Post *Ujamaa* School-community Connectedness in Tanzania:
Exploring Learning Communities in Rural Areas

by

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how do schools and communities work together to generate learning communities. One community case in remote rural areas of Tanzania was selected for the study. The community was selected on the criterion that it showed hopeful practices of school-community connectedness and of learning communities despite macro socio-political changes in Tanzania from liberal oriented policies in the 1960s to *ujamaa* (familyhood) in the 1970s, and back to liberal oriented policies from the 1990s to date.

Perspectives of community members on the subject matter were qualitatively studied using a community capabilities framework (CCF) adopted from Emery & Flora (2006). Interviews were conducted with one district education officer, one ward education coordinator, one head of school, 14 teachers, and 15 community members. Data collected from interviews was triangulated by holding two separate focus group discussions for 19 community members and using documentary review and observations in the community. All forms of data were analyzed using transformative learning and social capital theories.

Results suggest that the observed promising school-community connectedness and learning communities were a function of home-grown innovations of improving teaching and learning. The innovations led to promising school outputs measured by the country wide Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) which in turn strengthened and sustained the collaboration between teachers, parents, and students. The collaboration was made possible by mutual trust, commitment, accountability, and responsibility amongst teachers, students, and parents; supported by locally innovated incentive system and mentorship; and monitoring through communication, transparency, and participation. Analysis further showed good leadership within the community and the school, along with internalized school and community values,

norms, and rules which put education as a priority were the catalysts of the innovations and collaboration. Further, systemic operationalization of agreed values, norms, and rules, coupled with a record of successes in achieving community-based innovations over time in aspects of life other than education, allowed community members and teachers to engage in critical reflection about the school and education of children, thereof maintaining school-community reciprocity and ultimately promising school-community connectedness.

The study concludes that whereas teachers as professionals play a significant role in generating professional learning communities, under good community leadership learning communities can organically be generated from the community members and influence teachers' and students' professional learning which will in turn further the connectedness and learning communities. The study recommends for more studies in other rural communities of Tanzania and other poor countries. In addition, the study recommends for studies that shall take aboard perspectives of more stakeholders–such as students–to enrich our understanding about learning communities and school-community connectedness, and the subsequent implementable strategies to emulate promising school community practices as a way out of poor school performances and rural poverty in poor countries.

PREFACE

This thesis is an original work by Athanas August Ngalawa. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name "A Case Study of a Primary School in Kilolo District, Iringa Region, Tanzania", No. Pro00024407, of July 18, 2011; and amendment No Pro00024407_AME3 of December 10, 2013.

Some of the research conducted for this thesis forms part of an international research collaboration, led by Professor Elaine Simmt at the University of Alberta, with co-applicants Professor Florence Glanfield, University of Alberta; Professor Anjum Halai, Institute for Educational Development, Eastern Africa, The Aga Khan University; Dr. Iddi A.M. Makombe, Mzumbe University; Professor Joyce R. Mgombelo, Brock University; Mr. Dominic Msabila, Mzumbe University and Mr. Athanas A. Ngalawa, Mzumbe University. The emergent themes presented in chapter 4 are a result of data collected from a school case by Professor Florence Glanfield and Mr. Athanas Ngalawa.

DEDICATION

To the memory of my late parents Augustine Ng'uwilo and Thecla Boniface Matitu, and my late brother and sister Wilbard August and Flora August. You gave so much of yourself on my education journey.

My father decided to give to his son what he had never had himself - an education. (Nelson Mandela)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCF- Community Capabilities Framework

CHAKIWATA-*Chama Cha Kitaalaamu cha Walimu Tanzania*

CWT- *Chama Cha Walimu Tanzania*

DED- District Executive Director

DEO- District Education Officer

EAUMP- Eastern Africa Universities Mathematics Program

FAO- Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations

GDP- Gross Domestic Product

IVST- International Village of Science and Technology

JMT-Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania (United Republic of Tanzania)

MAT- The Mathematical Association of Tanzania

MTUU- Mpango wa Tanzania UNESCO na UNICEF

NGO- Non-governmental Organization

PSLE- Primary School Leaving Examinations

RC – Roman Catholic

REO- Regional Education Officer

SACCOs- Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations

SAPs- Structural Adjustment Programs

SMEA- School Mathematics of East Africa

SMPEA- School Mathematics Project of East Africa

Tshs- Tanzanian shillings

UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF- United Nations (International) Children's (Emergency) Fund

UPE- Universal Primary Education

URT-United Republic of Tanzania

USA- United States of America

USD- United States Dolor

VEO- Village Executive Officer

WB- World Bank

WEC- Ward Education Coordinator

WW II- Second World War

ZPD- Zone of Proximal Development

Chapter 1

Introduction

Similar to many nations, Tanzania is focused on improving the education of its children and youth through improving schools. Literature suggests that school-community connectedness is vital for improving school performance and enhancing better community life (Hewitt, 2006; Lortie, 1975; Stefl-Mabry & Lynch, 2006; UNESCO, 2012). As an institution, "Everett Reimer (1971) defines schools 'as institutions that require full-time attendance of specific age groups in teacher-supervised classrooms for the study of graded curricula' " (Husén, 1979, p. 36). Thus, curriculum scholars have, for a long time, grappled with the relationships between the school, students, teachers, and the community.

Focused on administration, Bobbitt (2009) held that schools were to prepare students to control their future daily life. Accordingly, training should aim at producing proficient people capable of the "use of ideas in the control of practical situations" (p. 16). Hence, the role of teachers is to ensure that, upon completion, students are well equipped to use the knowledge obtained in schools to improve production, productivity, and the general life of the people. Thinking on how teachers should deliver classroom lessons, Dewey (1990) argued that the best pedagogical approach is for "the nature" and "society" to "live in the classrooms" (p. 62). He suggested that the school and society work to connect "with one another, so that they work easily, flexibly, and fully" (p. 64). To Dewey (2009), a school was "a form of community life" (Dewey, 2009, p. 36) and education "a process of living and not a preparation for future living," thus "the child should be stimulated and controlled in his work through the life of the community" (p. 36). Counts (2009), concerned with how the world ought to be, had the view that schools should be sources of "social regeneration" (p. 46). Thus, students should be prepared to bring about social change which would lead to better life.

Although these scholars speak from different perspectives, the commonality among them is a community. Bobbitt (2009) wanted schools to equip students with skills and knowledge which, upon graduation, would be useful to make them fit well in their immediate communities. Dewey (1990; 2009) wished immediate application of students' community life experiences in school teaching and immediate application of school lessons in students' community life practices. Counts (2009) wished for the school to make school leavers a source of improved community life. This brief scan through time illustrates how school-community connectedness,

for decades and may be centuries, has been a topic of inquiry as well as a mission of desire to educators, politicians, philosophers, and other research practitioners.

In this research, a particular rural community in Tanzania that demonstrates community connectedness is studied to better understand how it came to be and how it currently exists, especially in terms of the relationships that bind the school and the village. That community is called Kitamburo.

Tanzanian School-Community Connectedness

Tanzania is basically a rural and agrarian community (Hyden, 1980; Stahl, 1961). After 70 years of European colonialism (Stahl, 1961) followed by more than 50 years of flag independence gained in 1961, 70% of the approximate 45 million people of the United Republic of Tanzania reside in rural areas (URT, 2014, p. ix), with agriculture as the main economic activity (p. xi). The agricultural sector employs about 80% of the total population and contributes to approximately 45% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), and 30% of export earnings (URT, 2009). With an understanding of the potency of agriculture in improving the national economy, Tanzania was always set to improve the quality of agriculture by educating its people. Thus education was one of the long accepted driving forces toward improved rural population with the potential to improve agricultural productivity and ultimately national development.

Immediately and even before independence, Julius Kambarage Nyerere—the founder and first president of Tanzania—believed that education was the foundation of genuine and people-centered development. In a forward he wrote to Stahl's *Tanganyika Sail in the Wilderness* in 1961, J. K. Nyerere (Stahl, 1961), and then Prime Minister of Tanganyika (current Tanzania mainland), pointed out that:

> Looking broadly at the needs of our country, I would like to make two points. First, if I had to make a choice between money and men, I would take men-trained manpower [sic] . . . Secondly, when we talk about education, I do not think that we can afford to confine ourselves to formal education at school. We must develop our country and its economy quickly, and the great mass of the people who must participate in this development are illiterate peasants. It is no use our forgetting them, saying that we can do nothing and that we must wait three or four generations before we have educated people. (p. 10)

Nyerere's strong belief regarding the potency of education in development and consequent commitment to the generation of a mass of educated people within the shortest possible time surfaced frequently in his speeches and writing. He always reiterated that:

> We want to improve our lives and maintain our freedom; we shall only be able to do this if we apply ourselves to learning as much as possible and as quick as possible. . . . Unless we determine to educate ourselves we shall get left behind again; we shall be at the mercy of other nations and peoples. . . . We must change our conditions of life ourselves; and we can learn how to do this by educating ourselves. (Nyerere, 1982, p. 35)

Learning and education are closely related but as shall be discussed in the literature review, learning is outcome based and thus it is more problem-centered and self-directed than education which is actually a means towards learning (Haines, 1998). Nyerere wanted people to engage in learning because he wanted them to act against poverty which characterized the majority of the Tanzanian community. This foundational thinking influenced policy makers in Tanzania to invariably acknowledge the role of education as a driving force to improved national production and productivity in most of its official documents throughout its more than 50 years of independence. The national development framework, detailed in the Tanzania *National Development Vision 2025,* sets out the aspiration to transform the country from a low-income country to a middle-income country by the year 2025, and identified quality education and generation of learning societies as pivotal for achieving the development objectives. It clearly stated that:

> Education should be treated as a strategic agent for mind-set transformation and for the creation of a well-educated nation, sufficiently equipped with the knowledge needed to competently and competitively solve the development challenges which face the nation. In this light, the education system should be restructured and transformed qualitatively with a focus on promoting creativity and problem solving. (URT, 2000, p. 19)

In a bid to translate this long-term and broader dream of education and learning as a vehicle for development in implementable programs, earlier in the 1960s and the 1970s the nation embarked on establishing community centers to provide education to the masses of adult people in both rural and urban areas. There are two main conceptions of community centers. The traditional conception of community centers emphasizes the "physical structures" set to provide "leisure functions" (Ishumi, 1982, p. 66) to community members, and a radical

conception emphasizing a "stimulating a group of individuals within a given locale to engage in problem-solving activity in order to improve their condition or welfare" (p. 66). Community centers in Tanzania were first established by British colonial administrators in urban centers in the mid-1940s to cater mainly to recreational and welfare services for the ex-soldiers involved in the Second World War (WWII), within the country and elsewhere around the world, as a strategy to "re-absorb" and "rehabilitate" back home (p. 67). Consequently, even when the objectives of community centers in the late 1940s were extended to include the "provision of mass education as part of community development process" (p. 67) and adopted and scaled out by independent Tanzania as "community education centers" (p. 73) to, in part, provide adult education, the centers failed to deliver what was expected of them. The failure was due to the fact that most centers were located in urban areas while the majority of people resided in rural areas. The centers were also "associated with 'disguised unemployment' and idleness" (p. 69) so people would not go to the centers for educational programs. As a result, the government decided to declare all primary schools "as 'community education centers'" (Kassam, 1982, p. 62). Piloted community education center primary schools in Tanzania cultivated very close links between the school and its immediate community to the extent of having "*bona fide* school teachers" from the immediate community (Ishumi, 1982, p. 73). However, due to reasons that are explained in the literature review of this study, the initiative failed (Buchert, 1994).

To build on past experiences of the country and address the challenges recorded in the history of establishing school-community connectedness through the implementation of community schools programs and other education development programs (URT, 2006a, 2006b), the Tanzania government published a *School Improvement Toolkit* (URT, 2013) as a guiding document for the use of head teachers and heads of schools to improve schools and school-community connectedness. The guideline acknowledges the importance of a good relationship between the school and its immediate community in students' school performance. Therefore, head teachers and heads of schools were warned that "there is generally low support of schools in the community due to poor relationship between schools and the community" (p. 9) to the extent that in some communities, the immediate community "assist students to misbehave with regard to school attendance" (p. 9). Furthermore, calling for parental support in a country with severe budget constraints, the guideline points out that "some parents are not ready to assist schools in terms of paying school fees and supporting their children by providing learning

materials (e.g. textbooks)" (p. 9). As a solution to these noted weaknesses, the guideline proposed for "regular meetings with nearby community members," students' interaction with the community around school, community voluntary assistance to the school, creation of transparency, encouraging "parents to visit their children's schools and give suggestions on how to improve students' performance," and using various techniques to improve school-community "communication" (pp. 9–10) in order to strengthen school-community relationships and improve school performance.

