

PROPOSAL FOR FINAL ASSIGNMENT AS A CONDITION FOR FULFILLING THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR A

MASTERS IN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND HUMANITARIAN AID 2013/14.



TITLE: A cry from voiceless school girl in Shinyanga region, Tanzania.

Researcher: Stanley Kato Kachecheba.

kachechebastianley@hotmail.com

Abstract:

This study examined the social-cultural norms among Sukuma tribe that contributes to poor access to education among girls in Shinyanga Region with particular focus to rural areas. The study examined the influence both from demand and supply side. From the demand side the study targeted pupils, parents, CSOs, parents and community members where as from the supply side, the study targeted Head teachers, teachers, District Education Officers, Regional Education Officers, Village Executive Officers, and Trade Unions etc.

Data were collected using check list and in many cases face to face interviews, focus group discussion and observation were used. The study involved 10 sampled communities namely, Ndala A, Ndala B, Town, Nhelegani, Ibadakuli A, Ibadakuli B, Chamaguha, Mwawaza, Kolandoto and Pandagichiza involving 1 District Education Officer, 10 Head Teachers (4 from Urban and 6 from Rural), 30 parents,, 42 school committee members, 54 staff teachers , 254 pupils (131 boys and 107 girls) and 3 ward Education Coordinators. Surprisingly, the findings have revealed that unlike in the past, more girls are now enrolled. As such Shinyanga region has for the year 2013/14 has 32,571 girls compared to 30,788 boys from Grade I-VII in Primary schools. However due to many reasons, girls tend to drop off school as they advance to the higher grade. The major cited reasons for the drop out amongst girls in Shinyanga include; poverty, social-cultural norms, lack of role model and lack of awareness and or capacity on various educational issues. The study also provides an insight analysis reflecting our hypothesis that, in a Society likes Shinyanga with deep rooted culture and norms, where the motivation for girls is schooling.

Introduction:

According to UNGEI (2005) report, girls' education has been a priority in most of the developing countries including Tanzania. Responding on Tanzania girls' education condition, The United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) was launched in Tanzania in November 2002. In collaboration with Forum for African Women Educationalist (FAWE) Tanzania, United Nations Children and Education Fund (UNICEF) supported a national forum which was convened in November 2004 to build partnerships in Tanzania and propose modalities for future implementation of girls' education strategies. The United Republic of Tanzania in collaboration with other agencies such as UNESCO supports girls' education in many of her Regions including Shinyanga Region. The programmes have been to ensure an increased investment in education and to reduce inequality in the society.

As said earlier on, In Tanzania, education has continuously been treated as a strategic agent for mindset transformation and for the creation of a well educated nation, sufficiently equipped with the knowledge needed to competently and competitively solve the development challenges facing the nation including poverty. According to the founding father of Tanzania Nation, Mwalimu Nyerere ***“Education is not a way of escaping the country's poverty, it is a way of fighting it”***. This notion has been incorporated into various policies that reflect both International and local calls for girls' advancement especially the call to girls' right to education.

The government of Tanzania has taken a very strong position on the general principles of equality and human rights. Both the constitution of the United Republic and the manifesto of the ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) are built on the principles of equality before the law, based on the principles of human rights. Article XI of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania provides for equality in education and technical training. As a matter of principle education and specifically primary and basic education is a human right which is supposed to be guaranteed by the state.

The Tanzanian government is also a signatory to the UNESCO Convention against discrimination in education. The government has moreover signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women. The Government of Tanzania is, a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted by UN General Assembly in 1989), and the Declaration of the World Summit for all which underscored the principles of equal rights of girls to education. The OAU International Conference on Assistance to African Children (Nov. 1992), which the Tanzania government was a party to, reaffirmed the commitment of the Children's Summit and the World Conference on Education for African Girls. The World Summit for Children calls for an end to gender disparities. Tanzania, moreover, took part in the Pan-African Conference on the Education of Girls and the Ouagadougou Declaration which, among other things, called upon governments "to give priority to equity (and equality) and define a target for improving girls education within the framework of national development plans" (UNESCO/UNICEF: 1993). The government has also ratified both the International Conventions on Civil and Political Rights and the International Conventions on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, popularly referred to a Women's Convention. This convention was signed by the Tanzanian government in 1985.

