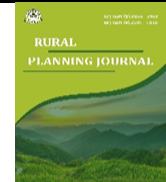




RURAL PLANNING JOURNAL  
Website: <https://journals.irdp.ac.tz/index.php/rpj>  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59557/rpj.26.1.2024.67>



## Access to Secondary School Education among Girls from Pastoral Communities: A case of the Barbaig in Hanang District, Manyara Region of Tanzania

Fausta E. Senga\*, Kwalu S. Dede and Immaculate O. Gillo

Institute of Rural Development Planning, Don Bosco Road, 41213 Mbwanga, P.O. Box 138, Dodoma-Tanzania.

\*Corresponding Author E-mail: [fsenga@irdp.ac.tz](mailto:fsenga@irdp.ac.tz)

### Abstract

Access to education for girls in many societies faces significant challenges, often leading to girls being viewed as inferior to boys. However, little is known about the unique challenges facing girls from pastoral societies and their access to schooling. Therefore, this paper sheds light on girls' access to secondary school education in the Barbaig pastoral community in the Hanang District, Manyara Region of Tanzania. Specifically, it examines the challenges girls face in accessing secondary education in their area. The study uses a cross-sectional research design and involved 210 girls from Dirma, Chief Gejaru, and Mwahu secondary schools. Proportional sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used to obtain respondents for this study. Data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions, and documentary reviews. Qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in data analysis. The results revealed that a shortage of girls' facilities and services in schools, families' low socio-economic status, and harmful gender norms, traditions, and practices were among the challenges. Other challenges include early pregnancies and early marriage, parents' desire for wealth, nomadic lifestyle, large family size, and long distance from home to school. It is recommended that the Education Department in Hanang District implement educational policies that ensure students in every school have sufficient resources. Furthermore, community leaders should insist on the importance of girls' education. This will only be possible if local authorities actively collaborate with relevant stakeholders to solve the educational challenges facing the girls from the Barbaig tribe.

**Keywords:** Secondary Education, Girls, Pastoral Communities, Barbaig, Challenges.

### 1.0. Introduction

Education plays a major role in developing the analytical mind and reasoning power of the individual. Additionally, it helps build confidence, self-esteem, and self-respect. It is important in any community's social, economic, and political development (Raymond, 2018). However, in some

communities, boys and girls do not have equal access to education. No wonder, girls' education has become a global development issue. Most countries, especially developing countries, have been working to improve girls' educational achievement by eliminating gender disparities in accessing primary and secondary education (Tabreek, 2017). Girls' education has been



identified as a most efficacious investment because it has significant implications for societies and nations (Muhammad, 2018). Evidence suggests that educating girls leads to lower maternal and infant mortality. Moreover, every additional year of education a mother possesses has been shown to directly correlate to a significant decrease in the likelihood of their child dying in infancy (Suleiman *et al.*, 2015). According to the World Bank (2020), globally, tens of millions of children remain without access to education, and there are substantial gender gaps when it comes to accessing education, mainly for disadvantaged populations (minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities, women, and girls) at the secondary and tertiary levels. In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is estimated that 15 million girls between the ages of 6 and 17 are not attending school (World Bank, 2020). Furthermore, it has been reported that in Africa only 76 girls are enrolled in secondary school for every 100 boys. Out of the girls who start school, only 36% will finish (UNICEF, 2020).

For countries to progress in terms of girls' education, special focus needs to be paid to rural areas, which have both a high incidence of poverty and a low level of educational participation and achievement (Kuria, 2019). Article 3 of the World Declaration on Education for All identified pastoralists as one of several groups who are discriminated against when it comes to accessing educational services (Kiranga, 2020). Access to secondary school education among pastoralist girls needs to be studied because when it comes to female

access and participation in education in these communities, girls are more likely to marry young, leading to lower school enrolment. The pastoralists do not value education, particularly for girls; sending a girl to school is considered a loss of vital help at home, a waste of time for marriage prospects, and useless for both parents and girls (Rotich and Koros, 2015). The pastoralists depend on children for herding labour and seasonal mobility for survival. Thus, there is a poor fit between the pastoralist production system and the design of formal education. Studies show that in pastoral societies, girls' access to schooling faces significant challenges. Idriss (2019) reports that pastoralist girls rarely go to school, resulting in lower enrolment, retention, completion, and achievement for girls in later life.