Despite the good efforts by the government to recognize and attempt to establish and enhance school-community connectedness as indicated by policy documents, actual practices were not promising. Within just the few months I spent reading Tanzanian newspapers while writing this dissertation, three reported cases demonstrated weaknesses in school-community connectedness. In one of the cases, a Grade 2 student went to school with a dilapidated school uniform which showed his private organs. The teacher responsible for the child sent the child back home and requested his parents to help him fix the uniform. In return, the father of the child went to school and caned the teacher for sending the child home (Raphael, 2014, July 29). In the second case, a parent who visited the school of her children to request clarification on school contributions, ended up in being jeered and chased by students throwing stones under the command of the school head teacher (Kumba, 2014, August 14). And in the third case, a member of parliament requested that the Minister of Education no longer require parents to make school contributions (Daily news reporters, 2014, June 27).

In terms of performance, poor performances and low quality education continue to characterize education in Tanzania. A study by Mrutu, Ponela, and Mkumbi found that "25% of children at Standard 6 level have not attained a basic level of numeracy" (as cited in Simmt et al., 2010, p. 2); furthermore, Wangeleja noted that "the vast majority of children fail mathematics in the national Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE)" (as cited in Simmt et al., 2010, p. 2). Recently, the *Uwezo* initiative (literacy and numeracy competence assessments to students of Grades 1 to 3 in primary schools of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) has shown significant low performances of students (Uwezo East Africa, 2014). It was upon this scenario that seeing a school with both promising school-community connectedness and school performance prompted the question: How do schools and communities in Tanzania work together to generate learning communities?

Nemes (2013) conducted a cross-sectional survey on the involvement of primary school committees in planning and implementing education development at a school level. The study was conducted in a municipality and, though schools in rural settings of the municipality were involved, the study missed the remote rural areas which are home to most Tanzanians. Furthermore, being a survey, it lacked the richness and details more likely captured in case study research. Moreover, studying learning communities is more than surveying school committees studied in the context of implementing a specific program. Most documented literature about learning communities is a product of research conducted in the context of Western Europe and North American countries (Epstein, 2011; Hord & Sommers, 2008; Warren, 2005). That literature suggests learning communities are implied necessary outputs for generating self-determined communities. There is a dearth of literature explaining how learning communities can be developed in poor countries like Tanzania. Additionally, much of the literature from Western Europe and North America that documents how schools can work with communities in developing learning communities is from a professional point of view, capitalizing on teachers as catalysts to learning communities (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008). There is limited literature on how learning communities can organically grow from communities and capture the commitment of teachers and students in improving school performance. The purpose of this study was to investigate, from the perspectives of community members, school-community connectedness and the conditions which led to the emergence of the learning community. In the course of conducting the literature review, and as I was reflecting on the challenges of school-community connectedness in this dissertation, a number of key concepts became central to my thinking around these issues. Covenant community and moral voice are two themes that I introduce below.

Covenant Communities in Tanzania

A community is a group of people who share space and feelings of belongingness to the extent that those members develop common interests because of the mutual touching of consciousness amongst themselves (Stefl-Mabry & Lynch, 2006). They work together because they have a common spirit to achieve a common goal (Dewey, 1990).

Traditionally, the term covenant community refers to a community guided by "binding agreements" (Mullen, 2010, p. 14) which restrict members of the community from going against agreed terms. For example in religious-based communities, covenant agreements were used to

guide the life of faith along with prescribed holy books and other principles (Hartley, 2010). Covenant communities have shared goals to achieve and in the process they have the obligation to help each other. In the case of faith-based covenant communities, one member of community cannot claim to be a good member by virtue of working hard to worship without attending to what others are doing. In covenant communities, members mentor and monitor each other with reference to agreed terms of the covenant. Thus, in covenant communities, people "commit (i. e., covenant) themselves to carry each other's burdens and share in their joys and fears" (Hartley, 2010, p. 14). Arguably, in the context where people share goals, strategies, and practices towards achieving the common agreed goal, they are a practicing covenant community even though they might not document agreements guiding their deeds. Thus, a covenant community has an extended meaning to include groups with "agreed-upon beliefs" (Mullen, Bettez, & Wilson, 2011, p. 284). The beliefs help to define who they are, what they are doing, and how to govern themselves. Covenant communities are "inscribed with moral and procedural codes" (Mullen et al., 2011, p. 283) which need not necessarily be in written form. The belief system helps members of the covenant community to "take careful account of the reading of the world being made by popular groups and expressed in their discourse, their syntax, their semantics, their dreams and desires" (Freire, 1994, p. 18). Covenant communities are tied by mutual trust that gives a collective way of looking at the world around them, representing the world around them, and acting upon the world around them to bring positive community change. A covenant community has a common worldview and is capable of using various mechanisms to enforce the sustainability of the glue that sticks them together to the effect of living as covenant community (Twale & De Luca as cited in Mullen, Bettez, &Wilson, 2011).

Historically, most communities in Tanzania had traditional leadership systems which united them as community members (Mbilinyi, 1979; Yeager, 1982). These communities were tied together with obligations that were handed down through generations through practical life experiences and oral traditions (what is commonly referred to as informal education) (Abdi, 2012; Mbilinyi, 1979). Community members were enveloped by "beliefs, values, and customs" (Beidelman, 1997, p. 2) which made them commit to helping one another to achieve the goal of community survival and sustainability.

Covenant communities in traditional African communities existed along blood relationships, age groups, gender, rites of passage, and professional skills. On the basis of blood

relationships, individuals had some commitments according to lineage. The "lineage or descent starts with the individual, then goes to the family, clan, and terminates with the tribe" (Otiso, 2013, p. 146). Most clans and tribes had an "apical" (p. 146) male ancestor to whom binding myths uniting the clan or the tribe were referred. Clan members regarded themselves, and were regarded by other clans, as one community and thus within the clan, "collective rights often surpass individual ones, individual misdeeds can easily hurt the reputation of entire clans" (p. 147). Every clan member was committed to ensuring clan survival, reputation, and sustainability through active participation in productive jobs and in events such as taking care of the sick, supporting a clan member in marriage, or other events related to occurrences such as the death of a clan member.

Along similar principles, tribal communities in Tanzania had beliefs, values, and customs that united members of a big tribal group or clan or members from different clans and tribes on the basis of age, gender, rite of passage, and profession. For example, the Maasai of Tanzania and Kenya had an age set management system which defined different commitments for the young, the youth, the mid-elders, and the elders (Otiso, 2013). The Kaguru and other tribes practicing initiation as a rite of passage from childhood to adulthood had well-defined commitments requiring initiates to define themselves as a distinctive covenant community from non-initiates, but also male initiates as a distinct group from female initiates. Thus even when a male community member married a female community member, they ended sharing a bed but not the details and secrets of what took place at a female initiation event or a male initiation event. In keeping the secret, each member of the couple maintained his or her commitment to fellow initiates (Beidelman, 1997). Similarly, traditional healers and witches held their own goals, beliefs, values, and customs which made them live as covenant communities of traditional healers or witches, regardless of the geographical distance between clans and tribal group backgrounds. For example, witches are "organized into a company, with a fixed number of members, strict rules for admission, and officials who perform the leading actions" (Parrinder, 1954, p. 125).

Covenant communities, as another social group, had advantages and disadvantages to community development measured by modern indicators such as access to school, health services, and possession of descent houses. Consequently, with the advent of exotic religious beliefs and practices followed by colonial rule and later new, independent states, traditional

covenant communities were weakened and some died completely. In Tanzania, the first president Julius Kambarage Nyerere "vigorously worked to create a national culture that significantly succeeded in undermining loyalty to clan and ethnic groups, especially in the younger generation" (Otiso, 2013, p. 147). However, as noted by Hyden (1980), "Pre-capitalist (or pre-socialist) social formations survive because the economic structures that give them life are still at work" (p.4). My experience with rural communities shows that indigenous social structures such as clans still exist and have powerful influence on peoples' life.

Conceiving Moral Voice

Moral voice can be conceived by considering both Carol Gilligan's sociological oriented "justice" and "care" (Tappan, 2006, p. 6) voices, as well as Lawrence Kohlberg's psychological oriented "moral development stages" (Tappan, 2006, p. 9). Gilligan (as cited in Tappan, 2006) argued that "justice voice" reflects "an ideal of equality, reciprocity, and fairness between persons" while "care voice" reflects " an ideal of attachment, loving and being loved, listening and being listened to, and responding and being responded to" (Tappan, 2006, p. 6). The study at the focus of this dissertation investigated perceptions of community members about conditions which led to practices indicating these aspects of justice and care amongst community members.

Kohlberg (as cited in Tappan, 2006, p.9) identified six stages of moral development which represent different moral thought, namely: "Heteronymous morality (Stage 1), individualistic, instrumental morality (Stage 2), interpersonally normative morality (Stage 3), social system morality (Stage 4), human rights and social welfare morality (Stage 5), morality of universalizable, reversible, and prescriptive general ethical principles (Stage 6)" (Tappan, 2006, p. 9). The study investigated conditions which led to a particular community's ethical principles that make people live as a learning community. In this study the sociological oriented moral voice was considered in tandem with the psychological orientation of moral development to explore the relationship between individual community members and the social, cultural, historical, and institutional contexts under which institutions, structures, personalities, norms, values, and ideas operated to the effect of supporting the school.

Researcher Connectedness

In an attempt to contribute to knowledge through research work, the researcher can take an objectivist or constructivist approach (Creswell, 2012; Harrington, 2005; Neuman, 2003). An objectivist approach assumes that knowledge is outside of the researcher waiting for him or her

to discover (Charmaz, 2003) and thus the researcher searches for empirical facts that exist outside his or her own experiences. Objectivists are inclined to the "positivist conception of 'truth' " that knowledge is "something beyond our experiential field" (Gatt & Vella, 2003, p. 14). Constructivist approaches, on the other hand, recognize "the mutual creation of knowledge by viewers and the viewed" (Charmaz, 2003, p. 250) and thus constructivists rely on "seeking meanings—both respondents' meanings and researchers' meanings" (p. 275) in the process of knowledge generation. My intent was to contribute to knowledge about how schools and communities work together to generate learning communities. Working together entailed interaction amongst members of the community and the school. I had the view that such knowledge is "built both within the individual and by the community" through "social interaction" (Gatt & Vella, 2003, p. 13), and thus I took a constructive approach in conducting this study. Also helping me accomplish the intended research goals was my own background of interaction with villagers, teachers, and students in attempts to address school improvement issues.

I was born, reared, and educated in rural Tanzania in a peasant family. From my early years, the link between school and community was embedded in my thinking and life practices. The school and teachers were very special to me but I considered them alien to our community. Before I began schooling, I felt very embarrassed when my parents or brother and sisters made me be in the school environment during school hours. When a teacher visited our home, I used to hide myself inside our house until the teacher left. This happened even when the teacher was a relative or family friend. My mother used to search for me and promise gifts in order to get me to come out and greet the teacher. When I started schooling, my parents and brother and sisters were very supportive in my education. I received both primary and secondary school education during the period when Tanzania was seriously implementing *ujamaa* (familyhood) policy. Thus, I am a person who joined the teaching profession as a product of a socialist-oriented community.

I spent 25 years of teaching in schools in rural Tanzania and school community connectedness has always been my interest. I started teaching in the early 1980s when Tanzania was implementing a home-initiated Universal Primary Education Program (UPE). This program was initiated in the early 1970s with a goal "to enable every child of school age to go to school" (Mbunda, 1982, p. 93). The economic hardships that hit Tanzania in the late 1970s and early

1980s restricted the government from providing free primary school education (Galabawa, 2001). The Government had to give directives for a compulsory school fee contribution of Tshs 20/=(≈ 3.0 USD) per student to be paid annually by parents to complement government efforts to supply school stationeries. Although parents did contribute, the contribution was not enough to cater to the full-year stationery demands of students. In some schools, like the one at which I happened to teach, students had to go without stationery and parents were not willing to make additional contributions or take any initiative out of school to ensure a year-round supply of stationery for their children. The school I taught at was a primary school in a community where formal education was introduced by Christian missionaries in the 1870s. I questioned the link between the school and the community because I thought the work done by the school for all those years would have made me and fellow teachers enjoy teaching in a privileged community—a community that would be willing to support the education of their children regardless of government education budget constraints. Unfortunately that was not the case.

