there just to facilitate the exercise and create a direct link between me as a researcher and the participants in a study area. He is a holder of bachelor's degree in education and information technology, and he is currently doing internship at the institute of accountancy Arusha. He used to be my fellow working staff at LITA-Tengeru where he was contracted temporary to teach students introduction to computer course. Since I didn't go to the field where I conducted my study, he helped me to do the following tasks: recruiting the eligible participants based on the instructions I gave to him and keep close contact with them for the appointment of an interview on this role he took his time to introduce my research to the recruited participants for them to be aware of what was going on, another role was to print and disseminate the prepared questionnaire prior to the interviews in order for the participants to be familiar with the topics of the interview, moreover, He played a role of organizing participants for conducting an online semi-structured interview with me as a researcher at this role he had to travel a long distances to meet the participants since the participants were scattered as the study covered the highland and low land villages which located some kilometers apart. Lastly, he helped me to facilitate an interview between me and my participants through zoom call and because he was expert in information technology the setup of the devices was not a problem. Generally, the exercise of data collection was structured and conducted by me, but the assistant was there in the field just to facilitate the execution of the program.

2.6 Data analysis

Since the study applied a qualitative research methodology, the qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and patterns that emerged from the data. The analysis was guided by the main research question that aim to know the main barriers that hinder farmland access to young men and women in a study area. Data were collected through semi structured interview to twelve respondents as described earlier, and I find it useful to use thematic analysis to explore the experiences from the participants concerning the study questions within the study area. The interviews from the young men and women and the key informants were recorded through mobile phone and computer, the recorded audio transcripts were transcribed manually through selective transcription by focusing on sections that are relevant to the research question. Coding was done manually by reviewing the respondent transcripts and identify the potential codes that were used to develop themes and sub themes.

2.7 Positionality

I am a government employee working with the livestock training Agency (LITA) based in Arumeru district within the Arusha region. My professional background is Animal science, particularly range management, my home of origin is in the southern part of the country almost 680.5km away from the study area. Residing and working in arumeru gives me an opportunity to be familiar with various problems facing the community around. I study the problem of land accessibility facing young men and women to support marginalized groups in society and I acknowledge that I am an outsider to the study context. However, it is my hope this research will bring a better understanding of the struggles that youths are facing in accessing farmlands for farming activities. I chose to conduct research in Arumeru district because I understand the struggles and problems facing community around particularly youth with an intension to help them in addressing their problems. Many youths in arumeru are unemployed engaging in crime and jeopardize their future, this drew my attention to conduct research in this area.

2.8 Ethical consideration and Limitations

Since this study is dealing with community, ethical consideration is very important, in this study ethical approval was provided by the International Institute of Social studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam to ensure the compliance of the established ethical guidelines. All Participants were assured that their information shared during an interview would be confidential and be informed about the purpose of the research and its contribution to their community. Furthermore, as a researcher in this study I asked for the consent of the participants before conducting the interview and each participant was free to leave the interview whenever they wanted to do so. However, during data collection process I encountered some limitations including the following: one of the limitations was language barrier to some participants particularly community elders were unable to understand interview questions in Swahili language as they used to speak more their vernacular language due to this, I was forced to select other eligible participants who can understand the asked questions. Another limitation encountered was several times participants were missing appointments for interview as planned, I had to reschedule the appointments to their convenient time. Furthermore, I had to comply with my research assistant schedule to conduct an interview since he was also doing his other activities while at the same time, he was supposed to link me with participants to conduct interviews. All these limitations consumed a lot of my time and prolonged my time of data collection.

Chapter 3 Results and discussion

Reflecting the main objective of this study, this study intended to answer a research question that asks what are the barriers limiting young men and women in Arumeru district from accessing farmland for investing in farming activities. After analyzing the collected primary data, this study finds that population growth, cultural and gender differentiation and the existing pattern of land ownership within the study area as the core barriers that limits young men and women in the study area from accessing farmlands for farming activities. Below are the detailed discussion of the recurring themes;

