Global Research Paper: Social Workers on the Ground

Sherwin Dewan

Department of Social Work, Rutgers University-Newark

21:910:347: Issues in Social Work

Professor Clayton Walton

March 20, 2024

Global Research Paper: Social Workers on the Ground

In a world dependent and dwelled on capitalism, it can be difficult with social work to make an impact for the betterment of individuals and the environment. This is where the Integrative Well-Being Model comes into play. The multiple aspects of the model encompasses the 5 foundations of well-being: physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, and social. The model helps tailor strategies to address the issues of the world. Pertaining to Tanzania and Zanzibar, this paper will be focused on 2 global affairs within the region; child labor and women's rights in education, in hopes to break societal barriers.

Based on the latest 2024 UNICEF data, Tanzania is nearing 70 million in overall population, where 4.2 million children ages 5 to 7 are in child labor; within these numbers, approximately 29% of the population make up the abundance of this issue ("Child Work and Child Labor "). Due to the fact that Tanzania is one of the countries full of its natural resources, the gold and mining industries are one of the "worst forms of child labour," in which these children are most lured into (Metta et al., 2023). Despite the government's awareness of the issues, it is difficult to tackle the illegal acts that are taking place for these children to stay off of the mines from its weak enforcement and policies. In fact, many of these children work willingly in effort to alleviate the financial challenges of their families.

Around the world, there are many cultures that practice for women to stay home and take care of the household; while this is completely fine and many choose to do so, some do not have the choice at all due to patriarchal society. Pertaining to girls and women's empowerment, education is a fundamental right, which everyone should have access to. The number of girls that are not participating in the education system are more prevalent within those that are entering the secondary level; around 61% of girls ages 14 to 19 are not in school (Wilson, 2023). Another barrier for education is child marriage, where "two out of five girls in Tanzania are married

before they turn 18" ("What's Hindering", 2019). Regardless of cultural aspects, women and girls should at least be given the opportunity to choose what to pursue with basic access to education.

In accordance with the issues addressed with child labor and women's rights in education, there is a relation between the two. While Tanzania falls under the 30th percentile in the poorest countries in the world, globally they have one of the largest populations in the world (Ventura, 2024). Due to this imbalance, families consistently struggle to provide for themselves and the expensive access to education. On the contrary, there are many social work and organization collaborations that are being done to satisfy the needs of well-being of the community and economy. The primary roots of women's rights and the harsh child labor is due to poverty; it pushed scales to keep children and women below the economy. With the increasing rate of the population, the scale is letting those "survive off of $1.90 a day or less"("5 Facts", 2021). While the rural regions are suffering the most with these 2 issues, Tanzania continues to progress ways to make an impact for their citizens and the country itself.

History

While Tanzania is beautifully diverse in culture, it has also been known for its rich natural resources and agricultural products, where the location was accessible for trading for centuries. For this reason, many European countries in the 18th and 19th century competed to win over African territories to benefit for their own economic interests (Chiteji & Ingham, 2023). During the colonial era, Tanzania was being ruled under Germany, where it was known as German East Africa (Chiteji & Ingham, 2023). After WW1, the Germans lost the territory under the Treaty of Versailles and the British administration took over, becoming known as Tanganyika (Chiteji & Ingham, 2023). After Tanganyika's independence in 1961, it became "Tanzania" when it united with the island of Zanzibar, which also gained independence from the British monarchy

in 1964 (Chiteji & Ingham, 2023). However, the main challenge was the aftermath of strengthening the economy after Julius Nyerere became the first prime minister then president of the United Republic of Tanzania ("Independence of Tanzania").

Nyerere's goal was to let Tanzania become politically free of foreign investors and become self-reliant, when he pursued a new policy of socialism for self-development called *Ujamaa,* which meant the locals would work with one another and profit together (Boddy-Evans, 2019). The urbanization of European colonialism "disrupted their rural society" before the precolonialization, and so he wanted to "recreate pre colonial traditions in Tanzania" and alleviate the country's economic distress with collectivization with rural agriculture (Boddy-Evans, 2019). While the socialist movement "helped forge a politically cohesive and unified country," it caused challenges the most (Nord et al., 2009).