The second school I taught at was a secondary day school which admitted students from a catchment area of approximately 19,036 km². This meant that students from distant villages had to rent rooms in order to attend school. The village was rich in agricultural products and thus attracted many businessmen. Despite the business potential, the village had neither a hotel nor a guest house. Prior to the establishment of the secondary school, businessmen were hosted by various villagers. With the advent of a secondary school, villagers turned some rooms of their houses, primarily designed as family houses, to rent to students thus reducing their capacity to accommodate the businessmen. Consequently, businessmen tempted female students by contributing room fees and food in return for sexual exploitation. When teachers proposed building a hostel to rescue female students, villagers did not support the idea because they found it a threat to the income gained through students' room rent. Additionally, the headmistress of the school was of the view that the school was registered as a day school and she was less concerned with what happened to students before and after school hours.

Another time I worked in a village privileged to be exposed to formal education for more than a century. But again there was no promising link between the school and the community. In the third school I taught, the headmaster decided to terminate extra training hours that teachers were voluntarily providing to students on Saturdays after he had received complaints from

villagers who questioned the rationale of their children attending school for 6 days instead of the recommended 5 days.

As a teacher at the university level, I used my weekends to do volunteer activities with a local non-governmental organization (NGO) in Tanzania. The NGO solicits development partners to support education-oriented projects. In one of the supported schools, teachers and school committee members, on behalf of villagers, chose to contribute locally obtained construction materials like stones, sand, and water to construct a teachers' house. The NGO and a development partner committed to provide industrial-based construction materials. To the surprise of the NGO and the donor, the agreed upon teachers' house never came to a reality despite 3 years of close follow-up. As a result, 100 bags of cement provided by the development partner expired and turned to stone. Another primary school that I happened to visit with the NGO was in a very remote rural area of a district council. The school had Grade 1 to Grade 4 and only six desks, even though the school was surrounded by beautiful trees suitable for all kinds of timber for making desks. In a joint meeting with teachers and the school committee, they requested the NGO help get more desks for the school. This made me question how villagers look at a school in their community and how school teachers perceive their presence in a community. My background and experiences shaped my interest in this research project, particularly when I came across a community with promising positive school-community connectedness.

Research Questions

The state of affairs regarding school-community connectedness and learning communities in Tanzania revealed the government's long-term theoretical intentions -to generate and sustain learning communities as keys to the development process of the country, particularly amongst rural communities. Practice, however, indicated a gross discrepancy from the documented government intentions as indicated by teachers' and parents' misunderstandings as well as students' poor performances. Thus after witnessing a promising deviance at Kitamburo, all these memories and reflections came back to me.

I visited Kitamburo while participating in a collaborative research project between the University of Alberta and six other institutions in Canada and Tanzania, including the University in Tanzania, where I teach. The project explored the question, "How can universities work effectively with communities (classroom, school, ward, district, region, and national) to enhance

mathematics education in rural and remote primary schools?" Through a baseline survey to selected rural areas, the team (me included) noted that within the rural areas there are schools with a relatively promising performance in mathematics as measured by the country-wide Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) (Glanfield & Ngalawa, 2013). One school was purposely chosen as a positive case and a study was conducted to learn what the teachers in the school did to make the school show the noted results.

A closer examination into the selected school case unveiled a strong collaboration between teachers, parents, and students that led to innovations in teaching and learning of mathematics. Interviews with individual teachers and a focus group discussion with members of the village government revealed historically positive cooperation between the school and community members around the school.

It was within this scenario where I found a school with promising school-community cooperation and I asked the question: *How do schools and communities in Tanzania work together to generate learning communities*?

Specifically, the study explored the following questions (1) From the perspective of community members, what institutions, structures, personalities, norms, values, and ideas are in place and internalized by members of the extended school community that define a school as covenant community, (2) How do the collectively acknowledged institutions, structures, personalities, norms, and values operate in order to address all parties involved in a moral voice (Sergiovanni, 2005) of working together in curriculum implementation? (3) How do the community members explain how the shared community institutions, structures, personalities, and obligations were initiated or came into recognition? (4) Finally, from the perspective of the community members, how does the school impact the community and the community impacts the school that makes the partnership sustainable?

Purpose of the study

Findings from this study relating to how a learning community in a selected school case came into being will inform education managers and administrators about the execution of their duties. Further, it could inform policy makers, curriculum developers and implementers, as well as development practitioners, and contribute to the generation and implementation of curriculum. Given the ongoing local government reforms in Tanzania (URT, 1998) which, amongst others,

aim at devolving powers to the lowest local government authorities, this is a timely study that can inform how the intended goal already works in the selected school case.

From an educational research perspective, this study is designed to provide understanding of the conditions for organic development of a learning community, to develop an interpretation that demonstrates the rationality of bottom-up development-oriented activities, and the efficacy of community-based initiatives. Due to historical reasons, formal schools in Tanzania are looked at as islands without connection with immediate communities. In this study, the history and dynamics of the school and community are studied as a union.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

As explained in the introductory chapter, this was a qualitative research project. While both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms for literature review were used to "justify the importance of the research problem" (Creswell, 2012, p. 80), in quantitative designs the discussion prefigures the "purpose of the study and research questions"; while in qualitative research, designs are less discussed to "allow the views of the participants to emerge without being constrained by views of other literature" (Creswell, 2012, p. 80). In this chapter, issues of schools and community schools in Tanzania are discussed to locate the historical context of the study while the concepts of learning, learning communities, and rural areas are discussed to situate the conceptual perspectives of the study. The subject of mathematics is given special attention as it is the one subject which prompted the study. In addition, theories of transformative learning, social capital, and intergenerational learning are discussed to show the theoretical tools of the study. Finally, the community capabilities framework (CCF) is discussed to show the conceptual framework of the study.

Schools in Tanzania

The first formal (modern) school in Tanzania was introduced in 1868 by Christian missionaries (Msola as cited in Ngalawa, 2001). This was followed by the establishment of more schools during colonialism and after independence (Mbunda, 1982). However, throughout colonial rule education was a privilege to few people who were prepared to serve the colonial government (Mbilinyi, 1982; Nyerere, 1968).

After independence (in 1961), Julius Nyerere, the first president and father of the nation, announced poverty, ignorance, and diseases as the three enemies of development. Capitalizing on his strong belief of education as pathfinder for development (Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005; Block, 1988; Buchert, 1994; Hundsörfer, 1982; Mayo, 2012; Nyerere, 1968), he pioneered different initiatives to improve both content and mode of delivery of education. During the early years of independence, Tanzania adopted the human capital and personnel planning model of education planning (Block, 1988), thus emphasis was on primary school education with a belief that this level of education could easily be accessed by many children (Duggan, 1976, Mayo, 2012; Nyerere, 1982) and therefore create an army of literate people capable of contributing to the anticipated fast development process of Tanzania. Nyerere, like current post-colonial education

scholars (Abdi, 2012; Abdi & Cleghorn, 2005; Donald, 2012; Namukasa, Kaahwa, Quinn, & Ddungu, 2012; Shizha, 2005, 2012), denounced the colonial system of education as being elitist in trying to alienate the educated from the real-life situation of their communities and the country-at-large (Nyerere, 1982). He emphasized a close partnership between students and community members.

Nyerere had the vision of building an egalitarian socialist state devoid of exploitation of man by man (*sic*). He therefore initiated the ujamaa policy (Duggan & Civille, 1976; Nyerere, 1967). In February 1967, the Arusha Declaration was proclaimed to enforce practical implementation of the ujamaa policy (Mbunda, 1982). In the education sector, the Arusha Declaration was reinforced by an additional document, *Education For Self-Reliance* in March of 1967. The broader objectives of education for self-reliance, amongst others, were:

> Acquisition of basic concepts and content so that the child will be able to apply that knowledge to his ever-changing environment; . . . Development of an enquiring mind so that the child can process information and become a self-educating adult; . . . Development of the child's co-operative involvement with peers and the community as a whole; Provision of experience that will develop and demonstrate human values such as equality, honesty, trust, courage, responsibility and respect for others. (Mbunda, 1982, p. 91)

Education for Self–reliance necessitated changes in the curriculum to take aboard contextualization of education content and delivery that could make primary school leavers effective participants in the development process as both individuals and members of the community. This was the essence of the community school experiment during ujamaa with the goal to tie together schools and communities, as well as teaching and practical life.

Community School Experiment in Tanzania.

Aware of the potency of school community connectedness, and with influence of the Phelps-Stokes Commissions reports (Bray, Clarke, & Stephens, 1986), in 1928 Mumford, a British educator, initiated experiments linking school and community in a project called, "Malangali or Mumford Experiment" (Ngunangwa, 1988, p. 8). Although the project had promising results (Ngunangwa, 1988), it was not supported by the British colonial government because the interest of the colonial education system was "to use education as a means of domination" (Ngunangwa, 1988, p. 213). After independence, the government of independent

Tanzania initiated radical transformation aimed at people-centred development (Mazrui & Mhando, 2013). The most notable innovation was the determination to build a nation based on the principles of ujamaa or familyhood (Ibhawoh & Dibua, 2003; Nyerere, 1968). In the 1960s more than 90% of the people of Tanzania were living in rural areas (Kassam, 1982). Thus, rural development was "for obvious reasons, the strategy of choice" (Mazrui & Mhando, 2013, p. 69). To facilitate radical change in rural settings the people were to be educated. Nyerere identified education as key to the development process and called for efforts to generate a learning community and school- community connectedness when he said:

> Schools must in fact be communities –and communities which practice the precept of self- reliance. The teachers, workers, and pupils together must be members of a social unit in the same way as parents, relatives and children are the same family unit. (Nyerere, 1982, p.27)

The belief Nyerere had on the role of education in development and the role of adults in economic activities that might contribute to the development process of a country made Tanzania government put emphasis on adult education. It was on this background that the community school experiment was implemented in post- independence Tanzania to provide education to both students and adults who could not attend primary school but needed education in order to learn and improve their well being.

> The particular purposes of the community school as defined in the Education for Self-Reliance document in 1967 were to contribute to village development by breaking down the barrier between the school and the surrounding society and between academic and manual skills, . . . Through the cooperation or participation of village members in school life and school members in village life. (Buchert, 1994, p. 123)

> The link between community, education, and development has been a development agenda for a long time in Tanzania (Duggan, 1976). The experiment was spearheaded by Tanzania's zeal to build a socialist state (ujamaa), but also supported by UNESCO and UNICEF and thus the experiment was managed under a program called *Mpango wa Tanzania UNESCO na UNICEF* (MTUU).

> The first post-independence experiment of community school in Tanzania was implemented at Kwamsisi in Tanga Region.

Kwamsisi is located in one of the key sisal plantation regions on relatively fertile soils with relatively reliable rain. The village was founded in 1925 and was from 1935 the homestead of Mzee Msisi . . . Kwamsisi is almost solely inhabited by Zigua farmers and at the beginning of the experiment constituted approximately 60 families mostly belonging to Msisi's extended family. (Buchert, 1994, pp. 126–127)

Two factors influenced the choice of the school: "Its proximity to Korogwe Teachers' College which was mentoring the project" (Buchert, 1994, p. 123), and its "well-established socialist oriented organization structures and activities" (p. 127). Though "it was anticipated that the inclusion of village members in the school committees and of school members in the village committees would enhance the joint cooperation between the school and the village" (interviewee as cited in Buchert, 1994, p. 127), villagers' consent on participating in the experiment was not sought. Therefore, villagers did not own the program in the real sense of the word as was well noted by an interviewed MTUU official that,

Although the Kwamsisi villagers expressed a clear 'ownership' of their school as a community school – 'the school belonged to us' - they appeared not to have been widely involved in the decision making and planning process concerning the direction of the school. (Buchert, 1994, p. 130)

It is further noted that community schools were not integrated in the "formal system" and "remained more of a political idea than an educational movement" (Buchert, 1994, p. 124), hence suffered vulnerability during changing economic and political climates. While the rise and fall of the community school movement in Tanzania can be attributed to a number of factors, it is evident that the way it was introduced made it vulnerable to the liberal policies that Tanzania adopted beginning in the mid-1980s. It is upon these experiences that seeing a learning community in the context of liberal policies in rural Tanzania raised my interest in creating this study. A closer look at literature about education and development in Nyerere's philosophy (Mayo, 2012) reveals that Nyerere had dreams of learning rather than education.