To ensure that girls are given equal opportunity to education, Article 3 of the Education for All (EFA) declaration clearly emphasizes equal and equitable access to education for all people. Further, Article 5 specifically considers marginalised groups who cannot access education, especially people experiencing poverty, such as girls, women, people with disabilities, and minority ethnic groups like nomads (UNESCO, 2018). In addition, the 1977 Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania recognises the right to education. According to Article 11, every person has the right to access education, and every citizen shall be free to pursue education in a field of merit and ability (URT, 1977). The Ministry of Education elaborated on this in the Education Acts of 1978 and 2014, directing compulsory



enrolment and attendance in school for both girls and boys. Despite all these efforts made by the government and other stakeholders, there remains limited access to education for children in pastoral communities (Dyer, 2016). This study, therefore, aimed to shed light on the challenges girls face in accessing secondary school education in the Barbaig pastoral community in Hanang District, Manyara Region of Tanzania.

## 2.0. Methodology

### 2.1. Study Area

Hanang District is one of the five districts found in the Manyara Region, with a total area of about 3,436 square kilometres, of which 80,078 hectares are used for agricultural activities, and 224,000 hectares (65.2%) are used for grazing (DED, Personal Communication, 2022). It is situated in the Northern part of Tanzania, in the Rift Valley highland zone 1,000 to 2,000 metres above sea level. It lies between 4° and 5° latitudes south of the Equator and 34° and 35° longitudes east of the Greenwich Meridian. [Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2019]. Various tribes inhabit the Hanang District, with the Iraqw, Maasai, and Datoga being the predominant ones. The Barabaig are a nomadic tribe of the Datooga people based in the northern volcanic highlands near Mount Hanang in Manyara Region, Tanzania, speaking the eponymous dialect of the Datooga language.

This study was conducted in the 3 secondary schools of Mwahu, Dirma, and Chief Gejaru located in the Mwahu, Balang'dalalu, and Dirma wards, respectively, in the Hanang District, Manyara region of Tanzania. These three

wards were chosen because the majority of the people living in these wards are Barbaig. Another reason for selecting the Hanang district is the fact that 70% of its people subsist from pastoralist activities (Ammo, 2020). According to a conversation with the District Executive Director (DED) during the survey, he also noted that the majority of the people in the selected wards are Barbaig.

### 2.2 Research Design, Sampling Procedures, and Sample Size

The study used a cross-sectional research design to allow data to be collected at a single time from a representative sample. The study used a list of Barbaric girls enrolled in secondary school as the sampling frame, with a single girl serving as the sampling unit. A proportional sampling technique was used to select 210 girls from a population of 750 girls-Chief Gejaru (375), Dirma (199), and Mwahu (176), and thus 105, 56, and 49 girls were selected from Chief Gejaru, Dirma, and Mwahu, respectively. In addition, 24 parents were purposefully selected from the three wards, and fifteen (15) key informants. Table 1 presents the sample size and composition.

**Table 1: Sample size and composition**

Respondents' category	Number
Girls	210
Parents	24
Head of schools	03
School discipline Master	03
District Education Officer (DEO)	01
District Community Development Officer (DCDO)	01
Ward Education Officer (WEO)	03
Ward Community Development Officer (WCDO)	01
Ward Executive Officer (WEO)	03
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>249</b>

Both probability and non-probability sampling procedures were used to obtain respondents for this study. Proportional and then simple random sampling were applied to get 210 girls from these three selected schools as stated in the previous paragraph. The headmaster and discipline master of each of the sampled schools were included in the study as key informants. District and Ward education officers were purposefully sampled (Table 1).

### 2.3. Data Collection Methods and Tools

Different methods were used to collect primary and secondary data. Primary data was directly collected from the field through interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), while secondary data was collected through documentary review. Questionnaires for girls' interviews, checklists for FGDs with girls, parents, and Key Informant Interviewees (KIIs) were employed. Questionnaires were distributed to 210 girl students to fill in and then collected. Furthermore, a semi-structured interview was administered to solicit information from 24 parents; also, in-depth interviews were held with 15 key informants. According to Kumar (2018) semi-structured interview is a powerful data collection method that allows for flexibility, question probes, and the collection of in-depth information from the respondents. Three (3) FGDs were conducted, one in each of the selected secondary schools. From each school, a minimum of six students participated. Paradis *et al.* (2016) argued that the FGD is a useful tool to examine the perceptions, experiences, and understandings of a group of people with shared experiences relating to the issue under study. Respondents with sufficient knowledge about the study were also purposefully selected. A documentary review was

carried out to collect secondary data through reviews of a large number of professional reports and documents such as journal articles, legislation, and policy documents (the National Education Policy of 2009, the Education Act of 1978, National Gender Policy of 2007). Additional sources included school reports, attendance registers, admission books, and disciplinary reports that aimed to verify the records of the girls participating in the study. This documentary review provided a wealth of data concerning the problem being studied (Muhanga, 2019).