3.0 Population growth

The study revealed that there is increase in population in Arumeru district that influence spatial land distribution within the district. There are some areas become more densely populated leading to farmland shortage and limit accessibility to young men and women who lives within those areas. According to the National bureau of statistics of Tanzania based on demographic data obtained after every ten years through conducting a population and Housing national census, the population of Arumeru district observed to increase over time. It has been shown that in 2002 the population of Meru people was 516,814 (NBS, 2002) while in 2012 the population was recorded to be 268,144 (NBS, 2012) and in 2022 the population was recorded to be 331,603 (NBS, 2022). To be specific in the study wards and villages where this study was conducted the population observed to increase as well, that leads to the competition of farmland resources among the people of Meru community. In the highland area of Akheri ward that contain several villages including Sura, Sehela and many others, the population increased overtime from 2002 to 2022 as shown in the table 1 below. The study observes that the growth in population in this area is very natural due to the increased fertility which result to a greater number of children's and young people in households and communities. The young men and women of the community they also grow older and become parents overtime and produce more children's in the society, in line with this there is a common habit among the people of Meru society they always stay in their homeland in most of their life time, they don't migrate into other areas like other tribes does in the country because they believe that they live in a more valuable fertile land that can give them a better life than elsewhere within the country, this ideology also increase their number in their district as majority among them don't move away. Due to the increase in population the area become too concentrated now to the extent that limit majority of the young men and women in their villages from accessing farmland for farming activities and even those who own land, they own small portions of about half an acre per person and those who are landless but interested in investing in farming activities they have option to rent a farmland from the landed people with no interest in farming for the price of five hundred thousand per half of an acre for a single harvesting season that is very expensive for the young men and women from the poor families to afford and hence limit them from accessing a farmland. Furthermore, this study observe different reactions between young men and women from families of different socio-economic status in the area, whereby young men and women with limited access to farmland especially those who are coming from the poor and low status families have started to diversify their means of livelihood and start engaging into other livelihood activities particularly off-farm activities like transport services by transporting people and their crop produce to and from the market and petty trades in the nearest market of Tengeru and others sell their labor to other farm owners in order for them to survive. However, the young men and women from the rich and high-status families get support from their parents who help them to buy farmland for them in other villages where land is available but very expensive.

In the low land area of Kikwe ward where nambala and other villages are found this study revealed that the increase in population is mainly caused by in migration. It was reported that in the past these areas were less populated with large open and vacant land which was not habited by the people because its land was less fertile compared to that of the high-land area. The open land was owned by the government under the Meu district council, the local community in the area had access to the government open land to do their farming activities by renting farmlands at low affordable price and sometimes access it for free as free grazing land for those who used to keep animals. However, in recent years the population observed to increase due to in migration where people from other areas mostly being from other parts of Arusha region migrate into these areas and buy the open land from the government and use them for residence and few use them for farming activities to the extent that the young men and women from the local families have no more access to acquire the farmland since every land is occupied now and it is under the private ownership, they are also poor they couldn't compete with the rich and middle class families who migrated into their areas and buy land from the government. The pulling factors for migration were better social services available in these areas including better education, health, transport, and water supply services. The number of households has increased compared to the past years and every land is occupied now with high rate of conversion of farmlands into residence areas as it was stated by the kikwe ward executive officer, *“there is large number of migrants in our ward and most of them convert farmlands into residential areas as a result the available farmland is shrinking, forcing local residents who are interested in farming to shift to nearby villages with lower population densities such as majimoto and others. However, only a few wealthy individuals can afford to do this move”*.

.In addition, the study discover that the poor parents in the villages from among the local families who owned large areas of land has been also selling the land to the rich and middle class migrant in order for them to get more money and use it to solve their problems that requires immediate huge amount of cash, most of them are small holder farmers who cultivate crops and keep animals for their livelihood therefore in case of any emergence they have to sell portions of their land to get more money. However, selling of the land by the parents seems to compromise with the children's interest who are the main heir of their parent's land because the more land is sold out to other people is the more children's will have smaller area of farmlands to inherit and sometimes due to their large numbers in the house holds the land inherited by the few while others remain landless. The results from this study that shows the increase in population in arumeru district contribute to the limited access of farmlands to the young men and women, align with the findings from another study conducted in the same district by Ngailo et al. (2001) who found that the increase in population pressure in arumeru district resulted in a reduction of the area needed for grazing animals and crops cultivation. The table below shows the increase in population in a study wards overtime.