Learning

People have been trying to understand learning for over 2000 years. It was in the 19th century that Edward Thorndike came up with his stimulus-response learning theory which is considered as the first scientific explanation of learning (Hamond, Austin, Orcutt, & Rosso, 2001). Learning differs from education. Learning can take place within individuals or within a

social process or interaction in a given context to obtain knowledge, skills, and attitudes which may or may not be the result of education (Tu & Corry, 2002). Education is the process of imparting knowledge, values, skills, and attitudes which can be beneficial to an individual. On the contrary, learning is the process of adopting knowledge, values, and skills relevant for enabling humankind to understand the environment around him/her and take relevant action to change it to his/her own betterment (Shizha, 2012).

Habermas (as cited in Mezirow, 2000) classifies learning into "two major domains" namely: "instrumental learning" and "communicative learning" (p. 8). Instrumental learning is that learning which helps people "control and manipulate the environment" in the course of performing a task. Communicative learning is learning "what others mean when they communicate with you" (p. 8). This classification looks at an individual as the centre of the learning process. Feldman (as cited in Kilpatrick, Barrett & Jones, 2003) says the learner is the "lone seeker of knowledge" (Kilpatrick, Barrett &Jones, 2003, p. 1). Contrary to this view, I conducted a study about learning communities that looked at a community as a single entity. To view a community as a learner in its entirety required a "philosophical shift" (Kilgore, 1999, p. 196) from looking at learning as a process taking place in an individual to learning as a process that takes place in a community as a single entity—a view advanced in collective learning theory.

Collective learning theory holds that "learning involves both individual and group components. Individual components presented here are identity, consciousness, sense of agency, sense of worthiness, and sense of connectedness. Individual identity answers the question, 'Who am I?' " (Kilgore, 1999, pp. 196–197). The theory contends that "as an individual is a learning system, so is a group" (p. 197), only that in this case the "identity answers the question, 'Who are we?'" (p. 197), and the learning is "taken-as-shared meanings that may lead the group to a course of collective action" (p. 197). While Kilgore's focus was on collective learning as an instrument for collective social action and particularly in social movements, this study is not focused in social movements. It is focused on collective action that takes place within the normal day-to-day community life. Accordingly, while acknowledging that a community can learn as an entity just like an individual learner, the purposes of collective learning put forward by Kilgore did not fit in this study. So what are the learning communities that this study wished to explore?

Learning Communities

      To understand the concept of learning communities necessitates an understanding of the term *community*. Various scholars have attempted an explanation of a community. Putnam and Fukuyama are of the view that community membership endows upon its members a sense of belonging and creates the social capital and trust needed to build stable economies and governments (as cited in Stefl-Mabry & Lynch, 2006). This explanation is skewed to communities with political orientations like political parties which always strive for forming governments. A broader explanation of a community is given by Brooks who views a community as "a place where people conduct community activities, share common beliefs and share a means of communicating" (as cited in Tu & Corry, 2002, p. 1). Though it faces tautological linguistic limitations of using the same term to define a term, it outlines three features of a community: common location, activity, and beliefs.

      This opinion is also held by Stefl-Mabry and Lynch (2006) who view communities as constituted essentially by people and space. The question that might rise from this explanation is the conception of space in the current age of technological advancement where while one community can claim ownership of a physical space on the land, another community might have full command of the cyber space corresponding to the same land. Is there any added value of mentioning space in the definition of a community? It is upon these complexities that I look to Putnam (1993) who defines community as people "cooperating for mutual benefit" (Stefl-Mabry & Lynch, 2006, p. 27), although I have reservations for the term mutual benefit as a necessity for a community. The smallest community that I know is the family where parents and guardians provide support to young family members as part of their responsibility rather than investing for a guaranteed return from what they do to the young. Parents in the long run might enjoy support from their children; the return might not necessarily be to the same degree as to be termed *mutual benefit*.

      For purposes of this study, a community is a group of "people who see themselves as sharing similar interests" (Stefl-Mabry & Lynch, 2006, p. 27). I adopt Steven Doheny-Farina's conception of a community (as cited in Stefl-Mabry & Lynch, 2006, p. 28) that it "is bound by place which always includes complex social and environmental necessities . . . It must be lived. It is intertwined, contradictory and involves all our senses. It involves the continuing, unplanned interactions between the same people for a long period of time". Thus at the core of a

community is "context" (p. 28) which involves "a feeling of belonging upon their members" (p. 28) and "evolves when one person's consciousness touches another" (p. 29).

While proposing a theory of social constructivism, Vygotsky (as cited in Kilpatrick et al., 2003) gave impetus to the concept of learning communities amongst educators after acknowledging the contribution of other people in the learning process of an individual. According to Vygotsky (as cited in Kilgore, 1999), learning in children involves "two levels of development," namely "the actual developmental level" and "the potential developmental level" (p. 198). Actual development level is "the level of development of a child's mental functions that has been established as a result of certain already completed developmental cycles." The potential developmental level is "determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 198). Vygotsky calls the distance between these two levels the "Zone of Proximal Development ZPD" and argues that "[W]hat a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow" (as cited in Kilgore, p. 198). So Vygotsky gives special emphasis on the role of other people in the learning process of individuals. The notion of the contribution of other people in the learning process of a person is advanced by Wells (as cited in Kilgore, 1999) who points out that "ZPD is an attribute of interaction among participants jointly engaged in learning activity" (p. 198). The social activity nature in Vygotsky's conception of zone of proximal development is what Freire (1994) calls "fields" and is interpreted by Tu as "environment" (as cited in Tu & Corry, 2002, p. 5).

Yarnit (2000, p. 11) defines learning communities as communities which "use learning as a way of promoting social cohesion, regeneration and economic development which involves all parts of the community." Referring back to Vygostky (as cited in Kilgore, 1999), there is learning that can be fulfilled with an individual and there is learning which is difficult or impossible to achieve without engaging in collaboration with others. The collaboration in the learning process, the utilization of a synergy obtained after pulling together group efforts in the learning process is what is known as a learning community. Learning communities exist for the benefit of community members as both individuals and a collective (Kilpatrick et al., 2003). As is the case with community (discussed above), learning communities are not necessarily bound in geographical demarcations; rather they apply to groups of common interest as well as geography. The common interest in the case selected for this study was based on students performing well in the Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) and particularly so in mathematics. This

being the situation, some students might cross from nearby villages to register to Kitamburo. It is the common interest (in doing well in mathematics) that might transcend geography. Thus any group of people, whether linked by geography or some other shared interest that addresses the learning needs of its members through proactive partnerships is a learning community.

Although the definition of learning communities has concerned many scholars, core themes that dominate those definitions are "common or shared purpose, interests or geography; collaboration, partnership and learning; respecting diversity; and enhanced potential and outcomes" (Kilpatrick et al., 2003, p. 4). A learning community is "a common place where people learn through group activity to define problems affecting them, to decide upon a solution, and to act to achieve the solution" (Tu & Corry, 2002, p. 1). The primary purpose of a learning community is to bring about positive change to both the individuals who constitute the community and the community as an entity. This idea of using learning as a tool for positive social change is well elaborated in a theory of learning as transformation.

Transformative Learning

When communities of people decide to engage in learning in order to get solutions to problems that act against their development paths, they actually engage in transformative learning. Transformative learning "is the expansion of consciousness in any human system, thus the collective as well as individual" (Kasl & Elias, 2000, p. 233). According to Kasl and Elias, key characteristics of an expanded consciousness are "new frames of reference, points of view, or habits of mind as well as . . . new structure of engaging the system's identity" (p. 233). Transformative learning essentially involves the "transformation of the content of consciousness and transformation of the structure of consciousness" (p. 233). These two transformations do not happen automatically; rather, they are facilitated. The content of consciousness is transformed by the interactive engagement of "the process of critical analyzing underlying premises and the process of appreciatively accessing and receiving the symbolic contents of the unconscious" (p. 233), while "the structure of consciousness is facilitated when a learner is confronted with a complex cultural environment because effective engagement with that environment requires a change in the learner's relationship to his or her or the group's identity" (p. 233).

According to Marxist theories, consciousness refers to awareness. Marx and Engels contend that "consciousness is, therefore, from the beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men (sic.) exist at all" (as cited in Mayo, 2007, p 536). Consciousness of conscious

subjects is responsible for the transition of a subject from a state of "in itself" to a state of "for itself" (Mohandesi, 2013, p. 79). To elaborate on this, Mohandesi put it that during childhood, children are more aware of their own bodies, and thus they are in a state of "in itself," however, as they grow up, they recognize the existence of other people and other objects and start learning how to adjust themselves with respect to the state and behavior of those other objects and thus shift to a state of "for itself." At this level, a child starts to have a vision of life and thus sets objectives which require him/her to consider the environment he/she is subjected to in order to accomplish those objectives.

So consciousness according to Inwood enables people–as individuals or collectively–to move from "potentiality to actuality" (as cited in Mohandesi, 2013, p. 79). Moving from potentiality to actuality involves revisiting frames of reference, points of view, or habits of mind and the structure of engaging the system's identity. Frames of reference "are results of ways of interpreting experience" (Mezirow, 2000, p. 16). Frames of reference are a function of what Horton and Freire (1990) would call the formative years of child development in which the family and immediate community members influence the worldview of a young member of a community. As argued by Mezirow, our experiences are responsible for developing assumptions that are used to filter new experiences and come up with points of view. Mezirow (2000) calls the process of filtering new experiences using past experience a "habit of mind" which is the foundation for "point of view" (p. 17). Examples of habit of mind are "conservative or liberal orientation; . . . approaching the unknown fearful or confident; . . . focusing on a problem from whole to parts or vice versa" (p. 18), whereas examples of points of view are "immediate specific expectations, beliefs, feelings, attitudes, and judgments" (p. 18). Furthermore, Mezirow argues that habit of mind and point of view are responsible for making people act automatically. This automatic action can only be halted if a person engages in critical reflection. It is upon this orientation that transformative learning is seen as having the potential for community change, because it is a kind of learning which makes the learner engage in critical reflection as opposed to just focusing on what is already known. Transformative learning makes people do what Freire and Macedo call taking "their history into their own hands" which "entails the 'rewriting' of your society" (as cited in Gutstein, 2008, p. 11). Transformative learning is anchored on Marxist and Freirean thinking. Freire, for instance, "believed that humans are 'unfinished,' and our unfinishedness implies our constant search for deeper understanding and social (and individual)

transformation" (Gutstein, 2008, p. 10). Transformative learning provides the means to achieve a more suitable future through critical reflection on the existing context.

This study conducted at Kitamburo aimed at unveiling the conditions that result in the school and its immediate community behaving as a learning community. Learning, in the words of Mezirow (2000), "occurs in one of four ways: by elaborating existing frames of reference, by learning new frames of reference, by transforming points of view, or by transforming habits of mind" (p. 19). My study aimed to look at the conditions that facilitate "reformulating reified structures of meaning" (p. 19) to the effect that even when generations change, the school sustained the state of behaving as a learning community to facilitate the promising progress of the school in teaching and learning of mathematics. Every community member has his/her own background and by implication different habits of mind and possibly points of view. The question is to look at conditions that facilitated community members at Kitamburo managing and resolving the contradictions that might have existed on the basis of distinctive habits of mind and points of view to the effect that a community level habit of mind and point of view emerged and operated to promote the teaching and learning of mathematics at Kitamburo.

Why Mathematics?