### 2.4. Data Processing and Analysis

The collected data were edited to detect errors and omissions, then coded and entered into IBM-SPSS computer software as a data management tool ready for analysis. and descriptive statistics were employed to analyse quantitative data. Also, descriptive statistics analysed quantitative data to determine frequencies and percentages.

Qualitative data was categorised, coded, and grouped into key themes and sub-themes for interpretation. Afterwards, the data were analysed and interpreted using a multiplicity of themes simultaneously to include the many different voices of respondents, some of which are presented *verbatim* as respondents' statements. Content analysis helps interpret and construct meanings from the text and enables systematic classification and identification of themes or patterns (Paradis *et al.*, 2016).

## 3.0. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Characteristics of Respondents

The findings in Table 2 reveal that most of the respondents (50.0%) were from Chief Gejaru secondary school, while (26.7%) were from Dirma and (23.3%) were from



Mwahu. Further, the findings reveal that more than half of the respondents (67.6%) were in Form Three and Four and were mature enough to provide relevant information about challenges in accessing secondary education, while a few (13.3%) were in Form One. Furthermore, 180 (85%) respondents were aged 15 years and above. Some respondents came from families with more than eight (34.3%) children compared to families with 3 children.

Based on the type of school, two-thirds (2/3) of the respondents were from both day and boarding schools, Chief Gejaru and Mwahu, with one-third (1/3) from day

school, Dirma. Regarding the parents' level of education, most never attended school, with very few attaining secondary and tertiary education; father (54.3%) and mother (72%) never attended school, while 5.2% and 2% achieved secondary and tertiary education, respectively. This may contribute to the parents' low motivation to support their children in obtaining secondary education, which is currently a basic requirement in Tanzania. Moreover, most of the parents are pastoralists who value their economic activities (occupation) and value less the need for secondary education for the girl child.

**Table 2. Characteristics of respondents (n=210)**

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Respondents by school	Chief Gejaru	105	50.0
	Dirma	56	26.7
	Mwahu	49	23.3
Respondents by class (form)	Form I	28	13.3
	Form II	40	19.0
	Form III	53	25.2
	Form IV	89	42.4
Respondents by age group	10-14	30	14.3
	15-19	162	77.1
	Above 19	18	8.6
Type of school	Day	70	33.3
	Both day and boarding	140	66.7
<b>Parent's level of education</b>			
Father	Never attended school	114	54.3
	Primary	85	40.5
	Secondary	8	3.8
	Tertiary	3	1.4
Mother	Never attended school	151	72
	Primary	55	26
	Secondary	2	1.0
	Tertiary	2	1.0
Parents main occupation	Livestock keeping	174	82.4
	Crops cultivation	24	11.9
	Other	12	5.7



### 3.2. Challenges Faced by Pastoralist Girls in Accessing Secondary Education

During the study, the respondents were asked about the different challenges that pastoralist girls faced in accessing secondary school education. The pin-pointed-out challenges include; the

availability of facilities and services for girls, parents' desire for wealth, early marriage, family's economic status, household chores, distance from home to school, family size, sex preference, nomadic lifestyle, gender norms, and culture. The results were as indicated in Table 3.

**Table 3: Challenges pastoralist girls face in accessing secondary education**

Challenges	Cases	Percent of Cases**
Availability of facilities and services for girls	196	93.3
Parents' desire for wealth	186	88.6
Early marriage	166	79.1
Family's economic status	148	70.5
Household chores	142	67.6
Distance from home to school	136	64.7
Family size	130	61.9
Sex preference (boys over girls)	101	48.1
Nomadic lifestyle	86	40.1
Gender norms and culture	82	39.1

\*\*Based on Multiple Response

#### 3.2.1. Availability of schools' facilities and services for girls

A shortage of girls' facilities and services at school was reported by nearly all (93.3%) respondents (Table 3). The majority of girls pointed out the shortage and lack of important facilities including; latrines, dormitories for girls, clean water and a room for changing during menstruation. Moreover, the presence of school matrons was minimal (27.6%), and the availability of sanitary materials was non-existent. The respondents were asked to explain in detail whether the following facilities and services were available in their schools (Table 4).

**Table 4: Facilities and services available for girls in selected secondary schools**

Facilities/service	Availability	
	Frequency	Percent (%)
Changing room	0	0
Matron	58	27.6
Sanitary materials	0	0
Water	51	24.3
Latrines	82	39.0
Hostels	72	34.3

The findings in Table 4 show that; in all three (3) surveyed secondary schools; Dirma, Chief Gejaru and Mwahu, there were neither special rooms for girls nor the provision of sanitary materials at school. This was reported by all (100.0%) respondents (Table 4). The

presence of matrons (27.6%), the presence of latrines for girls (39.0%), and the availability of clean water (24.3%) was minimal.