Table 1 Population of Akheri and Kikwe wards in Arumeru 2002-2022

Ward	Year		
	2002	2012	2022
Akheri	12,243	13,699	17,236
Kikwe	9,826	10,795	10,965

Source: National bureau of statistics Tanzania

3.1 Cultural and gender differentiation

To begin with cultural differentiation, this study unveiled that there is inequality in land ownership where the land is only distributed within the people of Meru ethnic group and not to other non-Meru ethnic groups. The country is known for its rich cultural diversity with more than one hundred distinct ethnic groups and tribes moves and interact freely within the country but for the case of Meru particularly in the high land area this study found that the access of farmland is limited to the people from other ethnic groups and tribes. The young men and women from other ethnic groups with different culture who lives in Arumeru district are not accepted by Meru community to buy or rent farmland in the high land area of the district, therefore, this limits majority of them from accessing farmlands for farming activities. Other ethnic groups found themselves in Meru community in one reason or another some of them are state employees who have been allocated to Arumeru district as their working station, others migrated to search for better life to boost their economy. Majority of them have been there for many decades, the young men and women from these families have been also affected by the scenario since they grew up in Meru but with limited access of farmland ownership. One of the respondents who is also a community elder from sura village located in the high land part of the district was quoted saying that *"We don't sell land to people from other ethnic groups, the land here is sold within ourselves."* However, in the low land area where the land is less potential compared to the highland, non-Meru ethnic groups are allowed to buy and own their farmlands although it is very expensive only few rich and middle-class families can afford while most of the poor families can't afford and remain landless.

From table 2 below in appendix1, we can see two older male state employees who are looking for land (Middle class) to do farming activities, currently they are able to rent a farm from the big landlords around in the low land area of the district although they want to own their own farm, but they can't afford for now. Moreover, since they are not originating from Meru community, they can't buy land from the highland areas based on the limitation posed by Meru culture, hence they have only one option to buy land in the low land area, this reduce their chance of accessing more farmlands, this also seems to affect the young men and women from these families because as they become older they find a family with no more farmlands to give them. Furthermore, this study revealed that the existing land tenure systems in Meru have significant impact in the distribution of farmlands between Meru and non-Meru ethnic groups. There are two common land tenure systems found in the study area currently, which includes customary and state laws land tenure systems, customary land tenure system is mostly used in the transfer of land ownership in the highland part of the district where you can find Sura, Ndoombo, Schela and other villages while in the low land area below the mount Meru where you can find Nambala, Mbuguni, majimoto and other villages state laws land tenure system is mostly used in the transfer of farmland ownership. Concerning the use of the customary land tenure in the distribution of farmland within Meru community this study unveil that the ownership of farmland is governed by the norms and practices set by Meru community where the intergenerational transfer of farmland is controlled by the community leaders, clan leaders or families based on known long established traditions. In Meru community, normally farmlands are transferred from one generation to another through inheritance within the family level whereby a family farther give portions of farmlands to their children's particularly young men and the rights of the inherited farmland is passed down from the parents to the heir and the heir is given a customary land title from the village leaders to certify his ownership, although the heir will be responsible to organize the farmland transfer event by paying thirty thousand shillings to the community leaders involved in the transfer process and this is commonly known as "Debe" in Meru community. The use of the customary land tenure system in the high land part of the district automatically excludes and limit non-Meru from accessing the farmlands because the system

ensures the circulation transfer of farmlands remain within Meru tribe families. However, the use of customary land tenure system observed to bring some challenges within Meru community including conflicts among the family members as shown in another study conducted in the slope of mount Meru in Arumeru district Tanzania it was found that under customary land tenure system there are many claims recorded about family land alienation among family members and most of which happened due to various reasons including separation between partners and death of a father of a family or husband (Dancer, 2016:165). Despite its challenges but the system is still used in the area as the way to show their cultural preservation. We can see from table 2, the participants from the village located in the high-land part of the district are originating from Meru ethnic group while most of the participants from the village located in the low land area originates from non-Meru ethnic groups, this contributed mostly by the use of the customary land tenure system that exclude non-Meru individuals who possess different culture from owning a farmland in the high land area instead forced to concentrate in the low land villages where state laws land tenure system is applicable.

The use of the state laws land tenure systems in the low land area of the district gives opportunity people from other ethnic groups (non-Meru) to own their own farmlands since farmland ownership in this area is governed by the formal laws and regulations established by the government. The regulation allows any citizen from any region of the country to own farmland provided that the criteria for ownership are met. Individuals who purchase farmland in this area are given legal titles or deeds that define their ownership rights. From table 2 below, we can see a community elder who is also a farmer in Nambala village originating from pare ethnic group migrated to arumeru district many years ago, he managed to buy his own land in Nambala village and establish his permanent settlement.