Factors of contribution

Since the independence in 1961, the most rural areas of Tanzania have been dependent on agriculture, limitations in infrastructure, and inadequate resources for the government to enforce policies, struggling to reduce poverty and grow economically. For this reason, there were some connections between the two global issues.

Lack of Education

While the economical growth is advancing by "averaging 7 percent a year since 2000," many women and children are faced with systemic challenges with inequality and an overall under-resourced educational system (Nord et al., 2009).

Primarily in rural regions, Tanzania struggles to provide quality education, due to the shortage of qualified teachers and resources, such as uniforms, school books, facilities, and other learning materials (Karma, 2023). Due to the inadequate resources in schools, many students leave school and look for work in a more practical field for immediate sources of income. The

government and other NGOs are focused on this complex situation, finding ways to provide the right resources and sustainable outcome, to increase retention rate for students of all ages and genders, but it continues to be a challenge.

Poverty & Social Norms

The limited access to education perpetuates the cycle of poverty and an advancement towards socio-economy. Due to the inaccessibility, children are forced to take up responsibilities and this is how they lead their life, then the cycle would pass on to their children, becoming a norm. Since children have high mobility and energy, they willingly work in hazardous environments to relieve their families of financial burdens and to provide for the most basic needs, however this puts a direct impact on their overall health and well-being. To make matters worse, they are often overworked, underpaid, and face abuses; "most of them are paid as little as $10 dollars per month even though they work for 18 hours a day" (Marealle et al., 2019).

As for girls and women, they are barriered due to traditional responsibilities, early marriages, and bearing children at such a young age; "12% of females under the age of 20 reported they had already given birth " ("What are the challenges", 2023). Due to the lack of freedom, they are denied access to education and become primary caregivers, instead. Ultimately, with the lack of education from childhood, as they get older, they struggle to find opportunities in the labor market or for other formal employment. ("What are the challenges", 2023).

Due to patriarchal practices and gender roles, the vulnerability towards these communities are quite subjected to exploitation and harsh labor conditions. Overall, these factors bring out community expectations, where individuals are pressured to continuously conform to the traditions that are normalized, keeping the economy dormant, due to the widespread poverty and lack of education. According to *Ballard Brief*, "Tanzanian women spend 13.6% of their time

per day on unpaid work compared to men spending 3.6% of their time on unpaid work" (Raleigh and Coleman, 2020).

Government Policies

As mentioned before, the administration is aware of the conditions of children working in the mines, however, no matter what they sign or create policies, there is "poor reinforcement of mining regulations" and "funds for inspection" leading the children to work, even illegally without even knowing (Metta et al., 2023; Raleigh and Coleman, 2020). The insufficient fundings of the government gives them limitations to move forward with basic services for the civilians; in other words there is an "absence of economic infrastructure" (Raleigh and Coleman, 2020)

The priorities of the Mainland Government may also differ from what they are supposed to focus on. For example, they have "invested very little in creating and improving public transportation from rural to urban areas," such as the Tanzania-Zambia Railways having frequent breakdowns (Raleigh and Coleman, 2020). If the administration cannot focus on the needs of the public, vulnerable communities lack the prioritization even more.

Strategies

Addressing Women's Rights in Education

Regarding women's rights in education, it is seen that the Mainland is more focused on micro level work. Bridging of the age gap overall is mainly being concentrated within the Zanzibar islands, where the answers and implements are better seen not just in the mezzo-level, but also in the macro-level for systematic policies. A lot of the articles had commonalities of originating the gender gap in the islands, rather than the Mainland of Tanzania. Due to the vast tourism, Zanzibar recognizes education to be prominent for the economy, where NGOs are working to bring more inclusivity