### *Latrines*

The results in Table 3 revealed that only 39.0% of respondents said latrines were available for girls in their respective schools. And even then, there were not nearly enough toilets when taking into account the total number of girls attending school. Girls require safe and separate toilets from those of boys. A key informant reported that Mwahu secondary school had five (5) toilet holes for 176 girls, a ratio of approximately one toilet hole for every 35 girls. At Chief Gejaru, there were seven (7) toilet holes for 375 girls, a ratio of around one toilet hole for every 54 girls, and at Dirma, there were six (6) toilet holes for 199 girls, a ratio of one toilet hole for 33 girls. This reveals that the number of washrooms available for girls was insufficient. According to the Tanzanian Education Policy, the ratio of toilet holes to the number of girls in secondary schools should be in the worst case, one toilet hole for 20 girls. Thus, if this situation is not quickly resolved, it will continue to compromise girls' health and consequently, lead to poor school attendance. The situation was better for boys as compared to girls; Mwahu secondary school had seven (7) toilet holes for 191 boys, a ratio of one toilet hole for every 27 boys, while at Chief Gejaru, there were 7 toilet holes for 347 boys, a ratio of one toilet hole for every 50 boys. At Dirma secondary school, there were 6 toilet holes for 148 boys, a ratio of one toilet hole for every 25 boys.

### *Changing room*

All the respondents (100%) said there was no room at school for girls to change their sanitary pads during their menstrual periods. During their menstrual period, girls require a special changing room for sanitary purposes. Unfortunately, this service was not available in all of the schools visited during the study. These rooms allow girls to manage their menstrual periods without being embarrassed, and while maintaining a good standard of hygiene. These rooms normally provide an emergency supply of sanitary pads, changing and resting areas, clean and private toilets, clean water, as well as disposal bins for sanitary products. This was explained by one girl during FGD:

*"Girls need a private and safe place to change their pads during the period to avoid the shame, discomfort, and embarrassment related to menstruation. Due to this lack of a special room, girls change their sanitary towels in the bushes, which is unsafe and unhygienic." (Girls FGD in Dirma secondary school, May 2023).*

This is supported by Magayane and Meremo (2021), who found that girls need safe, private, and hygienic rooms to effectively manage their menstrual periods. All schools should have adequate sanitary materials for washing, changing, and disposing of menstrual waste. The SNV (2015) study found that 90% of school environments in Tanzania

are not conducive to menstrual hygiene management.

### **Matrons**

The findings revealed that only 27.6% of respondents said matrons assisted them in school. It was learnt that there were female teachers who acted as school matrons, but no one was specifically employed for this purpose in all surveyed secondary schools of Dirma, Mwashu, and Chief Gejaru. This implies that girls fail to get support from a matron, or other female mentor, which could be helpful to them. A dormitory in Mwashu secondary school is insufficient without hiring a matron to ensure close supervision of the girls so that they can feel protected and get any necessary support they might need, which would normally be obtained from either parents or caregivers. This is against the National and Education Policy of Tanzania (1995), which requires any secondary school with a hostel to have a matron or patron to care for students at the school hostel. The availability and unavailability of School Matron was reported by all the headmasters in all schools, to support what was reported by respondents.

### **Sanitary materials for emergency**

All respondents (100%) reported that the school did not provide any sanitary materials. Sanitary pads were supposed to be made available to girls in school emergencies. During the FGD with girls, the majority reported experiencing unfavourable sanitary conditions in their schools. They require greater school support during their menstrual periods, facilities to dispose of sanitary products, and access to clean water to wash themselves. Regarding this, one of the

key informants reported during the interview:

*“At this school, there is no free service of sanitary pad provision, the conditions are difficult and poor as you see, we do not get support on this matter from either the government or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), so if the girl gets an emergency, she is permitted to go back home to change, since they come from distant places, she cannot come back to school; as a result, they miss a lot of sessions during their periods.” (Interview with Discipline master, Dirma secondary school, May 2023).*

Lack of hygienic sanitary materials is a challenge for girls. Girls commented that they were regularly forced to stay at home during their menstrual period for 3 to 7 days because they lacked sanitary pads to cover themselves. It was reported that some girls used unhygienic materials as substitutes, including pieces of clothes and cow dung. During FGD, girls said that:

*“The menstrual period is one of the hardest times for us to attend school due to stomach pain and a lack of sanitary pads. It is shameful for others to know that I am in my period, so I decided to stay at home during that time. Our school has neither a room for change nor enough toilets and water.” (Girls FGD in Dirma secondary school, May 2023).*



During KII with parents, one of the parents added that:

*“Having a menstrual period is regarded as something secretive and shameful. Due to poverty and a lack of knowledge, many parents fail to purchase modern sanitary materials for their girls, ...Fear of menstrual emergencies affects girls, and they decide to stay at home for the whole period.”*  
(Interview with parents, Balang'dalalu ward, May 2023).