Concerning the intergenerational transfer of farmland resources in Meru community this study revealed that the transfer of farmlands resources within Meru community is done through devolution process where a transfer of farmland within a family is done before death of a farmland holder. In the case of Meru community this study find that a family land is under the control of the parents particularly a male parent who is a family leader and has mandate to control the ownership and the distribution of a family land to his children since the society is structured in a patriarchy system. The common form of devolution practiced in the area is that the use right of a farmland is given to the children of the family who are older enough to start their self -dependent life and farmland resources are passed down in the same vertical way in the coming generation. However, it has been discovered that there is inequality in the division of farmland resources among children from the same families based on their gender and age differences, the findings shows that in many families of the Meru community the devolution process of farmland resources favor young men and neglect young women where a father of a family allocate portion of farmlands to his sons and transfer the rights of use to them while young women are not considered for the allocation of farmlands but involved in a family farming production that benefits the whole family and not for their individual benefits. The findings from this study concerning the inequality on the division of farmland resource based on gender, aligns with the findings of the previous research conducted by Doss et al. (2018) who argues that many of the inheritance systems disadvantage women and favor men in terms of inheritance and once women inherit legally still receive a social pressure to surrender their inheritance. It has been also observed that inheritance of the family land follows the same structure even after the death of a farmland resource holder who is normally a male parent of a family, and the land transfer exercise is supervised by the close siblings of the resource holder from the same lineage. Similarly, it has been also shown in a previous study by (Mulder et al, 2009:8) where it was found that the transfer of wealth in pastoral and agricultural societies exhibit a significant level of inequality.

In addition, it was also found that in some few instances young women has been taken into consideration in the allocation of farmlands but only a first daughter of a family is given a smallest portion of land compared to the young men while other daughters within the same family are limited from accessing a family land for their individual benefit and remain landless and this create classes of those who have farmlands and those who have not based on their age differences. The scenario has been well narrated by Mr. Francis Nko, a community elder in Sura village who said that *“Young women are not given land in our village and if had to be given just a small portion of land will be allocated only to the first daughter which is commonly known as Kisumu”*. The scenario explicitly shows gender inequality by which young women in Meru community are denied from accessing a family land from their parents and this hinder them from investing in farming activities of their choice to explore the available potential. Therefore, this study argues that the exclusion of young women from farmland distribution executed under a devolution process of agrarian resources transfer between generations limits young women in Arumeru district from accessing farmlands for farming activities. We can see from table 2 a young man who is a farmer from Sura village owning a farmland of less than an acre granted by his family and use it to invest in farming activities by producing horticultural crops for sell and sustain his life. We can also see another young farmer aging twenty-one years old from sura village owning a farmland of 0.5 Acre granted by his family and use it to produce carrots for business purpose and generate income to sustain his daily life, meanwhile these young farmers are expected by their families to protect the farmlands and pass it to the next generations. Moreover, on the other hand from the same table we can see young women participants from both Nambala and sura villages who are landless and involved in other off-farm activities, they are coming from the landed families but they have not been considered in family land allocation because they were expected to be married and leave their homelands, although they all have ambitions to become farmers in the future once they will be able to purchase their own farmland. The exclusion of the young women from accessing a family land in Meru community observed to affect them economically as most of them struggle to find jobs that can help them to generate income and sustain their life, instead they become dependent to the young men within the community and their families for their livelihood and this strengthen the domination of the patriarchy system in the entire district because young men are more favored than young women by being provided with a farmland which is one of the core factors of production in agrarian societies. Although previous research conducted in Indonesia by (White, 2020) showed that in many parts of the country young men and women are permitted to inherit farmland from their families although in some few areas particularly in west Manggarai district and Flores there is still gender inequality where young women from these areas cannot inherit a family land. The more interesting issue in this study regarding the intergenerational transfer of farmlands is the fact that the inequality in the distribution of farmland resource is not only based on gender but it goes far to the age differences among the same gender group where the first daughter of the family is considered for the allocation of the family farmlands while other daughters are not.