1) Micro-level: In accordance with the Women Fund Tanzania Trust (WFTT), the local organization gives Tanzanian women the opportunity to raise voices for themselves with advocacy. A particular article, “Strengthening NPA-VAWC Committees To Protect Girl Rights" in regards to Sukuma communities, speaks of many girls’ dreams being cut short due to being forced to drop out because of pregnancies; later on, women struggle to jump back into the educational system (WFT-T, 2023). To tackle this, the Tufike Pamoja Project focuses on building local wards to provide a safe space for young women to raise voices within neighborhoods and their peers with the importance of having these rights through advocacy (WFT-T, 2023).
2) Mezzo-level: One of the factors were initiatives by UN Women Tanzania in Zanzibar, who focused more on technological advances to empower women to favor the 5-year plan with the African Girls Can Code Initiative (AGCCI). For example, the Binti Dijitali Coding Camp aims to give women opportunities to participate in the technological era, to fight barriers and let these girls find their potential to contribute to the economy (“Breaking barriers”, 2020). The inclusive approach lets them amplify their voices through online platforms and other positive aspects in usage of technology. It is already seen today; computers have become one of the greatest tools in this generation for succession.
3) Macro-level: In 2016, UNICEF and the Government of Zanzibar published the 5-year plan (2017 - 2022), called the NPA VAC, or in other words, the “National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children” (Ligiero et al., 2018).

Addressing Child Labor

While the paper is leaning more towards women's rights in choices, it is important to look at the key works being done for child labor and the impacts from it, demonstrating the work that

is being done. According to the research on "Ecological aspects shaping child labour in Tanzania's artisanal and small-scale gold mines: A qualitative inquiry," done by *the National Library of Medicine*, various data were collected through the four FGDs (Focused Group Discussions), who looked into the root causes of child labor, by speaking to those across numerous districts in Tanzania, in which they studied the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of influences to how these children end up in these environments (Metta et al., 2023). The following list briefly states some of what is being done to address the issue in various levels.

1) Micro-level: Small advocacy campaigns were conducted to bring awareness of the prevalence of child labor in local communities by the United States Agency for International Development for this project, since not many are aware of the child labor laws and its changes, where children should not be working unless they are at the age of 14 or above (Mahr, 2023; Metta et al., 2023).
2) Mezzo-level: ILO and UNICEF are working towards a goal to build sustainable and sanitary schools for children in some areas. Additionally, "through government programmes (TASAF)," ILO plans to provide better for the parents with microfinances, as well as providing shelters for families, to keep out from dangerous conditions (Mahr, 2023; Metta et al., 2023).
3) Macro-level: Some of the legislation brought some minimal changes, such as increasing inspection to keep children safe from these harsh labor conditions and putting restrictions on the "worst forms of child labor" ("2022 Findings"). According to the 2022 "Child Labor and Forced Labor Reports," Articles 5 and 102 of the Employment and Labor Relations Act passed Articles 77 and 82 puts restrictions for the minimum age to work, which is 14 and above, and the minimum age of 18 to work in hazardous environments ("2022 Findings").

The Impact

As for the responses, the local initiatives often take culture into account rather than international NGOs and the government itself. Tanzania is diverse in terms of cultures; such as that in comparison to the Maasai community, Zanzibar, the isolated areas off the west, as well as The generalization comes from looking at the statistics nationally of the impacted parties. For example, to abolish child labor, the government is trying to focus on the worst cases, such as mining or other hazardous environments by hiring some inspectors, but it hasn't brought any long term effects. According to the WFT-T website, the Women's Trust Fund touched over 24 regions across the country and impacted over 68,000+ individuals; this has been possible due to their growing and strategic partnerships with other organizations "both grassroot level and those working at the national level" (WFT-T).

In March 19, 2021, Samia Suluhu Hussan, who took a stand as the first woman president with a hijab, brings a great importance in the history of East Africa, who is seen as full of great hopes to bring legislation and reforms to diverge away from the patriarchal attitude, as well as violence against the minority groups, such as women and children. In the past, the former President of Tanzania, John Magufuli, "banned pregnant teenagers from going back to school," which the current president is working to overturn (Hairsine, 2022).

Nationally, the country still faces challenges in which, according to the Law of Marriage Act 1971, "allows girls to be married at 14 with court consent and 15 with parental consent," and 18-years-old for men (Ledama, 2023). While there are no new records found of a new reform or laws applied, according to *Women, Business and the Law 2023*, the President of Tanzania is committed to "increase government investment in education to 20 per cent of the GDP by 2025" for both children and women ("Investing in Girls' Rights", 2023). In fact, the Samia Scholarship is working to fund students who are in secondary level to the tertiary in subjects of science and

engineering, helping women who desire to go back to school have the helping hand ("Investing in Girls' Rights", 2023).