The findings are in line with UNESCO (2018), which reported that; menstruation affects girls' attendance and participation in schools due to deficient menstrual hygiene materials, and a lack of clean water and sanitation facilities. As a result, one in 10 girls in Sub-Saharan Africa misses school often up to six days every month.

### **Water**

The availability of water at school was reported by 24.3% of respondents. Access to water is an essential service that all students need. Girls particularly need access to clean water at school during their menstrual days. The results are supported by Awinia (2019), who found that many schools in Tanzania lack clean and accessible water, toilets, and sanitation facilities (SWASH) for girls due to overcrowding and a lack of funding.

### **Hostels**

The results revealed that 34.3% of respondents agreed that there was a hostel for girls at their school. It was

found that one (1) out of three (3) surveyed secondary schools had hostels for girls, but the other two did not. Girls at Mwashu Secondary School are accommodated close to school so that they do not have to travel to school and back home every day. This safeguards them from any difficulties they might encounter during the long travel as well as domestic chores. Moreover, it allows girls living in the hostel to regularly attend classes. During the Key Informant Interview, the participant said:

*“The construction of a hostel for girls at our school has been helpful. The dormitory provides safety and security to girls, gives them time to study, reduces travel time, builds friendships and allows girls to have enough time to commit themselves to their studies.”* (Interview with the discipline master at Mwashu secondary school, May 2023).

These findings are in line with Kiranga (2020), who found that; the lack of hostels for girls in secondary schools adversely impacts girls' access to education.

### **3.2.2 Parents' desire for wealth**

The study found that 88.6% of the respondents reported that, parents' desire for wealth was a challenge facing girls' access to secondary education (Table 3). During FGD with girls, it was reported that; some community members consider girls a source of

wealth for the family due to the bride price the family receives in return for sanctioning the marriage. Family income and wealth were enhanced by receiving bride prices at the expense of their daughters' education. During the interview, one of the participants said;

*"In Barbaig culture, marriage is not recognised without paying the bride price, which is a way of thanking the girl's family for caring for the girl. The girls' families receive the bride price between 15 to 40 cattle, sometimes up to 60. However, this affects the girl's freedom to choose the man she desires and sometimes leads to being tortured."* (Interview with parents, Mwahu ward, May, 2023).

These findings are similar to those of Kiranga (2020), who found that, despite the popular conception that the bride price was regarded as a thanksgiving blessing, it could be argued that this tendency jeopardised the freedom and dignity of girls. Essentially, when a family chooses to let their daughter study, it means that parents are harming their financial self-interest.

### 3.2.3 Early marriage

The study found that 79.1% of the respondents reported early marriage as one of the challenges girls face in accessing secondary school education (Table 3). During the KII with the education officials, it was found that early marriage still hinders girls' access to secondary education in the Hanang

District. This is supported by the statistics indicating that; 4 in 10 Tanzanian girls marry before turning 18 (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Also, Article 16(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights condemns this practice. This was supported by girls during the FGD, they said that:

*"The community expects a girl to get married at puberty to avoid pre-marital pregnancies; the community believes that; girls are for marriage. Barbaig also believes that a girl's early marriage protects the family's honour and increases the bride's price. Girls often get married because of pressure from parents and relatives, poverty and lack of alternatives."* (Girls FGD in Dirma secondary school, May 2023).

These findings were also supported by Mutuku *et al.* (2020) who show that investing in girls' education will have a positive impact on reducing child marriage, household poverty and gender inequality and Pan (2023), who documented teenage marriage as a challenge to girls' access to secondary education.

### 3.2.4 Family's economic status

The results in Table 3 indicate that 70.5% of the respondents pinpointed their family's poor economic status as one of the challenges they faced when accessing education. During interviews with key informants and FGD with girls, it was revealed that

some families do not send girls to school due to a lack of money to buy school uniforms, exercise books, food and other school requirements. Parents in low-income families cannot invest adequately in their children's education because of limited resources, which in turn affects their future academic achievement. One of the parents in Dirma said:

*"I have four children who are in school, two boys and two girls. I sometimes fail to provide them with basic school requirements, as a result, girls have to remain at home, and I only support boys who I can manage."* (Interview with parents, Dirma Village, May 2023).

Another key informant added during the interview that:

*"Some families send their daughters away for marriage at a young age in order to gather cattle for bride price. Family poverty pushes girls into abusive marriages and fail to return to their families because their families are unable pay back the bride price."* (Interview with Key informant, Balang'dalalu ward, May 2023).