The signing to these instruments implies that Tanzania recognizes that gender inequality exists, and it promises to generate the necessary political will to redress all forms of discrimination based on sex. As signatory to the Women's Convention, therefore, Tanzania is committed to "take, in particular, in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise, and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

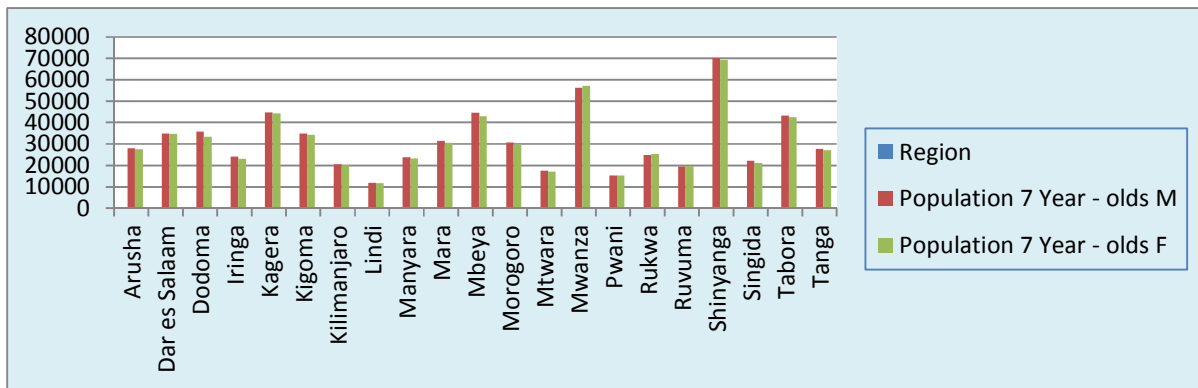
Moreover, various laws, policies and strategies are in place to ensure that girls, just like boys have access to quality basic education. Some of these legal and guiding documents includes, Tanzania Vision 2025, The National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty, Education and Training Policy 1995, various Education Acts, The Marriage Act 1971, Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP), Public Service Reform Programmes (PSRP) and Public Financial Management Reform Programme (PFMRP) and many more all attesting the government political will to ensure that all girls are enrolled, retained and complete their education circle. Albeit these efforts, most rural girls lack access to primary education as a result they become vulnerable to chronic poverty hence high maternal and infant deaths, early pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS and income poverty.

Literature review:

Tremendous progress has taken place in the education sector in Tanzania with major growth in enrolment in primary and secondary schools. The abolition of school fees in primary schools in 2001, Coupled with the compulsory requirement that parents/guardians send all children to school, ensured that 94 percent of children aged 7 to 13 years were enrolled in primary school in 2011, and compared with only 59 percent in 2000. Net secondary school enrolment has also expanded quickly: from 6 percent in 2000 to over 30 percent in 2011. According to the Basic Education Statistics In Tanzania in 2012/13 Shinyanga enrolled more girls and boys in Primary school than many regions.

Yet while Tanzania is 'on track' to achieve the Millennium Development Goal for enrolment in primary school for boy and girls, the education system struggles to deliver quality education, as reflected in recent disappointing examination results. Similarly inequalities does exists reflecting gender imbalances especially during transition and pass marks in examinations.

In Shinyanga Region, girls' education is not given priority albeit the government calls to ensure that girls just like boys are enrolled, retained and motivated to perform better in their examination. Findings from various sources distinguish a wide range of socio-economic characteristics that influences the functioning of schools, education outcomes and the participation of the wider community in school operations. Various research data have shown that girls with secondary or higher education are ten times less likely to become pregnant as adolescents than girls with no education. Yet, 2010, over 7000 girls dropped out of primary and secondary schools due to pregnancy. In 2010, only half (53.5 percent) of pupils passed the primary school leavers' examination. These figures portray the challenges facing education in Shinyanga. The reasons for this are manifold and complex and include entrenched cultural practices which lead to girls under-performing. Albeit the fact that Shinyanga region has almost reached Gender parity, the truth is that most girls still drops from school before completing the schooling circle. The table below shows the Gross enrollment indicating that the enrollment is almost at par for the Region;