Furthermore, the findings shows that the patrilocal social system of life practiced in the study area is a major reason that contribute to lack of access to land by young women, under this system normally a married young women move from her homeland to join her husband and resides near or with the husband's community, due to this cultural practice where a young women leaves her homeland and join another family after marriage, the community perceive that giving land to a young women the land will not be protected as they will not be there to look after it, instead the community decides to allocate farmlands to young men who can protect their homelands and pass it down to the coming generations because most of them establish their permanent residence around their homeland while doing farming activities including crop cultivation and animal husbandry. However, Under the patrilocal system we can also see a class differentiation between married and non-married young

women where a married young women get access to a farmland by sharing the same land owned by her husband and use it to do farming activities while for non -married young women especially those who are coming from the poor class families remain landless because they have limited options of acquiring farmlands as compared to the married ones, as a result majority of the young women who are not married in Meru community decided to turn away from farming activities and start to venture into other livelihood activities particularly petty trades to sustain their life. Most of them operates their businesses in small town centers of Tengeru, Usariver and Kikatiti where there are reliable markets dominated by huge population of women traders. Some of the common businesses conducted includes selling of the agricultural produce where they normally search for the high demanded agricultural produce in the market such as banana, tomatoes, onions, potatoes and many more from different areas of the district and buy them in affordable price and sell them into the market to generate profit. From table 2, that shows the occupation of different participants we can see a young woman who is a small entrepreneur doing small businesses for her survival, we can also see another young woman who is selling her labor in one of the plantations around and paid small amount of money for her livelihood, we can see none of them engage in farming activities while young men do but they all have ambitions to become farmers in the future once they get access to farmland because they still believe they can make more profit in farming activities, this small sample of the young women participants and the occupation represent the current existing life situation of the majority of young women in the district. Moreover, concerning the transfer of farmlands between one generation to another in Meru community this study unveiled that the struggle to farmland access among young men and women from landed and landless class families differ significantly where those who come from the landed families have a guarantee to access farmland as the land is passed down to them from their parents and help many of them to engage in farming activities and be able to explore the farming potential available in the study area, and those from the rich and middle class landed families have double chance of accessing more farmlands as they also have opportunity to buy or rent more lands for farming activities as they get support from their families .Nevertheless, it has been also shown that even those who come from the poor class landed families have been able to explore the available potential of investing in farming activities. Contrary, the landless class families where the young men and women from these families observed to have limited options of accessing farmlands mostly through renting or purchasing from the landed families and this can only be afforded by those who are from the rich and middle class families while majority of the young men and women from the poor families remain landless and decided to sell their labor to other landed families and generate income for their survival, but the struggle for farmland access in these families observed to continue affecting the subsequent generations because the heir find themselves without a farmlands to inherit.

Furthermore, this study discovered that the existing customary and state laws land tenure systems in the study area bring a significant impact to the accessibility of farmlands between young men and women in Meru community, The devolution process used to transfer family lands to the young men is executed through a customary land tenure system that exclude young women from accessing farmlands and remain landless, most of the villages located in the highland part of the district are still practicing it. However, it has been found that in the low land area of the district where many villages are now developed into small towns including Usariver, Maji ya chai and Tengeru, the customary law of land tenure system is no longer used instead they are now using state laws in the transfer of farmland ownership. The use of the state laws in the transfer of farmland ownership in Meru community gives young women opportunity to purchase a farmland and invest in farming activities as the system allow any citizen of the country to own land although this opportunity is mostly exploited by the young women from the middle class and rich families who have a certain

level of income that allows them to buy their own farmlands while those from the poor landless families are limited from accessing it because of the financial constrain and most of them remain landless and un able to engage in farming activities. A young women participant from sura village who is a small entrepreneur, was reported claiming that *“we as young women we are not considered in the allocation of family land, but we are allowed to purchase and own a farmland for any one of us who can manage to do so”*.