These findings align with Li and Qiu (2018), who found that a family's socio-economic status significantly affects children's learning behaviour and academic performance, and fails to support daughters through their secondary school education. Furthermore, Kiranga (2020) found that

a decrease in family income in pastoral communities results in the removal of girls from school, while boys remain in school.

### 3.2.5 Household chores

Close to 68% of the total respondents mentioned domestic chores before and after school as a challenge facing girls' schooling (Table 3). Girls and women in the Barbaig community are supposed to fulfil all domestic requirements (often at the expense of not attending school), such as fetching water, cooking, cleaning, collecting firewood, caring for children (siblings), the infirm, and the elderly. This hinders girls from attending school. During FGD, the participants said:

*"In our community, we have a clear division of labour based on gender; men and women have clearly stated roles. Girls and women perform household chores such as cleaning, collecting firewood, cooking, fetching water, caring for siblings and other household activities. I always go to school late; this affects my performance. Families tend to value domestic activities more than schooling for girls..."* (Girls FGD in Mwahu secondary school, May 2023).

The study by Raymond (2018) found that pastoralist families expect girls to remain at home and perform household duties, which hinders girls' participation in

secondary education. Similarly, the study by Iwu and Azoro (2017), which was carried out in Nigeria on barriers to the involvement of females in education revealed that domestic responsibilities are significant hindrances to the effective participation of females in educational frameworks.

### 3.2.6. Distance from home to school

It was found that around 64.7% of respondents said travelling long distances to and from school was one of the challenges Barbaig girls face in accessing secondary education (Table 3). Some of the girls had to walk very long distances from their homes to school and back. It was reported that girls came from as far away as Qalosendo village which is 15 kilometres from Dirma secondary school. During KII, one of the school headmasters said that:

*“Due to the long distance to school, some students arrive late and miss some school activities. This sometimes tempts girls to ask for lifts from motorcycle riders and they end up in bad relationships, poor academic performance and an unexpected pregnancy.” (Interview with the Headmaster, Chief Gejaru secondary school, May 2023).*

During interviews with parents, it was found that some parents are afraid to send their daughters go to school alone because of the long travel. They worry about sexual abuse and even rape occurring on the walk to school. During KII, the school’s discipline master said that;

*“Some of our students come very far away from here, which makes*

*them always come late to school as their means to school is on foot. We used to punish them, but now we have observed that they no longer receive punishment; instead, we recommend parents to rent rooms close to the school, as it lacks dormitories.” (Interview with School discipline master, Dirma secondary school, May 2023).*

### 3.2.7. Family size

The study’s findings revealed that large family size is a challenge for girls’ access to secondary education. This was supported by more than sixty percent (61.9%) of respondents (Table 3). Having many children increases a family’s prestige in pastoralist communities. However, ensuring the provision of essential materials for children to attend school is a challenge. Girls pose a greater financial burden to families as they have more needs than boys, including sanitary pads during the menstrual period. The results in Table 5 indicate that more than half (76.6%) of respondents have family members ranging from 6 and above. The results are in line with Hanang district officials’ report that most families in the pastoral communities have more than 5 people as relatives tend to live together. These findings are in agreement with the National Bureau of Statistics (2022), which reported that Manyara Region was among ten regions in Tanzania with an average household size that was above the national average of 4.3 persons per household. Table 5 summarises the results.

**Table 5: Respondents' family sizes**

Size	Frequency	Percentage
Three	6	2.9
Four	13	6.2
Five	30	14.3
Six	32	15.2
Seven	32	15.2
Eight	25	11.9
Above 8	72	34.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>100</b>

The perspective that large family size is detrimental to girls' access to education was supported by one of the parents during FGD, who said that:

*"Children are wealth to us; having a lot of girls has wealth that will be exchanged after getting married, they are also used in productive activities, including taking care of their young and elders at home, sending them to school is a waste of time and wealth and distorting them. They destroy and abandon our traditional ways of life." (FDG with parents at Gehandu ward, May 2023)*

### 3.2.8. Sex preference (boys over girls)

The study findings in Table 3 indicated that 48.1% of the respondents said family preference for boys over girls was one of the challenges affecting girls. The Barbaig community still believes boys are superior to girls and therefore boys should be educated while girls stay home. The girls' focus group discussion and the parents' interview supported

these findings. The FGD participants reported that some of the Barbaig still embrace cultural practices displaying favouritism towards boys as the community's norms dictate that girls are for marriage and domestic responsibilities, not schooling. In addition, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) was computed, and the results are summarised in Table 6.