As noted above, the purpose of both learning communities and transformative learning is to bring about positive social change to the concerned community. The World Bank (2011) singles out the acquisition and application of scientific knowledge to play a core role in impacting people's livelihood and the general community development. It is pointed out that "an increase of one standard deviation in student reading and *math* [emphasis added] scores . . . is associated with a very large increase of 2 percentage points in annual GDP per capita growth" (p. 3). Further, as argued in Matos, Valero, and Yasukawa (2008), "Mathematics education is a key focus in the politics of education" (p. 1) and that "defining success in mathematics becomes a way of controlling people's pathways in work and life generally" (p. 1).

In Tanzania, mathematics is a subject taught from primary school through to university. With due consideration of the importance of mathematics, Tanzania attempted many initiatives towards improving the teaching and learning of mathematics. I was personally trained as a primary school mathematics and science teacher during the time when Tanzania thought that teaching and learning of mathematics could be improved by training specialized teachers in the

subject. Although the program produced teachers who loved mathematics like me, personal experience showed that many did not stay long in teaching the subject due to various reasons.

Seka (2012) gave a brief but good account of the history of efforts to improve teaching and learning of mathematics in Tanzania. Accordingly, apart from other documented joint efforts, Tanzania and other East African countries used the same kind of mathematics books in primary schools. To show the joint commitment, the book covers had pictures of a lion, a peacock, a giraffe, and a boat, the respective symbols for Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zanzibar which constituted the East African community in the 1960s.

Efforts to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics in the 1960s were implemented under various programs such as, *"School Mathematics Project of East Africa (SMPEA),"* later renamed as *"School Mathematics of East Africa (SMEA)"* (Seka, 2012). These programs and other initiatives made Tanzania periodically change the content and mode of delivery of mathematics in an attempt to make the subject as learner friendly as possible. Thus, to date, Tanzania has passed through teaching of Traditional Mathematics, Modern Mathematics, to the current Basic Mathematics (Seka, 2012). In addition to government led mathematics curriculum and pedagogy review, reforms, and counter reforms, Seka (2012) identified efforts by associations like The Professional Teachers Association of Tanzania (*Chama Cha Kitaalaamu cha Walimu Tanzania* - CHAKIWATA); Tanzania Teachers Association (*Chama Cha Walimu Tanzania* -CWT); The Mathematical Association of Tanzania (MAT), and the International Village of Science and Technology (IVST) in improving the teaching and learning of mathematics and other science subjects. Despite these efforts, teaching and learning of mathematics is still challenging.

Nwame (2012) gave a promising observation while reporting to an Eastern Africa Universities Mathematics Program (EAUMP) Conference which drew participants from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, and Tanzania. He quoted a university professor arguing that at lower education levels students like mathematics but "most have been led to believe that mathematics cannot guarantee them employment once they leave colleges and universities so they usually change upon joining higher institutes of learning" (Nwame, 2012, August 23). While such an argument might be applicable to other countries involved in the conference, it was strongly questionable in the context of Tanzania because it contradicted various research findings

conducted in Tanzania which showed poor performances in mathematics as measured by the PSLE (Simmt et al., 2010).

Apart from the research findings, various reports showed that "in most cases the evaluation of the mathematics [in Tanzania] revealed that the syllabus was too heavily loaded and could not be covered effectively" (Seka, 2012, December 13), a view widely shared by Pritchett and Beatty (2012). The National Examinations Council of Tanzania had to revisit the National Secondary Education Examinations results for the year 2012 due to mass failure including mathematics (personal experience). All these indicate that much needs to be done in improving the teaching and learning of mathematics.

What takes place in Tanzania echoes the situation in Africa. As noted by Ngala (cited in Eskola, 2006, p. 2), "pupils often find mathematics dull, authoritarian, abstract and theoretical. Curricula are often overcrowded leaving little room for enjoyment, satisfying curiosity and a search for the meaning of it. Cultural, social and historical aspects are also often lacking." Furthermore, Ngala (cited in Eskola, p. 2) elaborated that "one significant problem, for example in African countries, is lack of teachers."

Whereas the world and country overview (Eskola, 2006; Simmt et al., 2010; Matos, Valero, &Yasukawa, 2008; Nagao, Rogan, & Magno, 2007; Seka, 2012) shows that mathematics is one of the most alienated subjects, the scene at Kitamburo is quite different. Data already collected at Kitamburo has shown a very strong partnership between and among students, teachers, and parents in promoting the teaching and learning of mathematics (Glanfield & Ngalawa, 2013). Teachers at the school have organized themselves to share their expertise regarding different topics of mathematics that are taught in school. Also, based on individual competencies, teachers collaborate in teaching mathematics, particularly in examination classes of Grade 4 and 7. Further, students' performance in mathematics tests is used as a criterion in establishing students' learning groups. In addition, one of the best mathematics teachers known in the ward and district where Kitamburo is located has been teaching mathematics in the school for more than 20 consecutive years. Above all, parents willingly give full support to both teachers and students in the course of accomplishing various learning targets set by the school (Glanfield & Ngalawa, 2013). It is with this background that I gained an interest in investigating the conditions that brought about this kind of school-community connection which encourages the community in its entirety and put emphasis on the teaching and learning of mathematics—a

subject widely reported to be shunned by other community members in other places. Kitamburo is in rural Tanzania so the next section explains, in brief, what a rural area is.

Rural Areas

Different countries have different perceptions of a rural area thus making it difficult to have a crosscutting definition of the term. According to FAO (cited in Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 36), "rural areas are generally open areas, with low settled population densities. A high proportion of the unsettled land area and/or land used are for primary production particularly mining, agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries." Also, it is conceived that "the residents of rural areas are largely dependent either directly or indirectly on these primary production activities" (p. 37). This concept is also supported by Pateman (2010/11) who, in defining rural areas, identifies factors to be considered as "population size, population concentration and remoteness (which can be measured as physical distance to other settlements, travel time, or a modeled measure of where people are in relation to each other known as 'population potential')" (p. 6). Tanzania defines rural areas administratively to refer to all councils going by the title of district council as opposed to those using urban-based titles of town council, municipal council, and city council, depending on the developmental level of the urban area (URT, 1998). This definition is somewhat problematic as some areas which administratively belong to city or municipal councils are mere bushes with little or no human development hence should be called rural rather than urban. This study adopts Ashley and Maxwell's (as cited in Atchoarena & Gasperini, 2003, p. 37) definition of rural as constituting some or all of the following characteristics:

• a space where human settlement and infrastructure occupy only a small share of the landscape;

• natural environment dominated by pastures, forests, mountains and deserts;

• settlements of low density;

• places where most people work on farms;

• the availability of land at a relatively low cost; and, a place where activities are affected by a high transaction cost, associated with long distance from cities and poor infrastructures.

Rural areas are of special significance to the proposed study because they are generally found to face serious problems with regard to the teaching and learning of mathematics because

of the inherent poor work environment particularly in poor countries like Tanzania (Eskola, 2009; Moulton, 2001; Simmt et al., 2010). Having a primary school like Kitamburo in a rural setting with a promising performance in mathematics makes people want to know what is happening. Available data collected from the school (Glanfield & Ngalawa, 2013) being studied, indicated that the school had a good number of teachers (16 teachers at the latest data collection in 2012), with most teachers having stayed in the school for more than 10 consecutive years. This is contrary to the general observation by Sahlberg (as cited in Eskola, 2009, p. 2) that "having qualified teachers in rural schools is also a challenge because living conditions are usually better in urban areas and teachers tend to work in big cities."

Changing Policies

Taking the Arusha Declaration (1967) and the adoption of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) beginning mid-1980s as two major changes in the history of Tanzania, it is possible to identify three distinctive periods. These are: After independence but before Arusha Declaration (1961–1967) where the main policies were liberal policies inherited from the colonial rule; after Arusha Declaration but before the adoption of the SAPs (1967–1986) which marks the hay days of ujamaa and all its influence in sectors including education; and after the adoption of the SAPs to date (1987–date) where although the nation still aspires to build a socialist state as documented in section 3(1) of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania,1977, (URT, 1977), what is actually being observed are capitalist oriented liberal policies and practices.

As mentioned in the previous sections education in Tanzania was taken as key in fighting ignorance, poverty, and diseases, which were proclaimed as enemies of the development process of independent Tanzania, as well as school-community connectedness in the context of ujamaa as a policy and practical means to generate learning communities across the country. If changing major policies from being liberal oriented to ujamaa and then back to liberal oriented is interpreted as shocking, it becomes logical to investigate conditions that influence a community like the one at Kitamburo School which demonstrated promising practices of a learning community.

The Concept of Social Capital

Your corn is ripe today; mine will be so tomorrow. 'Tis profitable for us both, that I should labor with you today, and that you should aid me tomorrow. I have no kindness

for you, and know you have as little for me. I will not, therefore, take any pains upon your account; and should I labor with you upon my own account, in expectation of a return, I know I should be disappointed, and that I should in vain depend upon your gratitude. Here then I leave you to labor alone; You treat me in the same manner. The seasons change; and both of us lose our harvests for want of mutual confidence and security-David Hume. (Putnam, 1993, p. 1)

In simple terms, social capital is "resources gained from relationships" (Lin, 2001, p. 23) or "social relations from which an individual is potentially able to derive various types of institutional resources and support" (Stanton-Salazar & Dornbush, 1995, p. 119). In the course of living, human beings enter into relationships. Social capital refers to the "reciprocity within communities and between households based on trust deriving from social ties" (Ellis, 2000, p. 36) that rises for the course of the inter-relationship. Thus in practice, as noted by the sociologist James Coleman and the political scientist Robert Putnam, social capital has "features of social life-networks, norms, and trust—that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives" (as cited in Hayami, 2009, p. 98).

The concept of social capital has a close relationship with Mezirow's conception of learning as transformation. Mezirow (2000) maintained that for a community to achieve transformative learning they must engage in a discourse in order to arrive at a reflective discourse, a prerequisite for transformative learning. Further, Mezirow acknowledged the centrality of "feelings of trust, solidarity, and empathy" (p. 12) in having a reflective discourse. Mezirow noted the difficulties of reaching the "broadest consensus" among community members and declared that it "is not always possible" (p. 12). He also did not explain the mechanisms required for community members to participate in reflective discourse, discourse characterized by the urge for more accurate information, freedom from coercion, openness to alternative points of view, equal opportunity to participate and willingness to seek understanding and agreement. In addition to Mezirow ideas,Cranton (2000, p. 199)proposed strategies to enhance transformative learning rather than explaining the mechanisms to implement the strategies in order to achieve the desired outputs. It is upon this conceptualization that I find it important to take aboard the concept of social capital in approaching this study as social capital "commonly refers to the mechanism of such social relationships as networks, norms and trust to include people toward cooperation" (Hayami, 2009, p. 96). I am of the view that understanding the

mechanisms shall point toward its essence and thus enable understanding of the conditions that are at play for the emergence and sustenance of the learning community at Kitamburo.

According to Hayami (2009), the mechanisms for enhancing social capital include "norms and conventions—that defines informal incentives" (p. 98); "social organizations . . . voluntary civic associations, as well as informal networks" (p. 106), and all things which bind community members so that "whatever a community member decides to take, he has to take into consideration how other members may look at his action" (p. 107). As summarized by Bowen (2009): "The literature on social capital emphasizes four key components: social relationships, civic participation, collaborative action and norms of reciprocity (mutual support and influence)" (p. 247). That is to say social capital is "the active connections within and between organizations, which create shared goals and collaborative action for social change in local communities" (p. 247). This idea is also shared by Narayan (1999) who defined social capital as "the norms and social relations embedded in the social structures of society that enable people to co-ordinate action and to achieve desired goals" (p. 6).

My personal experience as a teacher tells me that the mechanisms to make people work as a team or as a community are sometimes both informal and complex. I remember when I was teaching in my first school, one of the teachers' mothers died and she had to be buried in the village. The funeral was attended by very few villagers. As teachers, we were shocked and thus engaged in informal investigation thereafter. The school had been initiated by Christian missionaries and most villagers were Christians. We came to learn that the villagers had decided not to attend the funeral and burial services because of the fact that historically teachers had continued teaching when villagers had attended the burial services of other village members. As most funeral processions crossed the school compound, villagers had noticed what teachers were doing (continuing to teach rather than attending the burial service of the village member).