3.2 Land ownership pattern

Concerning the spatial distribution of land ownership in Arumeru district this study finds that the existing pattern of land distribution within the district foster inequality that contribute to farmlands inaccessibility among members of Meru community particularly young men and women who have ambition to invest in farming activities for their livelihood , it has been revealed that Land ownership is concentrated in the hands of a few including Government institutions, Conservation areas, big landlords, and plantations that creates barrier for farmland access. The situation reported to be highly triggered by the political economy of land existed within the district in 1960’s after the end of British colonial era. During this time the land was purchased from the British settlers by the big landlords of Meru community, government institutions and the remaining land was handed over to the Tanganyika government under Meru district council who later started to sell land to the Meru community particularly rich people who could afford to buy it. To unpack the distribution of land in Arumeru it has been revealed that a large portion of land is occupied by the government institutions to cater their own objectives .To begin with Akheri ward, where Sura as a study village is located within, there are plenty of Government institutions including NM-AIST, LITA-TENGERU, ASA, NAIC and HORTI-TENGERU, all of which occupy a significant portion of land that limit the community around from the nearest villages like Nambala, sing’isi, Sura and others from accessing it. Data recorded from one of the famous government institute known as LITA-TENGERU shows that the institute occupy a total area of 159.6 ha of farmlands which is allocated for their office use only this makes the community around particularly young men and women to struggle asking for the farming land especially during the rainy season when majority of the farmers engage in crops cultivation , it has been also revealed that not all of the occupied land is effectively utilized by the respective institutions there are some areas where the land is dumped with no any use yet is still protected and limited not to be accessed by the community around as it has been claimed by one of the young farmers from Nambala village named as Kelvin who said that *“the big farmlands are owned by the government institutions in our area and they don’t utilize them effectively, they could give it to us for cultivation of maize crop”*. Other mentioned government institutions they also own land almost like that of LITA-TENGERU. In addition, regarding the land ownership pattern in Arumeru this study discover that there are plantations around Tengeru, Nduruma and Usariver wards owned by foreign investors they also occupy a significant portion of land that limit the accessibility of farmlands to the young men and women who live within the listed wards located around the plantations .Majority of the young men and women who lives around these plantations are forced to work in these plantations as cheap labors for their survival since most of them are coming from the poor families. Most of these plantations produces flowers for export including Enza zaden and Tanzania flowers.

Furthermore, this study also finds that there are few big landlords who own large farms that observed to limit farmland access to the Meru community particularly those who live around these farms, the study revealed that Nduruma wards and Nambala village are the most affected areas by the big landlords who occupy large areas of farmlands for their own benefits, some of the noted big farms around includes Gomba estate, Dolli farms who owns

more than hundred acres of land and Georges farm that has been in operation for more than two decades now. Some of these large farms offer farmland rent service to the community around especially during the rainy season when the crop cultivation seems to be feasible. However, few people from the rich and middle-class families afford to rent a farmland since it is very expensive while most of the young men and women from the poor and landless families can't afford the cost and decide to sell their labor to the rich and middle-class farmers around. In line with this Mr kaaya who is the oldest farmer and community elder in Akheri ward was noted saying that *"We don't have land, if we want to cultivate, we have to rent farmland from big landlords in Gomba estate for about one hundred thousand Tanzanian shillings per acre per season which is very expensive"*. In addition, it has been also revealed that some of the big landlords who own registered companies, use their companies to buy large areas of open farmlands in the area from the government represented by Meru district council who are the fundamental owner of land as it is recognized in the land and village land acts of 1999 of the united republic of Tanzania which state that "all land in Tanzania is public land vested in the president as trustee on behalf of all citizens of Tanzania (Kimaro & Hieronimo, 2014). They normally divide the area into small plots and sell to their clients in a high price that will give them more profit, based on the information from the participants, Kambele Investment Company is a leading company that owns largest area recently. The companies sell land to anyone who can afford the price. However, majority of the buyers are from the rich and middle-class families who are migrants and not from among the residents. These companies hold empty land, and they do nothing with it just waiting for the customers to buy it, this limits the residents including young men and women around from getting the farmland for farming activities.

Moreover, it has been also discovered that in the high land part of the district a large area of land is occupied by the conservation areas that limit young men and women from the mountainous wards and villages including Sura, Sehela, Ndoombo, Ngare na nyuki and others from accessing farmlands. Arusha National Park (ANAPA) with the size of 322 km² and Mount Meru national forest, are the largest conservation areas in Meru that occupy a significant portion of land that reduces the available farmlands to the young men and women of the Meru community who are interested to do farming activities. These areas are highly protected with limited access to the Meru community members since they are used for tourism activities.