**Table 6. Enrolment in surveyed secondary schools for 2022**

Name of school	Boys	Girls	GPI
Mwahu	191	176	1.09
Dirma	148	199	0.74
Chief Gejaru	347	375	0.93
<b>Total</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>0.91</b>

**Source:** Field data (2023)

*Note: GPI=Gender Parity Index: the ratio of females to males.*

Regarding preference for boys over girls, one of the parents had this to say during the interview:

*"Educating a girl is a risk. She can get pregnant while in school. A girl does not fully belong to her family. She will get married and become a part of that family. Educating her does not benefit us; we prefer to educate boys more because they will benefit our family (An interview with parents, Dirma ward, May 2023).*

These findings are in line with Eamon (2015), who found that in pastoralist communities, most parents are concerned with their socio-economic status. It is difficult for parents to balance household expenses with the educational



expenses of both girls and boys, which in turn leads to boys having greater access to education than girls.

### 3.2.9. Nomadic life

The study revealed that a nomadic lifestyle is among the challenges facing girls in accessing secondary education. This was reported by 86 respondents, which is equivalent to 40.1% of the total sample (Table 3). The constant motion inherent in pastoral communities hinders girls' full participation in secondary education due to the lack of necessities such as food and financial support when parents are away from home. This often results in girls' absences from school. Conversely, the situation is a learning experience for boys as they move with their parents, especially during dry seasons, searching for greener pastures to feed animals. During KII, one of the key informants said:

*“Nomadic life still exists in pastoral communities, particularly in Barbaig. They keep moving from one place to another, especially during dry seasons, searching for water and animal food. Girls remain at home without support as boy children move with their parents..... Although this is a challenge for girls, it affects many boys, as they are the ones who move even when they are supposed to be at school.” (KII participant at Chief Gejaru secondary school, May 2023).*

The study's findings align with those of Hedges *et al.* (2015), who found that;

children in predominantly Maasai pastoralist households were the least likely to attend school, while neighbouring farmers and business owners invested more in education. Similarly, the findings are in line with Kiranga (2020), who found that; girls had no access to secondary education in pastoral communities in Tarime district.

### 3.2.10. Gender norms and culture

The study findings showed that 39.1% of the respondents mentioned gender norms and culture as a challenge facing Barbaig girls in accessing secondary education (Table 3). During the FGDs with girls and interviews with key informants, it was found that the study area promoted a patriarchal and male-dominated way of life. Community members possessed beliefs, norms and customs which insisted on girls' early and forced marriage to obtain a large dowry. Girls were regarded as commodities (sources of wealth for the family), and there was an evident preference for boys over girls, which affected girls' access to education. It was reported that these Barbaig cultural norms and practices generally do not promote girls' access to secondary school education because they marginalise girls and support gender inequality in education and the community. On the other hand, these results are in line with those of Kiranga (2020) and Mutuku *et al.* (2020), which indicate that some girls in pastoral communities are not in school because of social norms and cultural beliefs that affect their right to access education.

#### 4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that the availability of facilities for girls' participation in secondary education is poor among pastoral communities. The environment remains unfavourable to girls due to the absence of girls' accommodation near school, the lack of professional matrons for close supervision of girls, the inadequate number of pit latrines or toilets, and the paucity of special rooms for changing. As if these challenges were inadequate, there are no sanitary materials provided for girls, even during school emergencies. Other obstacles preventing Barbaig girls from accessing secondary education are the shortage of available girls' school facilities and services, the low socio-economic status of families, harmful gender norms, anachronistic traditions and practices, early marriage and pregnancy, parents' desire for wealth and the long distance from home to and from school.

The study therefore recommends that the Tanzanian government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and community members (Barbaig) collaborate in the creation of a conducive educational environment for Barbaig girls in secondary schools in the Hanang District. These combined efforts should primarily focus on improving secondary schools' facilities so that they can comfortably accommodate girls as they pursue their studies. Furthermore, the Tanzanian government in collaboration with international and local NGOs should launch an awareness campaign directed at Barbaig communities to convince traditional leaders, influential people and families to change their attitudes and

make secondary education a priority for both girls and boys. Moreover, the government in collaboration with NGOs and other stakeholders should make efforts to ensure the presence of mobile schools in the Barbaig community in Hanang District.