Key Findings

The NPA-VAC set out on the journey to abridge equality and eliminate all forms of violence against children and women, prospectively reducing by 50% by 2022, however, the numbers are still a myth; according to the *World Bank*'s press release in 2022, more than 20% women (ages 17-49) reported these violence, while 75% children experience physical violence, which are often by their own relatives or employers ("Tanzania Can Do More", 2022). This is due to the "low levels of economic independence and lack of education," as well as by lacking the "decision-making power " being carried out by social norms outside of the law, showcasing the importance of micro-level to mezzo-level social work and advocacy, leading to the macro-level ("Tanzania Can Do More", 2022).

Culture is a huge aspect carried across Zanzibar and the Tanzanian Mainland. Even with the "the establishment of ample government coordination mechanisms," the culture and stigmas still concludes that the issues with women's rights with education, child labor, gender-gap, and the violence continues to be a problem across the country ("Tanzania Can Do More", 2022).

Conclusion

There would be a positive ripple effect to eliminate child labor, if women were given the chance to be educated throughout the country. According to the *European Comission*, they mentioned that "when women are educated, their children are less likely to be involved in child labour and hazardous work," economically ("Empowering women"). The far east side of Africa, Dar Es Salaam and Zanzibar, are quite passionate about these issues, however other parts of Tanzania do not get a lot of attention, nor is there a lot of data.

Overall, there are more girls than boys in the primary level education both in Zanzibar and in the Mainlands, however by the time the girls reach the age for marriage, which is at about 14 to 15 years old, the dropout rate is prevalent. Once the young women get married and have children, they desire to come back to school, it becomes impossible to do so. Even if the laws are changed, girls still do not tend to come back. Many can be unaware or they simply keep following the cultural habits they grow up with. Pertaining to these initiatives, there needs to be more micro-level approaches, involving local organizations. While mezzo-level work seems to be the most effective, it can be difficult to sustain the implementations permanently; in other words, the solutions that are done would have a temporary effect, if the community is not involved.

In summary, the research of the Mainlands and Zanzibar has been enlightening, due to the differences in cultures, raising many questions about politics, governance, the customs, the contrasts between various communities' lifestyles. The islands are blends of its cultures derived from European, the Middle Eastern, and Asian heritages, bringing in tourists from around the world, influencing economic prosperity, which is quite fascinating; due to several mentions in the references, it brings on curiosity as to how the tourism industry impacts the cultural and religious norms for the community (positively or negatively), specifically such as: what are some prevalent issues revolving around women’s education, taking in considering with ages, marital statuses etc, with statistics; as for local NGOs working to combating child labor and women’s rights in educations, what challenges are being faced and what has been successful; another would be, regarding the outcomes of NPA VAC, did the prospective goal ever reach the percentages it wanted to. Although these questions serve as some opening inquiries, I am eager to embark on this journey, working in-field, visiting schools, the local towns, and immersing myself into these new cultures and coming out with new perspectives.

References:

Child Work and child Labor analysis for the United Republic of Tanzania. (n.d.). *American Institutes for Research.* https://www.air.org/project/child-work-and-child-labor-analysis-united-republic-tanzania

Ventura, L. (2024, March 12). Poorest Countries in the world 2024. *Global Finance Magazine.* https://gfmag.com/data/economic-data/poorest-country-in-the-world/

5 Facts about the causes of poverty in Tanzania. (2021, January 15). *The Borgen Project*. https://borgenproject.org/causes-of-poverty-in-tanzania/

What's Hindering Girls' Education in Tanzania? (2019, August 14). *The Borgen Project.* https://borgenproject.org/girls-education-in-tanzania-2/

Metta, E., Abdul, R., Koler, A., & Geubbels, E. (2023). "Ecological aspects shaping child labour in Tanzania's artisanal and small-scale gold mines: A qualitative inquiry." *Heliyon*, 9(3), e14417. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2405844023016249