What had not been clearly communicated to the villagers was the fact that if teachers were to postpone classes in response to every burial service, many teaching hours would be lost. This had been the practice been for many years. None of the villagers had ever raised it as an issue that needed to be addressed. Only upon the burial of the teacher's mother did the village community decide to informally teach the teachers a lesson. As a result the teachers decided to send a representative to any funeral and burial service happening in the village. By the villagers communicating something to the school teachers which made the teachers change their frame of

reference and start to invest their time and resources in social events taking place in the village, trust and social capital was established.

This simple example implies that community capitals do not assume an impermeable boundary; rather there is fluidity between one capital and another. The teachers were able to reflect on what the villagers did to them because they possessed some analytical skills and knowledge mentioned in the preceding sections as part of human capital. The burial service of the teacher's mother, which was attended by few villagers, had financial implication to the teachers as it meant they themselves had to pay for some activities; activities that would otherwise be done free of charge by villagers if the teachers would have had enough social capital prior to the event. Having to pay is an aspect of financial capital. When teachers decided to send a representative to social events it meant the representative had to go there with a certain financial contribution. Thus, while acknowledging the relationship between community capitals, I will elaborate in a detailed discussion on the link and interrelationships between the capitals at a later stage of data interpretation and discussion.

I used Mezirow & associates (2000) learning as transformation theory to understand the learning process relating to how community members at Kitamburo were changing or maintaining their point of view and thus give clues about the environment under which the changes happened. These clues were used to identify the conditions that triggered learning. The concept of social capital helped explain the mechanisms used to initiate and maintain social bonds through which learning took place.

Intergenerational Learning

Learning is a continuous process that human beings go through from birth to death. However human beings are social beings, they constitute communities and societies. Writing along the lines of continued social movements in Chile, Chovanec & Beitez (2008) questioned the processes of learning that sustain activism across generations. She argued that the lack of attention to the transfer of learning between generations contributed to disillusionment and political inactivity in the second generation of women due to the absence of the kind of political socialization that was experienced by the first generation. This implied, where there is a continuity of social capital, there exist conditions necessary for intergenerational learning whereby norms, values, and practices are organically improved and handed over from generation to generation. What is intergenerational learning?

Intergenerational learning is "learning that occurs as a consequence of being exposed to different generations" (Brennan & Clarke, 2010, p. 127). It is a learning that occurs as a result of "interaction amongst and between generations" whereas interaction is a "reciprocal action where individuals are engaging with and influencing one another" (Schiller & Cooper, 2012, p. 27). Kaplan et al. (cited in Ho, 2010, p. 60) noted that intergenerational learning is not the same as what the Chinese call *"'xiao'"* or *"'filial piety'"* in the western tradition. This distinction is also supported by Murphy (as cited in Ho, 2010, p. 60) that in xiao, the emphasis is put on "strictness of discipline and proper behavior, rather than an expression of opinion, independence, self-mastery, creativity and all-round personal development." Intergenerational learning has something to do with values and development of mutual respect amongst people of different generations based on the trust that every generation has the potential for a useful contribution towards positive social change. Therefore, in practice, almost all strategies that Mezirow & associates (2000) suggested for engaging in a reflective discourse and arriving at a more effective agreement might be applicable in intergenerational learning. What I found missing in Mezirow &associates theory is the aspect of taking into account different generations because the theory is focused on adult learning.

Conception of intergenerational learning helped in interpreting some of the observable aspects of the study like the age composition of members of the village government and school committee at Kitamburo, as well as age composition of who is allowed to speak in a meeting or informal gathering or any social function. As already explained, Tanzania, including Kitamburo, has passed through different historical periods. A person who experienced early years of independence in the 1960s might have a different point of view from a person who grew up during the hay days of ujamaa, or a person who is growing in the current age of global advanced levels of science and technology. An understanding of intergenerational learning will help to show how the learning community at Kitamburo has sustained its status over time.

Framing the Study

I approached this study using a community capabilities framework (CCF). Community capabilities "refers to the ability of individuals to realize their potential as human beings in the sense of both being (i.e., to be adequately nourished, free of illness and so on) and doing (i.e., to exercise choices, develop skills and experience, participate socially and so on)" (Sen as cited in Ellis, 2000, p. 7). This explanation addresses an individual. However, referring to the collective

learning theoretical argument that what an individual can do can also be done by a community (Kilgore, 1999); "community capabilities" refers to the ability of the community, as an entity, to realize its potential through identifying its potential characteristics and applying those characteristics to determine what they can and cannot do. This study investigated how the community at Kitamburo emerged as a learning community to the effect of promoting the teaching and learning of mathematics in the primary school. In general the study posed the question: "How do communities get things done?" (Beckley, Martz, Nadeau, Wall, & Reimer, 2008, p. 57). In questioning how do communities get things done, Beckley et al. (2008) postulate that "communities with a demonstrated track record of getting things done have higher capacity than those that struggle in achieving their goals or have difficulty articulating goals" (p. 57). It is with this understanding that this study adopted a community capabilities framework in approaching the research question.

The community capabilities framework can better be understood by unpacking the concept of community capacity. Community capacity "is a multidimensional concept. First, there are multiple components (both structural and relational) that contribute to community capacity. Second, there are multiple types of community capacity and therefore a broad range of capacity outcomes" (Beckley et al., 2008, p. 58). Defining along a livelihood perspective, Dreze and Sen (as cited in Ellis, 2000, p. 7) point out that capacities are the possible "alternatives of beings and doings" at a person's disposal as a result of "economic, social and personal characteristics" of an individual. Advancing the argument at a community level, Scoones (as cited in Ellis, 2000, p. 8) identified five capitals that constitute community capacities, namely "natural capital, physical capital, human capital, financial capital and social capital." Variations in the conceptualization of community capacity are well summarized by Chaskin (as cited in Beckley et al., 2008, p. 59) who said each conceptualization "places a different relative emphasis on various dimensions of community capacity. Some focus largely on organizations, others on individuals, others on affective connections and shared values, and still others on processes of participation and engagement." Given these variations, this study adopted the definition that community capacity is:

> the collective ability of a group (the community) to combine various forms of capital
> within institutional and relational contexts to produce desired results or outcomes. This
> definition involves distinct but related facets: (a) capital, assets, or resources; (b)

catalysts; (c) mobilization of those resources through social organization and relationships; and (d) end results or outcomes. (Beckley et al., 2008, pp. 60–61)
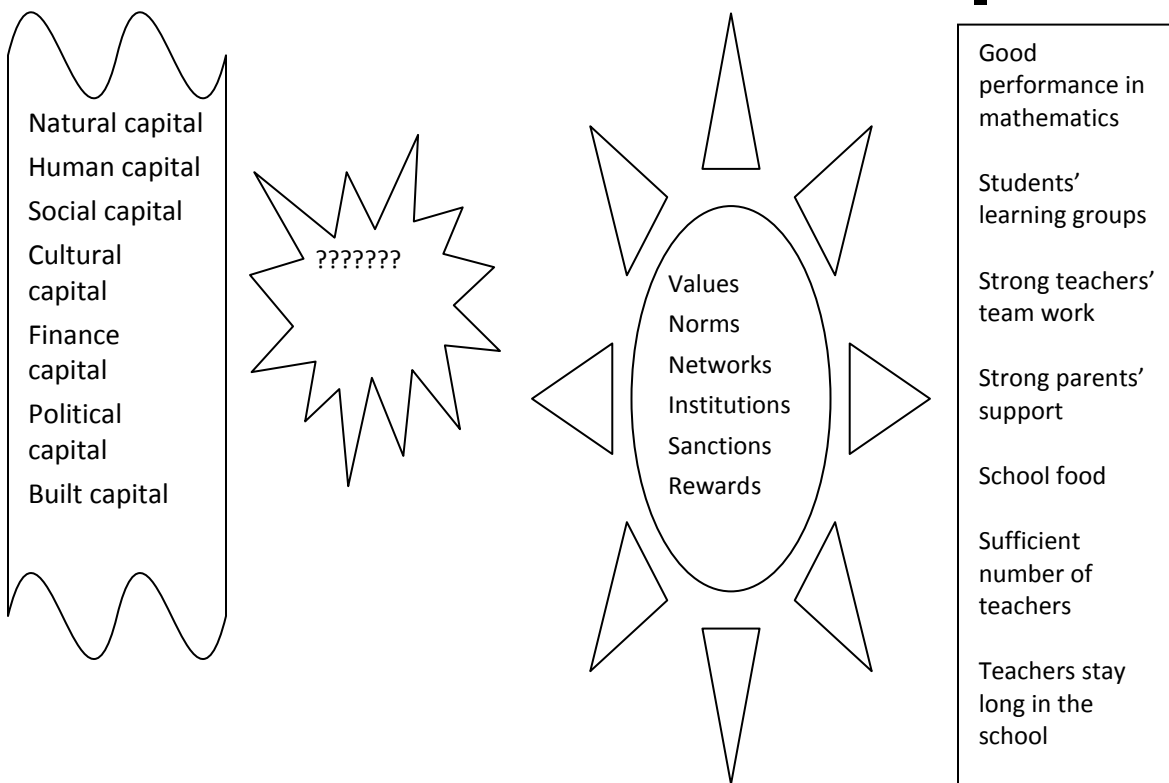
Figure 1. Community capabilities model (adapted from Beckley et al. 2008, p. 62).

While the output that prompted the proposed study was known to be a relatively better performance in mathematics observed at Kitamburo primary school, and some of the capitals were known to be close school-community connectedness, and some of the mechanisms were known to be parents' participation through meetings, the underlying conditions which led to all those known aspects about Kitamburo were not known. The study investigated the conditions which prompted the emergence of this learning community operating to the effect of improving the teaching and learning of mathematics at Kitamburo primary school. In other words and according to the definition above, the study looked for the catalysts. Thus while acknowledging the learning community as a core aspect in the noted relatively promising performance in mathematics at Kitamburo primary school, the interest of this study was not to underscore how the learning process took place but rather to understand the environment in which it happened, what made it happen, and how it was sustained over time despite changing policies and generations of the people comprising the community in question. It is upon this scenario that community capacities framework was found to fit most in approaching the study.

The community capacities framework assumes that communities have capital which, in the presence of catalysts, the respective community will perform. The diagrammatic representation of the framework is shown in Figure 1. The figure shows four parts: the community capital, the catalysts, the community mechanisms, and the outputs. The outputs are the observable and measurable promising changes taking place in the community, the mechanisms are the immediate conditions leading to the observed outputs, the catalysts are the underlying conditions which required community members to innovate and initiate mechanisms leading to the output. The capitals are the characteristic features that are found in almost every community, though at different quantities, qualities, and levels of development. The figure shows that the researcher had insights into three parts of the framework and thus the task was to look for the catalysts—the underlying conditions.

Whereas Scoones (as cited in Ellis, 2000) identified five such capitals (natural capital, physical capital, human capital, financial capital, and social capital), and Beckley at al. (2008, p. 62) identified four capitals (economic capital, natural capital, social capital, and human capital), this study adopted a more elaborate conception of community capitals as used by Emery and

Flora (2006) in their Community Capitals Framework which identified "seven different components of community capital: natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial, and built capitals" (Emery & Flora, 2006, p. 20). Accordingly, "natural capital refers to those assets that exist in a particular location including weather, geographic isolation, natural resources, amenities, and natural beauty" (p. 20), "cultural capital reflects the way people 'know the world' and how they act within it" (p. 21), "human capital . . . includes the skills and abilities of people" (p. 21), "social capital reflects the connections among people and organizations or the social 'glue' to make things, positive or negative, happen" (p. 21), "political capital reflects access to power, organizations, connection to resources and power brokers" (p. 21), "financial capital refers to the financial resources available to invest in community capacity-building" (p. 21), and "built capital . . . includes the infrastructure supporting these activities" (p. 21).

Community capitals are potentials readily available in communities and human capital is part of it. Human beings have inborn potential to acquire knowledge and that human capital represents the actualization of the potential (Laroche et al., cited in Olimpia, 2012). While the potential is inborn, the actual skills and knowledge which constitute the human capital of a person depends on, among others things, the socialization process to which the person is exposed (Olimpia, 2012). By implication, community capitals must also be triggered in order to let them influence each other to the effect of determining community capacity. This idea was central to the Guyanese writer Walter Rodney (1973) in his *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Rodney contended that a community might be well endowed with natural resources, but the beliefs, traditions, and general culture of the community towards the resource may prevent it from using the resource for their development.