#### References

- Ammo, T. (2020). Influence of pastoralists' perception of vocational education and training on enrolling their children in vocational education and training centres: A case of Hanang District Council (Master dissertation, Mzumbe University, Tanzania).
- Awinia, C. (2019). Free Basic Education and Gender Disparities in Tanzania. *Huria Journal*, 26(2), 1-22.
- Dyer, C. (2016). Approaches to education provision for mobile pastoralists. *Revue scientifique et technique (International Office of Epizootics)*, 35(2), 631-638.
- Eamon, M. K. (2015). Social-demographic, neighbourhood and parenting influences on the academic achievement of Latino young adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. 34(2), 163-174.
- Eichenberger, P., Hulliger, B., and Potterat, J. (2011). Two measures for sample size determination. *Survey Research Methods*, 5(1), 27-37).
- Hedges, S., Mulder, M. B., James, S., and Lawson, D. W. (2016). Sending children to school: rural livelihoods and Parental investment in education in Northern Tanzania. *Evolution and*

- human behaviour, 37(2), 142-151. Idriss, A. (2019). Taking the Camel through the eye of a needle: Enhancing pastoral resilience through education policy in Kenya. *Resilience: Interdisciplinary Perspective on Science and Humanitarianism*, 2(2) 25-38.
- Iwu, R. U., and Azoro, A. V. (2017). A study on the barriers to participation of females in science, mathematics and technology education in Imo State the way forward. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 12(17), 832-838.
- Kiranga, B. K. (2020). Bottlenecks in the accessibility of secondary education among girls in Tanzania: A case of Pastoral communities in Tarime district (Master dissertation, The University of Dodoma). <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12661/2660>
- Kothari, C. (2017). Research methodology methods and techniques. Published by New Age International (P) Ltd., Publishers, 91.
- Kumar, R. (2018). *Research methodology: A step-by-step Guide for Beginners*. Sage Publications Limited, Washington DC.
- Kuria, W. D. (2019). Influence of the Pastoralists' formal Education level on Economic prosperity: A case study of Samburu Pastoral Community, Kenya. *European Journal of Education Studie*, 5(12), 73-79.
- Li, Z. and Qiu, Z. (2018). How does family background affect children's educational achievement: Evidence from contemporary China. *Journal of Chinese Sociology*, 5(13), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40711-018-083-8>
- Magayane, R., and Meremo, J. (2021). Menstrual Hygiene Management Practices for Adolescent Girls among Public Secondary Schools in Kibondo District, Tanzania. *East African Journal of Education and Social Sciences (EAJESS)*, 2(3), 107-115.
- Mutuku, M. M., Njeru, E., and Mburugu, E. (2020). Challenges faced by girls in the course of their secondary school education. *International Journal of Gender Studies*, 5(1), 1-13.
- Muhammad, M. A. (2018). Pastoralists' girls' education in Africa: A study of Emusoi Center in Northern Tanzania. GRIN Verlag.
- Muhanga, M. I. and Malungo, J. R. S. (2017). The what, why and how of Health literacy: A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Health*, 5(2), 107-114.
- National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). (2019). Tanzania Mainland Household Budget Survey 2017-18: Key Indicators Report. Ministry of Finance and Planning.
- Pan, Z. (2023). Effecting education: factors influencing girls secondary education attainment in Kenya's pastoral communities.



- Paradis, E., O'Brien, B., Nimmon, L., Bandiera, G., and Martimianakis, M. A. (2016). Design: selection of data collection methods. *Journal of graduate medical education*, 8(2), 263-264.
- Raymond, A. (2018). Girls' Education in Pastoral Communities: An Ethnographic Study of Monduli District, Tanzania. Research Report. CfBT Education Trust. 60 Queens Road, Reading, RG1 4BS, England.
- Rotich, L. and Koros P. (2015). Pastoralists and Girl Child Education in Kenya. *International Journal of Innovative Education Research*, 3(1), 1-13.
- SNV (2015). Baseline Survey on Menstrual Hygiene Management in School in Tanzania. <https://healthdocuments/girls-control-compiled-findings-studies-menstrual-hygiene>
- Suleman, Q., Aslam, H. D., Habib, M. B., Yasmeen, K., Jalalian, M., Akhtar, Z., and Akhtar, B. (2015). Exploring Factors Affecting Girls' Education at Secondary Level: A Case of Karak District, Pakistan. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(19), 95-109.
- Tabreek, S. (2017). Importance of educating girls for the overall development of community: A global perspective. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 7(1), 125-139.
- UNESCO, (2018). Puberty education and Menstrual hygiene Management. <https://healtheducationresources.unesco.org>
- UNICEF (2020). Girls' education. Geneva: Marixie Mercado.
- United Republic of Tanzania-URT (1977). *The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977*. Government Printers, Dar-es-Salaam.
- United Republic of Tanzania-URT (1978). *The National Education Act of Tanzania*. Government Printers, Dar-es-Salaam.
- World Health Organization. (2021). *Health concerns among children deprived of liberty: policy brief* (No. WHO/EURO: 2021-2713-42469-58984). World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe.
- World Bank (2020). Learning for All. Investing in People's Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development. World Bank Group Education Strategy 2020. Washington DC: World Bank.