Above: Enrollment by Region for Old male and Female (Source: BEST June 2013/4)

Some causal factors for girls drop out include;

Livelihood choices and opportunities: In communities that are dominated by specific Income Generating Activities there is a variety of tangible impacts on community participation, curriculum relevance, and school attendance and education outcomes e.g. Pastoralist and nomadic communities; where environmental and traditional pressures to relocate seasonally affect the potential for school attendance of girls in particular, as well as the ability for full year participation by the wider community. Norms, cultures, poverty etc. have been identified as major challenges to girls schooling.

Accessibility: Under this category, poverty and distance to school has been cited as major contributing factors to girls schooling. In short, the higher the poverty level of the family, the less the chances for girls education. Poor families tend to give priority to boys believing that boys are a symbol for family than for girls who is supposed to get

married and serve another family. Meanwhile, girls tend not to attend schools because of the long distance that one is supposed to travel to and from school due to risks associated with long distances and the house chores that a girl is subjected to once she comes from school.

Gender and Sexual based violence: Girls especially in rural areas are subjected to many types of violence including sexual based violence albeit the presence of policies and laws against such behaviors. Violence is sometimes done by family members and even teachers at their own schools.

Norms, cultures and Traditions: Most rural communities do not value girls' education as relevant since girls are subjected to early marriage once they enter their puberty. Meanwhile, some parents in Sukuma tribe believes that educating a girls minimizes her chances of marriage since men do not marry educated women because of fears of losing power in decision making.

This study intends to finds out the social-cultural norms that impacts on girl schooling in Shinyanga region and propose the best possible measure if girls are to be enrolled, retained and perform better in their final exams. The denial of girls to access quality education is a violation of their right. Access to basic quality education, provides girls with an understanding of basic health, nutrition and family planning knowledge giving them choices and the power to decide over their own lives and bodies. Educating girls is a clear strategy to fighting poverty which results from violation of one's right including right to education. Overall, according to the current data obtained from Shinyanga Region Administrative Secretary in 2013/14 the following data testifies that the completion rate at Standard Seven is worse especially amongst girls. The table below gives a picture,

A Comaparative dat for STD I enrollment in the Selected 10 schools and completion of STD VIII

Community/School	STD I enrollment		Completed STD VII	
	BOYS	GRLS	BOYS	GRLS
Ndala A	125	145	94	98
Ndala B	70	80	31	29
Town	57	88	13	28
Nhelegani	32	27	11	17
Ibadakuli A	181	184	67	87
Ibadakuli B	127	139	75	83
Chamaguha	94	70	29	17
Mwawaza	32	44	21	21
Kolandoto	38	40	18	15
Pandagichiza	50	32	13	16
Total	806	849	372	411

Source: RAS-Shinyanga Region (2013/14 Big Results Now Strategy)

According to the above data the completion rate for girls was 16.6% where as that of boys was 46.15%.

Methodology:

A simple random sampling technique was applied in gathering all the necessary data for this study from various sources including primary and secondary sources whereby face to face interviews, focus group discussions and observation was made to 10 Primary schools in the regions covering pupils, parents from the surrounding communities, Head Teachers, District Education Officers, Regional Education Officers, ward Education Officers, Village Executive Officers and some potential Non state actors such as Teachers Trade Unions and CSOs in those communities. The researcher documented and analyzed the findings as well as preparing a case study depicting the ideal situation of girls schooling in Shinyanga Region by highlighting cases of girls enrollment, drop out, passes, pregnancies etc that impedes on girls schooling.

To test the validity and reliability of methods for data collection, pre-testing of the questionnaires was done prior to collection to determine their clarity and significance to the intended objective. The questionnaires were translated to Swahili language which is a common language within Shinyanga as not all people in the sampled areas can express themselves using English language. The pre-test was done in 5 communities that were in the survey prior to the actual commencement of the research. The researcher maintained the qualities and characteristics as those of the respondents in the main survey. The final tools were slightly modified to include key lessons learned from the pre-test exercise.