Data from Kitamburo which motivated me to investigate the emergence of learning communities showed closer collaboration among parents, teachers, and students as evidenced by teachers' willingness to offer extra classes for mathematics free of charge; parents' willingness to allow their children to attend extra classes in early morning, late afternoon, and on weekends; parents' willingness to contribute food for their children; and students' willingness to work as learning groups (Glanfield & Ngalawa, 2013). The question was how they came to behave like that and what conditions made them come up with the behavior.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to highlight the context of the study by looking at the history of formal schools in Tanzania and the concept of learning communities. Prior to formal schools, communities in Tanzania had traditional forms of schools which contributed to tying community members together as covenant communities. The form and content of the education offered in the traditional forms of schools was demand driven and thus there were close linkages between the schools and respective communities. With the advent of independence, the country endeavored to generate collaboration between the formal schools and immediate community members in order to create learning communities that would contribute to improve productivity, especially in agriculture, and lead to development. However, such efforts seem to have failed, thus leading to the scarcity of learning communities in rural Tanzania.

Learning communities in Tanzania were desired, existing literature is rich in information about the development and sustainability of learning communities in developed Western countries. The chosen Kitamburo community depicted promising signs of becoming a learning community and I was curious to understand what has taken place over time which made Kitamburo depict the said signs. The purpose of this qualitative study about school community connectedness and exploration of learning communities was to answer the question: How do schools and communities in Tanzania work together to generate learning communities. A community capabilities framework is briefly discussed and later utilized to look for the catalysts for the promising practices, whereas theories of learning as transformation and social capital were explained and later adopted as tools in conducting the study. The case study as discussed in the next chapter was found to be a more suitable design to conduct the study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Methodology is "a theoretical principle or principles governing the application of a set of methods" (Harrington, 2005, p. 5). It is the "activity or business of choosing, reflecting upon, evaluating and justifying the methods you use" (Wellington, 2000, p. 22). Thus methodology in research is a researcher's account to justify the selection of one of these categories in conducting a study. This chapter explains the design of the study and data collection methods along with data interpretation techniques applied in this research.

Interpretive approach

There are many research paradigms or approaches for conducting research (Neuman, 2003; Wellington, 2000). Amongst them is the positivist and interpretive continuum (Wellington, 2000, p. 15). Positivists hold that knowledge is "objective, value-free, generalizable and replicable" (Wellington, 2000, p. 15). This orientation is in contrast to Harrington (2005) who argued that "theoretical thought is always presupposed in research; there are no observations that are not 'theory–laden'" (p. 5). Accordingly,

> facts cannot be *separated* from values. If we had no values, if we had no interest in value in the world, we would not be interested in any particular facts. We would not be struck by any particular facts as calling out attention and demanding investigation. (p. 7)

My personal experience influenced the choice of the topic investigated in this research. As a teacher who worked in rural areas for more than 25 years, I developed interest in working in collaboration with community members to improve education. The intent of this study was to understand what was taking place in the community that made community members and the school work together to generate a learning community. This entailed collecting information from selected community members and using it to generate a story about how the learning community emerged. I held the view that in generating the story about the emergence of the learning community, my personal capacity in interpreting the bits of information from respondents was necessary and thus I chose methods that were interpretive oriented. Interpretive orientations "accept that observer makes a difference to the observed and that reality is a human construct" (Wellington, 2000, p. 16). As Harrington (2005) has argued that, "We cannot put all our values to one side in order to observe the world purely as a set of facts, undistorted by our frames of perception and feeling about what is right and wrong with the world" (p. 7). Thus, I

approached the study with a view to "explore perspectives and shared meanings" (Wellington, 2000, p. 16). Consequently, I used qualitative research methods.

In addition, the study was framed as an exploratory case study. Exploratory studies seek to understand phenomena which are not well known. There are basically two categories of data, *emic* and *etic* data. Emic data "are data that arise in a natural or indigenous form. They are only minimally imposed by the researcher or the research setting. Etic data, on the other hand, represent researcher's imposed view of the situation" (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 13). I neither imposed my views nor did I exclude myself completely from the study. I was in between. As mentioned earlier, I approached the study as a social constructivist (Harrington, 2005) and thus my personal experience was part and parcel of learning about participants' stories and what made Kitamburo show a promising school community connectedness.

Qualitative research paradigm

There are two main categories of research methods: "qualitative methods" and "quantitative methods" (Harrington, 2005, p. 4). Qualitative methods are more suitable when "you need to learn more from participants through exploration" (Creswell, 2007, p. 16), whereas quantitative methods are more suitable "when the researcher seeks to establish the overall tendency of responses from individuals and to note how this tendency varies among people" (Creswell, 2007, p. 13). I had no preconceived conditions which I wished to test quantitatively to account for the emergence of learning communities at Kitamburo. So I used a qualitative research paradigm to learn, from participants, how learning communities at Kitamburo emerged and worked to make Kitamburo primary school show promising performance in mathematics compared to other schools in similar rural settings. To allow me to learn more from participants using qualitative methods, I chose a case study design to approach the study. Case study design allows "a detailed examination of one setting" (Wellington, 2000, p. 90).

Case Study Research

I used Merriam's (1988) explanation of case study research to design my study. I also read ideas about case study research by other authors, which helped me to keep focus on my choice of a case study design and which I believe to be relevant in addressing the research question. In this section I share some of the ideas that helped me to better understand case study research.

Case studies are particularistic, descriptive, heuristic, and inductive (Merriam, 1988, p. 11). Case studies are particular because they "focus on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon" (Merriam, p. 11). This study was focused on one school community as a case to investigate the conditions that led to the observed learning communities. The end product of case studies is typically descriptive (Merriam) as they are expected to produce a rich description of the phenomenon under study. Chapters 4 and 5 are rich literal explanations about learning communities at Kitamburo. Case studies are heuristic, meaning that they "intend to illuminate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study" (Merriam, p. 13). The purpose of this study was to unveil the unknown conditions that led to the emergence of learning communities at Kitamburo. Lastly, case studies are inductive as they are more concerned with discovery of new relationships, concepts, and understanding rather than verification of predetermined hypotheses (Merriam). As explained above, this study was more interpretive than positivist.

Case studies are not homogenous. Merriam (1988) categorized case studies as descriptive, interpretive, and evaluative. Accordingly, a descriptive case study is "a historical case study that chronicles a sequence of events" (p. 27); interpretive case studies "develop conceptual categories" or "illustrate, support, or challenge theoretical assumptions held prior to the data gathered" (p. 28), while evaluative case studies "involve description, explanation, and judgment" (p. 28). I suggest that this study was descriptive case study. Descriptive case studies "move in a theoretical vacuum; they are neither guided by established or hypothesized generalizations nor a desire to formulate general hypotheses" (p. 27).The purpose of this study was to explore school community connectedness and learning communities in order to answer the question: *How do schools and communities in Tanzania work together to generate learning communities*? Though I had insights about the community under study as explained in the introduction part of this work, I approached the community without any preconceived answers about how the learning community was emerged and I did not intend to use the results of this study to generate a general theory about the emergence of learning communities in all rural areas.

This study was designed to look at Kitamburo community as a unit and thus the study could also be a qualitative single-case study (Yin, 2009). Respondents among community members were interviewed to learn more about the community, not to learn more about

individual respondents. In addition to these variations, Yin categorized case studies in terms of data collection and treatment into pure qualitative case studies, quantitative case studies, and mixed case studies. In this study I used very few instances of numbers to suggest potential validity of an argument, rather than for the purpose of determining a trend and thus the study remained descriptive.

Stake (1995) categorized case studies into intrinsic instrumental and collective case studies. In intrinsic case studies, the focus is the "particular case" regardless of whether knowledge generated through learning about that particular case helps to "learn about other cases or about some general problems," where as the focus of instrumental case studies is "the programme" under investigation (p. 3). Collective case studies involve many instrumental case studies; learning is achieved through "coordinating individual studies" about the same program (pp. 3–4). The interest of this study was to learn more about the conditions that led to the emergence of learning communities at Kitamburo community to generate insight about the question of learning communities in rural settings of Tanzania. The focus was to understand and explain the conditions that led to learning communities, rather than the practices community members performed to affect the observed relatively promising performance. Practices were explored as well in order to better understand the conditions not as programs that were to be studied and use the results to scale up the practices. As argued by Harrington (2005, pp. 6–7):

> researching problems such as labour, exploitation, environmental destruction, or sexism or racism remains a different activity from the activity of campaigning for policies to abolish them. The two kinds of activity depend on each other in very real practical ways; but they remain distinct from each other.

The study intended to contribute to literature about conditions for emergence of learning communities rather than contributing to the creation of learning communities elsewhere. The purposes of the study went beyond understanding community practices, instead contributing to the explanation and theory about the phenomenon based on the case study. What was observed during data collection was a result of interrelated processes that took place over time. To unpack it, I looked at historical narratives. History tells the chronology of the conditions as Stake (1995) has put it, "to the qualitative scholar, the understanding of human experience is a matter of chronologies more than of cause and effects" (p. 39). In this study, history was more than a

chronological account of the variables. I used history to unveil the context and assumptions behind the emergence of learning communities as argued by Merriam (1988) that:

> Descriptive case study in education is one that presents a detailed account of the phenomenon under study . . . a historical case study that chronicles a sequence of events. . . . They are entirely descriptive and move on a theoretical vacuum; they are neither guided by established or hypothesized generalizations nor motivated by a desire to formulate general hypotheses. They are useful, though, in presenting basic information about areas of education where little research has been conducted. Innovative programmes and practices are often the focus of descriptive case studies. (p. 27)

And Stake (1995):

> Qualitative researchers perceive what is happening in key episodes or testimonies; represent happenings with their own direct interpretation and stories (i. e., narratives). Qualitative research uses these narratives to optimize the opportunity of the reader to gain experiential understanding of the case. (p. 40)

I approached the case to collect narratives of the participants in order to understand what had transpired in the community and use the information to narrate a story about the emergence of the learning community at Kitamburo. Narration of a story, as already said, does not involve mere jotting down of participants' stories, but rather conceptualizing and using such information to craft a story about the community. Thus participants' stories were used as inputs in the crafting of the whole community which was the selected case.

Selection of the Case

Theoretically, "We do not study a case primarily to understand other cases. Our first obligation is to understand this one case" (Stake, 1995, p. 4). Thus, Kitamburo community was chosen as an "exceptional case" (Creswell, 2012, p. 208) from amongst the surveyed[1] primary schools in rural setting. Kitamburo deviated from the well-known poor performance of mathematics in Tanzanian primary schools by showing a promising performance which, upon initial investigation, it was learned that the phenomenon was a result of strong school and

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[1] Kitamburo Primary School was one of the schools studied in the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnership Development Grant 890-2010-0027, as mentioned in the Introduction.

community collaboration. Thus this study aimed to learn more about how the collaboration had developed.

Kitamburo community is a rural community in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania. It is located at the edges of a plateau within the general wider plateau that characterized the administrative district to which it belongs. Its approximate altitude is 1700m—2100m. Rain season was between November and May. During data collection in January, it sometimes rained heavily throughout the day. The average annual rainfall in the community was more than 1000 mm. It had two rivers in juvenile stages. One ran northwest of the community and the other ran to the southwest of the community. The community had a total land area of 605 hectares. Soils were predominantly red clay soil with dark top soils and were generally slippery when it rained. The main vegetation was forest and grassland. Predominantly, all forests were manmade and most tree varieties were exotic indicating a deliberate effort at forestation by community members. Trees were used for timber and fuel. While some forest trees belonged to Kitenge district council, a large proportion of them were owned by the village, the primary school, and individual community members. Kitamburo had two football pitches, one at the community open space at the centre of the community and another at Kitamburo primary school. The pitch at the school appeared more used than the other pitch. The community had only one universal graveyard.

Research Participants

Participants of a qualitative study should be people with enough information to help understand the case. The intent was to recruit people from whom I could gain insight and learn most about the case (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1995). The theoretical guide was, as reinstated by Stake, the "opportunity to learn is of primary importance" (p. 6). Therefore, since Kitamburo had already grown big enough to be separated into two villages at the time of data collection, participants were selected from both villages based on the criterion of how knowledgeable they were with respect to the matter under investigation.

Selection of respondents.