In addition to the core findings the study also revealed that despite the struggle that young men and women are going through in accessing farmlands for investing in farming activities in Arumeru district, there are some instance shows that some few young men available in the study area seems to lose interest of investing in farming activities and turn away from farming to off farm activities to the extent that they sell their inherited family farmland and buy a motor cycle and start to engage into the transport service business. Based on the information from the participants these young men developed interest to do this business because they want to earn money every day although the profit margin is very small while they see investing in farming activities it takes long processes and they will have to wait for a long time before realizing the profit. The observation challenges the myth of the Meru community who believe that giving family land to a young man the land will be protected while giving it to the young women the land will be unprotected and lost.

Moreover, other observation concerning the equality in the distribution of farmlands between young men and women the study find that generally there is improvement in gender consideration in the distribution of farmland resources as compared to the past decades, it has been recently observed that in some villages that has been promoted into small towns, few families are gradually changing and see there is a need to consider gender equality in the

distribution of farmland resources, and the change brought by various reasons; the first reason observed is the current generation within the society seems to be educated and through their acquired formal knowledge they see there is a need for a gender equality to be taken into consideration and another reason found is high divorce rate to the married couples , now days marriage are no longer lasting for a long time as it was in the past years and the young women become victims in most cases after separation as they are forced to go back to their home with their children and start a new dependent life out of marriage, since they were not considered in the allocation of family land they start to struggle and find themselves in a difficult situation to sustain their livelihood while majority of them remain poor.

Chapter 4 Conclusion and recommendations

4.0 Discussion of what is required to address the issues

Based on their experience, Participants had some opinions on what to be done to reduce the severity of the challenge regarding the farmland accessibility to the young men and women in their district as presented below.

Concerning the unbalanced land ownership pattern existing in the study area, to rectify the situation, the participants suggested that there should be redistribution of land in the district that will give land back to the community from the hands of a few and make it available to many individuals and bring a multiply economic effect within the community. They were mostly referring to the land owned by the institutions and are currently not utilized effectively. In addition, regarding the increase in population that leads to conversion of farmlands to residence areas, the ward executive officer who was also a key informant in this study suggested that in order to protect farmland for our young men and women there should be a proper land use plan that will guide the proper use of land within the area as per intended district objectives based on the potential available and prevent the large portion of farmlands to be converted into residence areas that reduce the available farmland to the community. Furthermore, concerning the inequality in the accessibility of farmland resources based on cultural and gender differentiation participants were asking for the government support to intervene and enforce the use of the state laws that treats all people equal and give member of the community equal chance of accessing farmlands.

4.1 Core argument of the research

From the core findings of this study, we can see class relation and power dynamics between different social classes existing within Meru agrarian society that affect the distribution of farmlands among the community individuals. For instance, we can see a male parent in a family have more power than the other members of a family and he decides the access, control and distribution of the family resources over other members of the family which in most cases results to inequality and injustice within the family. We can see the class differentiation between rich middle and poor classes, we can also see a social class differentiation between people from Meru ethnic groups and those who are from other ethnic groups who are non-Meru. We can also see class differences between married and non-married women, we can also see class differentiation between young men and women, the power dynamics existing between these class relations leads to inequalities and marginalization of some disadvantage's groups particularly in the access and control of the farmland resources within Meru agrarian society. Therefore, it is good at any onetime to take into consideration the class dynamics and power relation in any agrarian society as there is high level of inequalities going on among Meru individuals and it is not fair to consider the agrarian society as one it is very important to go further and observe the power relation within to promote justice and avoid inequality. By taking into consideration the class relation and power dynamics expressed between different classes within Meru society will enable each social group to enjoy the access and control of the farmland resources available in their society and be able to explore the available potential of investing in farming activities especially for the young men and women who are the target group in this study. To underpin the core argument of this study, the study refers Bernstein concepts of political economy to unveil the idea behind. In examining the social relation of production and reproduction on political economy Henry

Bernstein in his book pose four important questions who owns what, who does what, who gets what, and what do they do with it (Bernstein 2010,22). The first question is all about the access and control over the agrarian resources including farmlands within the agrarian society, showing that it is good to understand who owns what than taking assumptions that all individuals enjoy the resources at the same level. The second question is about the specialization in the allocation of responsibilities among the individuals within the agrarian society it helps to understand the level of commitment that someone invests on agricultural production. The third question is about the distribution of wealthy and benefits obtained after a labor work in agricultural production, the question reminds that the distribution of fruits of production should be in accordance with the labor force that an individual offer during production work to compensate the effort exerted during the farm work. The fourth question is concerned with the fairness in the consumption of the benefits obtained by the agrarian societies, and this differ from one society to another, this also remind us of the unpaid labor that face most of the marginalized groups within the agrarian society.