Study results and discussion:

Knowledge on Gender and sex:

The concept of gender and sex are not well understood. Except for Regional Education Officer and District Education Officers, all respondents from 10 sampled areas in the regions covering pupils, parents from the surrounding communities, Head Teachers, Ward Education Officers, Village Executive Officers and some potential Non state actors such as Teachers Trade Unions and CSOs in those communities were not clear of Gender concepts. Concepts such as Gender budgeting was not understood and applied e.g. while the National policy provides for the ratio of pupil: toilet of 1:20 for girls and 1:25 for boys (for pit latrine), many participants was not aware of this provision and therefore school planning does not consider this provision during planning. This has caused continuous girls drop out from schools because girls are sometimes forced to share the toilets with boys and in many cases even the number of toilets are few and therefore most girls can hardly access these toilets. This becomes more serious when adult girls are in their menstrual cycle and therefore they resort not to attend classes.

Students' representation in school committees:

All 131 students interviewed said they are not represented in the School committee however they would like to, that is why their requirements are not taken during school planning. The reasons mentioned most were; Students are not given chance to participate (62), Students are shy to speak in-front of adults (30) and Students do not

know why they are not involved (4).The rest mentioned other reasons as not being serious, lack of time to participate but all of them agreed that if allowed to participate in school committees, girls should not be allowed because girls are shy to express themselves and after all they are not intellectually good as boys!.

Teachers' recruitment and deployment:

Research findings had shown that generally there are more female teachers in urban than in rural schools. This has two major implications to girls schooling in Shinyanga. First, girls lack a model teacher and secondly girls have nowhere to report to especially when their sexual and reproductive rights have been violated. This is supported by the findings that most girls would talk to their mothers at home when their rights are violated either at school or at community and according to high illiteracy among adult women in Shinyanga most of the reported cases are not taken forward especially if the violation has been committed by adult male teachers because of fear and inferiority. The reason cited for more deployment of female teachers in Urban was that female teachers are attracted to urban school because of access to various social services e.g. banking, houses, hospitals etc and some female teachers are married by government officers hence they are forced to remain with their husband in town centers.

Gender and Sexual based violence

There are known cases of pregnancies that have led to some girls' dismissals from schools before they complete standard seven. In 10 schools that were involved in the study, 7 girls have been reported victims of pregnancy cases for the period between January and September 2013. This accounts to the cases where the girls is tested and found pregnant however it was availed that most girls drop off from school immediately after recognizing they are pregnant therefore it is difficult to get the actual figure of pregnant girls. In Tanzania, according to the existing law and policy, any girls who gets pregnancy is chased off school. This is happening albeit the fact that Tanzania is a signatory of various Regional and International provisions that considers education as a right to every-one.

Parent and Community support:

There are troubling silences and a lack of understanding on the part of some teachers, school committees, village leaders and parents of the levels of violence girls are exposed to and the effects of poverty on children's schooling. Girls experience multiple forms of violence, including corporal and other humiliating punishments at school, sexual harassment and coerced sex in exchange for money or goods which are sometimes needed to pay for the costs of schooling. In both contexts there was a denial by many head teachers and other officials of violence taking place in schools. They lack knowledge on actions to take and any action that is taken is rarely in the girls' best interests. Head teachers seem to be aware that actions are inadequate, particularly in Tanzania, but linkages are weak between schools and communities and reporting systems are largely ineffective. This can be testified by a comment made by Esther who was made to marry the boy who impregnated her immediately even without notifying the responsible authorities such as the schools and the policed. She has this to say "**My**

father was very, very angry, when told at the hospital that I was pregnant he did not say anything until next morning when my brothers took me to the house of the boy who fathered my baby, and we were made to marry." Girls' views on major obstacles in completing their education are not shared by all the adults and communities who manage and teach in the schools they attend.