Chiteji, F. M. & Ingham, K. (2023, June 30). History of Tanzania. *Encyclopedia Britannica.* https://www.britannica.com/topic/history-of-Tanzania

Independence of Tanzania (n.d.). *Encyclopedia Britannica.* https://www.britannica.com/place/Tanzania/Independence

Boddy-Evans, A. (2019, August 2). What was Ujamaa and how did it affect Tanzania? *ThoughtCo.* https://www.thoughtco.com/what-was-ujamaa-44589

Nord, R., Sobolev, Y. V., Dunn, D., Hajdenberg, A., Hobdari, N. A., Maziad, S., & Roudet, S. (2009). Tanzania: The story of an African transition. *IMF eLibrary*. https://doi.org/10.5089/9781589068223.087.A001

Karma, M. (2023, February 26). Education in Tanzania faces challenges and progress. *Art in Tanzania.* https://artintanzania.org/education-in-tanzania-faces-challenges-and-progress/

Wilson, L. (2023, July 6). *The need for women's education in Tanzania*. Embrace Relief Foundation. https://www.embracerelief.org/the-need-for-womens-education-in-tanzania/

Marealle, J., '20, Marealle, E., '21, & Chalwe, K., '20. (2019, June 1st - 14th July). Amani Kupitia Ujasiriamali: Peace through Entrepreneurship in the United Republic of Tanzania. *Middlebury.* Davis Projects 2019, University of Rochester. https://www.middlebury.edu/sites/default/files/pfp/1549pro.pdf

What are the challenges facing gender equality in Tanzania? (2023, September 21). *Maji Safi.* https://majisafigroup.org/gender-equality-in-tanzania/#:~:text=The%20period%20was%20marked%20by,processes%20and%20formal%20economic%20participation

Raleigh, D & Coleman, M. (2020). *Perpetuation of poverty in Rural Tanzania - Ballard Brief*. Ballard Brief. https://ballardbrief.byu.edu/issue-briefs/perpetuation-of-poverty-in-rural-tanzania#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20largest%20contributing,%2C%20water%2C%20and%20financial%20markets.

WFT-T. (29 November 2023) Women Fund Tanzania Trust. (n.d.). WFT-T. https://wftrust.or.tz/our-impact/strengthening-npa-committees-to-protect-girl-rights/

Breaking barriers, empowering women and girls in Zanzibar to shape a gender-equal future in tech. (2020, September 8). *UN Tanzania.* https://tanzania.un.org/en/241005-breaking-barriers-empowering-women-and-girls-zanzibar-shape-gender-equal-future-tech

Mahr, Krista. (2023). "Tanzania struggles to end child labor from the lure of gold." *Reuters.* https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN176006/

2022 Findings on the worst forms of child labor - Tanzania. (n.d.). DOL. https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/tanzania

World Bank. (2023). *Women, Business and the Law 2023: Tanzania*. https://wbl.worldbank.org/content/dam/documents/wbl/2023/snapshots/Tanzania.pdf

Investing in girls' rights in Tanzania: Our Leadership, Our Well-being. (11 October 2023) *UNICEF.* https://www.unicef.org/tanzania/press-releases/investing-girls-rights-tanzania-our-leadership-our-well-being

Tanzania can do more to protect its women and girls and promote gender equality. (2022, April 4). *World Bank.* https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/04/05/tanzania-can-do-more-to-protect-its-women-and-girls-and-promote-gender-equality

Hairsine, K. (2022, March 22). Tanzania: President Samia a boon for women. *dw.com*. https://www.dw.com/en/tanzanias-president-samia-suluhu-hassan-a-boon-for-women/a-61177159

Empowering women and girls to end child labour. (n.d.). *International Partnerships.* https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/news-and-events/stories/empowering-women-and-girls-end-child-labour_en

Ligiero, D., J., Gordon, R., Brandon, K., & Tucci, A. (2018). Accelerating Action to Address Violence Against Women and Children, *Together for Girls.* https://files.mutualcdn.com/tfg/assets/files/Lessons-learned-from-TfG-partnership-in-Tanzania.pdf

Women Fund Tanzania Trust website: https://wftrust.or.tz/