4.2 Conclusions

Classes struggle in farmland ownership bring serious impacts in Arumeru district as the future of the current generation towards farmland resource ownership has been determined mostly by the older generations, making the farming sector to be dominated by the old people, young men and women have significant contribution in the development of farming sector as the sector needs active manpower. The findings from this study showed that the main barriers that limits young men and women in Arumeru district from accessing farmland for farming activities includes increase in population that is mainly caused by In migration and increase in fertility rate within Meru agrarian society, cultural and gender differentiation, this refer to inequality in farmland access which based on cultural and gender differences where non-meru and young women are in disadvantage. Lastly the existing unbalanced land ownership pattern where the land belongs to few people and institutions while majority among young men and women remain landless. Since family land observed to be the first option for the young men and women of Arumeru to access farmland and help them to invest in farming activities and explore the available potential to improve their livelihood, therefore, this study recommends further studies to be conducted on the perceptions of the Meru community towards the existing gender-based inequality in farmland division between young men and women within families.

Appendices

Appendix 1.

Who are the participants?

Young women and men							
Name	Age	Marital status	Occupation	Land ownership status	Gender	Family size	village
Vumi	22	Not married	entrepreneur	Landless	Female	5 people	Sura
Suzan	24	Divorced with two kids	Office cleaner.	Landless	Female	4 people	Nambala
Mariam	22	Not married	Farm Labour at enza zaden	Landless	Female	1 person	Nambala
James	23	single	Young farmer	Less than an acre	Male	5 people	sura
Gud luck	21	Not married	Young farmer	0.5 Acre	Male	4 people	Sura
Kelvin	24	Not married	Young farmer	landless	Male	4 people	Nambala
Key informants							
Kaaya	68	Married	Farmer	1 Acre	Male	8 people	Sura
Fransis Nko	65	Married	Village chairman	0.5 Acre	Male	6 people	sura
Andrea	55	Married	Farmer	landless	Male	5 people	Nambala
Joel	35	Married	Agricultural extension officer	landless	Male	3 people	Nambala
John daud	37	Married	Agricultural extension officer	landless	Male	5 people	Nambala
Abeid	35	Married	Ward executive officer	landless	Male	3 people	Nambala

Table 2. Source: interview data

Appendix 2.

Semi structured interview guide for the 12 interviews conducted with the group of young men and women and key informants on different matters of the research topic.

Interview information

Date:

Location:

Name/code of the interviewee:

Gender:

Age/Age range:

Status of the interviewee in the village:

Personal Introduction.....

General questions

- i. How do you see farming activities in your village and within the district in general.
- ii. How do you understand about the issue of farmland accessibility in your village and the district in general.

Thematic questions

1. Access to credit related questions

- i. Are there young people who buy land? If yes, where do they get fund from? If not, how do they get land?
- ii. Is there any access to credit among youth who want to invest in farming activities e.g. from banks or informal sectors like vicobas, sacco, Money lenders.

2. Land ownership related questions (Who owns land in Arumeru district?)

- i. Are there big landlords or plantations controlling the land? If yes, how does this affect the accessibility of land in your village?
- ii. Are there conservation areas preventing land access? If yes, how does this affect the accessibility of land in your village?
- iii. Are there specific areas where land ownership is more concentrated? If so, why?
- iv. How have historical background shaped the current distribution of land ownership in Arumeru district?

3. Generational related questions

- i. What are the common methods through which land is transferred from one generation to another in your village?

- ii. How is farmland inherited in your society?
- iii. What cultural practices influence the transfer of farmland in your community.

4. Family classes related questions

- i. What differences do you observe in farmland access between young people from rich, middle and poor class families.

5. Land tenure systems related questions.

- i. Can you explain the different types of land tenure systems that exist in your village?
- ii. Are there any traditional or customary land tenure in your village?
- iii. How have land tenure systems in your village evolved overtime?

6. Family land distribution related questions.

- i. How is land transferred from the parents to their children's?
- ii. Is farmland equally and fairly divided between sons and daughters in a family?

Concluding questions

- i. Is there anything you need to know from me?
- ii. May I keep your contact for further communication?

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