Policy framework

Nationally in Tanzania there is a good number of Supporting instruments which include Rules and declarations such as Optional Protocol on the Convention Of The Rights Of Child, Optional Protocol to the Convention On the Rights of The Child on the Sale Of Children, Child Prostitution and child Pornography, the UN Guidelines for the prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (Riyadh Guideline) and the GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICE UNDER THE INSTRUMENTS that recognizes various principles such as the best interests of the Child, Non-discrimination, Child right to life, survival and , development (Wellbeing) and Child's right to participation(freedom of opinion). Tanzania has also various laws and policies to ensure access to quality basic education for girls such as Child Development Policy 1996, Reproductive and Child Health Policy guidelines (2003), Education and Training policy (1995), Marriage law and many more but the findings have revealed that almost none of the policies and laws are known to teachers, students and community members. All the policies and laws are at regional and some at District level and they are written in English hence many people cannot get hold of them and even if the get them they cannot understand them.

Conclusion and recommendations:

Overall, the study results has shown that there has been some government initiatives to improve education especially for girls and there has been some positive shift however due to many reasons access to quality education especially for girls has remained a big challenges. In the sampled communities and schools of Shinyanga, the major deterrents to girls access to education that has been a cry for these voiceless young girls can be traced around knowledge and awareness on gender, pupils especially girls representation in school committees, teachers recruitment and deployment, gender and sexual based violence, poor community and parental support to girls education and pro-poor policies and institutional frameworks.

Knowledge on Gender and sex:

The government and other likeminded organizations such as Community based Organizations and Non-Government Organizations should raise awareness on gender concepts including gender planning budgeting. This is because, almost all parents and other community leader were not aware of these concepts and as such they were not using them for school planning. The government is encouraging parents and other community members to be involved in school planning but if some of the pertinent key concepts such as gender and gender budgeting is not known then the school stand the big chance of leaving other vulnerable groups unattended. Groups such as physically

impaired girls, a albinism and many more are missing on education because the budgeting process has left them out.

Students' representation in school committees:

According to the Primary Education Development Programme under the Local Government Reform Programme procurement of e.g. books, furniture etc. should be done in close consultation with the school committee members. Similarly, according to education Act of 1969 and other subsequent Acts any money allocated to school by way of subvention or grants in-aid by the government shall be expended in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed both to avoid corruption and misuse of school funds and to ensure that requirement are met at higher degrees possible.

The fact that all 131 students interviewed said they are not represented in the School committee means that students can hardly know if their money has been expended as required and they cannot hold accountable members of schools committees. The school shall be allowed to elect student representative based on genders that are part of the school committees if student's interests are to be taken onboard.

Teachers' recruitment and deployment:

Overall many female teachers are recruited in urban areas compared to rural areas and due to the fact that communities do not value education leave alone teachers, there has been little efforts from the community to request recruitment of female teachers I they=ir schools. The study is suggesting a wholesome approach in solving this and that the government shall strive to strengthen the Public-Private partnership so that social services as banking, hospitals, universities etc. are accessible in rural areas just like in urban areas. This will motivate a good number of teachers including female teachers to be relocated and stay in rural schools. Similarly, community must be encouraged through community dialogue sessions to value education and ensure that their schools enroll female teachers as well. The presence of female teachers in rural school is pertinent because apart for being role model to rural girls, they can equally help girls as they grow up into adults and sometimes experience different conditions that lead to most of them leaving schools during puberty. Female teachers can acts as counselors for these girls as well and in most cases girls prefer to talk to female teachers than their counterparts when their rights especially the right to bodily integrity has been violated.

Gender and Sexual based violence

The study is looking at challenges facing girls as they relates to gender and sexual based violence from two dimensions namely, response and prevention. As such most of the violations to girls' right have been the result of deep rooted norms and cultures that condone and perpetuate these acts. There is a culture of silence among Sukuma peoples and as such a girl cannot speak to her parents on such issues as rape, sex etc. This being the case most girls grow up with little knowledge on their body therefore they expose themselves into risk behaviors that lead to violations of their sexual and reproductive rights. The study is proposing a more consultative discussion around and within family that will involve children and parents/ community members to discuss openly on these issues and taking them more seriously. Meanwhile because of

masculinity, most Sukuma men will not take the cases of sexual violation seriously and they end up settling these cases locally without involving legal instrument all resulting to girls being the loser.

As a response mechanism, there are poorly and in most cases corrupt police officers therefore the government must take appropriate charge against police who found guilty as well as ensuring the existence of pro-poor institutions. The movement has established gender desks in almost all district throughout the country however they are understaffed therefore the government must allocated more fund to these centers so that girls victims of sexual violence is assisted. Meanwhile, good cases such as the one in Zanzibar at Mnazi Mmoja National Hospital where by the government and some NGOs have established a one stop center to deal with violence cases shall be replicated elsewhere including Shinyanga where it is highly needed. The Government should ensure that mechanisms and institutions are there for girls who get pregnant to go back to school because sometimes they are their pregnancy are the consequences of failures of the systems to protect them. Meanwhile forceful pregnant tests among girls have been the major cause for drop out. This is because most girls will drop off school once they know that they are pregnant because they do not want to shy their parent and get embarrassment from their peers. If this is discouraged and the government allows for re-entry to schools for these girls, this will reverse the trend to a greater extent.

Parent and Community support:

The ever-increasing violence cases especially at school and community levels have many reasons but importantly are community and teachers perceptions on what rape is. According to this study most parents and teachers were only aware of rape as the only violence that sometimes does happen. They were not aware of many other forms of violence including emotional and physical abuses. In fact all teachers have on daily basis administered stick as a means of molding behaviors on child. Sometimes the child is punished for the mistake that is beyond her/his capacity for instance children who fail to make school contributions because his/her parent cannot afford is severely beaten! Sometimes back, the Ministry of education and vocation training has released a circular asking all teachers to seek permission from Head teachers before administering can/sticks but this has not been the case. Some children have seriously injured and some has resorted not to attend schools because of punishment. In addressing this almost all children interviewed were of the opinion that the school administration may impose another punitive means such as gardening and clearing of school environment rather than using sticks.

With regards, to teachers asking girls to offer sex in return of pass marks, It is the time for the Government of Tanzania to institutionalize the Teachers Professional Board, a Board that will oversee teachers professionalism such that however violates the code, does not get the certificate to serve as a teacher elsewhere and that a teacher will not be employed unless He/She has the certificate from the Board. This will partly resolve part of the problems. Meanwhile, the government shall resort to the earlier system of training teacher for more than two years so that teachers are academically and

professionally competent to manage students rather than the ongoing few months training which leaves many young teachers incompetent academically and morally.

Schools and communities should have their avenues where by parents and teachers shares on monthly basis what is going on at schools and the school committees should clearly represent parents by acting as an agent between the school and parents. If this is done, most of the cases such as drop-out, pregnancies, underachievement etc. will be redressing as soon as they emerge to ensure proper functioning of the school.

Policy framework

Tanzania has been good in ratifying laws and formulating policies that responds to International agenda however little impacts have been realized through use of the same. As mentioned earlier, Tanzania has good Supporting instruments which reflects the International, Regional and national needs however two major challenges with regards to these is that, some laws and policies are not pro-poor e.g. lack of re-entry for girls victims of pregnancy to come back to school after delivery is a major policy gap in the existing policies. Secondly, even the available policies and laws are written in English therefore many people including some local policy implementers such as teachers and students, and parents cannot understand them. Efforts shall be made to ensure that all policies and laws are accessible and are written in a user friendly language. It is advised that these laws and policies shall be either popularized (cartoon and other relevant graphics) for children to understand for instance the International Human Rights can popularized to make them more interesting to children rather than having them in bulky and in English language. Similarly, teachers resources centers can be used by the Government to ensure all policies and related laws are there ready for community reading. Equally important, the formulation of policy and laws shall follow the bottom up approach rather than the current experience where by laws and policies are formulated and directed to community for implementation.

References:

1. Ukuta wa Ukimya by ActionAid Tanzania 2011
2. Learning from children exposed to sexual Abuse and sexual exploitation- Bamboo Project by R Gilligan, May 2014
3. Parents Protect; helping you protect children and young people from violence
4. The role of media in addressing gender challenges, Tanzania Media Women Association, A guide to Journalists, 2011
5. Tanzania Education and Training Policy 1995
6. Tanzania Education Act 1978
7. Tanzania Multi-sectoral, A national response to Violence, 2011
8. The Tanzania Law of The Child Act, 2009 etc.