This was an exploratory case study to examine how learning communities at Kitamburo emerged. To obtain useful participants' stories as a source to explain the emergence of the said learning communities, the study used purposive sequential selection of participants. In sequential selection of research participants, "a researcher continues to gather cases until the

amount of new information or diversity of cases is filled. The principle is to gather cases until a saturation point is reached" (Neuman, 2003, p. 215). This approach of selecting research participants fell under the broader constituency of non-probability sampling which, according to Merriam (1988), "is the method of choice in qualitative case studies" (p. 47). This is because the purpose of this study was not to answer questions like "how much and how often" (Honigmann cited in Merriam, 1988, p. 48); it was a criterion-based selection of participants (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 1988; Wellington, 2000; Yin, 2009) and the criterion was knowledge about the matter under investigation.

Thus, in the pre-study that motivated this study, all 16 teachers of Kitamburo primary school were chosen for interview, though in practice 15 teachers were interviewed because one teacher was attending in-service studies and could not be reached. Teachers were involved because they were the people who taught the students who showed promising performance in mathematics upon writing their examinations. In addition, 12 community members participated in the focus group discussion. These were selected with the help of the village chairperson based on the participant's knowledge about what teachers were doing which made the school show the said promising performance.

In this study, I started by recruiting seven members of the village government. The village leadership supported me in recruiting the seven members. I conducted a focus group discussion with the seven people. At the end of the focus group discussion, I requested the participants identify six villagers who, to the best of their knowledge, would be able to provide information about the question that dominated our focus group discussion. After getting the six names, I conducted individual interviews with each of them. At the end of each interview, I invited the interviewee to provide three additional names of villagers who, to the best of his/her knowledge, would be capable of telling more about the subject of our conversation.

After finishing interviews with the six people, I went through the list of names that interviewees provided and arranged them in chronological order based on the frequency a person's name was mentioned. I used that list to continue with interviews beginning with the name that was mentioned by the most people to the name that was mentioned the least. Thus, in total 15 people were involved in individual interviews and seven in focus group discussion, making a total of 22 participants.

Sequential selection was found more suitable for this study because it is an ongoing selection process (Merriam, 1988) without a predetermined total number of respondents as the total number depends on what Wellington (2000) called "situation of diminishing returns" (p. 139). So, although I had a long list of potential participants during the process, I decided to stop the interviews because there was no significant new information gathered from new interviewee; a situation which gave me confidence that "(a) the sample size has been adequate, (b) our study has been thorough, (c) our findings can be discussed and presented with some confidence . . . and 'trustworthiness'" (p. 139).

Table 1

Summary of Research Participants

S/No	Type of participants	Number	Data collected
1	District Education Officer	1	Interview
2	Ward Education Coordinator	1	Interview
3	School head teacher	1	Interview and focus group discussion upon follow-up data collection
4	School teachers	14	Interview and focus group discussion upon follow-up data collection
5	Community members	12	Focus group discussion
6	Community members	15	Interview
7	Community members	7	Focus group discussion

This study was intended to understand and explain conditions that acted as catalysts in the generation and maintenance of a learning community, which contributed to the observed promising school community connectedness at Kitamburo. With an understanding that as an institution a school brings together teachers, students, and parents (Husén, 1979), I initially planned to involve students as respondents through a focus group discussion. They were recognized as potential respondents in the ethics permit that allowed me to collect data. However, in actuality and with respect to the procedures I used to select respondents, students were not mentioned by any of the community members I interviewed. This may have occurred because the core subject under investigation was skewed towards unveiling what took place in the past, whereby students were found to have little knowledge of what transpired in the past.

Data Collection

Determination of the type of data is an essential step in data collection (Creswell, 2012). For Stake (1995) "the most important planning has to do with the substance of the study: What needs to be known? What are some possible relationships that may be discovered?" (p. 54). This was a qualitative case study. Data collection in a qualitative study as argued by Patton (as cited in Merriam 1988):

> consist of detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors; direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts and excerpts or entire passages from documents, correspondence, records and case histories(Merriam, 1988, p. 68).

I therefore employed interview, observation, and documentary as the main data collection techniques for this study.

Interviews.

This study used interview as the main data collection method. Merriam (1988) suggested that individual face-to-face, or the "person-to-person encounter" interviews are "the most common form of interview" (p. 71) in case study research. I prepared an interview schedule well in advance (see Appendix A), as suggested by Stake (1995), that a researcher should have "a strong advance plan" (p. 64), and set relevant time and space to conduct a face-to-face interview with all respondents. The purpose of this qualitative study about school community connectedness and exploration of learning communities was to answer the question: How do schools and communities in Tanzania work together to generate learning communities. Thus, I collected people's perceptions in the form of narrated stories about how, in their view, the situation under investigation came to be. A sample interview protocol is attached in appendices. Stake (1995) held the view that the primary data collection method for case studies is observation. He contends that, "so we interview but it is usually so much better if we can see it ourselves" (p 67). However, it is not always possible for researchers to see everything they intend to learn from a case. This happened to me because I wanted to learn about events that took place in the past. It would not be possible for me to rewind all scenes and start to observe. I adopted the view that "We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. . . . The purpose of interviewing then is to enter into person's perspective (Patton as cited in Merriam, 1988). It is recommended that apart from things that are virtually

not visible, "it is also necessary to interview when we are interested with past events that are impossible to replicate" (Merriam, 1988, p. 72). Therefore, I interviewed people to obtain their views about the emergence of a learning community. These views were part of their experiences of living in the community in the past, which would not be possible for the researcher to witness.

Interview questions can be open-ended or closed (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1995) so I specifically used open-ended interviews. I chose to use open-ended interviews because they are less structured and thus have the potential to give respondents the capacity for more self-expression with respect to the asked question (Merriam 1988). Face-to-face interviews risk influencing the interviewer and interviewee interaction. I minimized distortions and I was as neutral as possible, as well suggested by Whyte (as cited in Merriam, 1988, p. 75) that "like the therapist, the research interviewer listens more than he talks."

In every interview session I followed all ethical considerations as per the University of Alberta ethics. Specifically, I explained to the interviewees what I intended to do and how data would be recorded. Finally, I requested his/her consent of the explained process, whereby a special well-prepared consent form was completed and signed by the respondent before the commencement of any interview. I then requested to do audio recording before starting the conversation. All 15 respondents agreed to fill in the consent form. Only one respondent did not allow me to audio record the interview. In this case I took notes using pen and paper.

Interviews served to collect people's narrated stories of their experiences, opinions and knowledge regarding what they considered to have happened to establish a learning community in the village. The schedule was like "guided conversations rather than structured queries" (Yin, 2009, p. 106). Open-ended interview questions are "a flexible list of questions" which can be progressively redefined and can maximize "opportunities to learn the unexpected" (Stake, 1995, p. 29). Although Stake argued that "for many researchers the tape recorder is of little value" (p. 66), in this study I used audio-recording and later transcribed verbatim. This allowed me to concentrate on the interview rather than trying to jot down hurriedly. I listened, took few notes, and, where necessary, asked for clarification as suggested by Stake (p. 66). While listening I was doing a preliminary data analysis and interpretation to unveil conditions that led to the emergence of a learning community, thus clarification questions focused on understanding key issues that were raised by the interviewee. Each day after the interviews I listened to the recorded interview to get more insights for enriching interviews that followed thereafter. After

transcription, I brought back the transcribed information to each of the interviewees in order to ascertain that what was recorded was what he/she had told me, but also to give an opportunity to add or delete some of the information as agreed through the consent form.

Observation.

Another data collection technique used in this study was observation. Observation, as noted by Kidder (as cited in Merriam, 1988), is a research tool when it serves a formulated research purpose, is planned deliberately, is recorded systematically, and is subjected to checks and controls on validity and reliability (Merriam, 1988). I conducted observation without interfering with things or events in their natural settings. I considered contexts of "the physical situation . . . The entry ways, the rooms, the landscape, the hallways, its place on the map, its décor" (Stake, 1995, p. 63). I concentrated on observing the vegetation, the crops, setting of the school buildings, the setting of teachers' houses, land use plan of the village, and location of various services like water, shops, and bus stands. Apart from the physical environment, I observed public events like celebrations and other events that took place while I was in the village. These events were good places to understand how villagers collaborated.

The physical layout of the village, vegetation and crops, and the general land use served in understanding the kind of food, the kind of cash crops, and other social and economic gains that influence the school-community connectedness. Observation of events served to inform how people work together and provided an opportunity for me to hear how education and school progress featured as topics in informal gatherings and conversations in which people engaged.

I developed and used a coded sheet (see Appendix B) to record instances of specific events and behavior as suggested by Merriam (1988). I specifically focused on observing elements, namely the physical setting of the observed event, participants in the observed event, activities and interventions in the event, frequency and duration of the observed event, as well as other subtle factors. To take note of this, I informally took time to walk around the village and then jotted down notes in the evening. I did not have a predetermined duration of a single observation or the total amount of time spent collecting data through observation as this was determined by the event itself and during the actual field data collection.

Observation followed three main stages: entry, data collection, and exit (Merriam, 1988). I did not have the chance to attend any event requiring prior permission for access. All observed events were open to the public so did not necessitate a specific permission. I just observed as a

visitor to the village. Merriam (1988) identified three kinds of relationships between the observer and the observed, namely complete participant, participant observer, observer participant and complete observer. In this study I used complete observer as the observed events did not provide an opportunity for the researcher to participate. In all instances I struck a balance between formal and casual data collection activities as suggested by Yin (2009). For example, when I engaged in informal conversations with villagers to understand a certain event, I did not take notes or record the conversations. I relied on my memory and then jotted down immediately when time and space allowed me do so without peoples' notice. Immediate jotting down of observed events is recommended by Merriam (1988) in order to exhaust what was observed before losing memory of the details.

Focus of observation was on "specific person, interaction, or activity while mentally blocking all the others" as suggested by Merriam (1988, p. 97). I looked for key words, concentrated on the first and last remarks in each conversation, and mentally played back remarks and scenes during breaks in talking or observing as further elaborated by Merriam (1988). I used diagrams of the setting and sketched movements through it and incorporated pieces of data remembered into original field notes. Bearing in mind that the study was all about human beings, I applied a technique put forward by Merriam (1988) of listing how many and what kind of people were present and described it in a way that was meaningful to the research. My field notes were in a form of "integrated format of field notes" (Merriam, 1988, p. 102) which included: verbal descriptions of the setting; the people and the activities; direct quotations or at least the substance of what people said; and my comments which indicated my personal feelings, reactions, initial interpretation, hunches and working hypotheses.

Documents and records.

Essentially "gathering data by studying documents follows the same line of thinking as observing or interviewing" (Stake, 1995, p. 68). Merriam's (1988) definition of documents includes books, newspapers, written songs, diaries, written interviews, and symbolic records kept by or about participants in a social group like trophies and buildings. Generally the term document refers to three categories, namely public or archival records, personal documents, and physical traces (Merriam, 1988). Documents involved in this study included certificates of awards, a football trophy, active and archival office documents, individual letters, and buildings. All these were looked at and interpreted with reference to their potential contribution to the

school-community connectedness and the general emergence of learning communities in the village. I looked at the history of the document to discover things like how it came into someone's hands, its originality or changes that had happened to it and were linked to the subject matter under study. Documents are valuable to observe because among the four areas noted by Rily (as cited in Meriam, 1988) on the importance of using documents is their potency in historical studies in which events can no longer be observed and informants might not recall or be available for recall . Thus documents were used as a way of triangulation to confirm, and sometimes complement, data collected by interview and observation. Documents were systematically coded and catalogued. Written documents and artifacts were photographed and then a systematic content analysis was done to describe its content in connection to the issue of learning communities.

Focus group discussion.

A group is "a number of interacting individuals having a community of interest" (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 10), and the word "focus" implies the discussion is "limited to a small number of issues" (p. 10). Focus group discussion is a technique of data collection which "uses the group as a device for eliciting information" (p. 10). This was used once in the study and twice in the preliminary study of the school case that motivated this study. In the preliminary study, it was used to collect data from community members and one focus group discussion was conducted for that purpose. After data collection and presentation of the findings to a workshop, follow-up data collection was conducted. During follow-up data collection of the preliminary study, a focus group discussion was used to collect data from teachers at Kitamburo. There was only one question put to the teacher focus group discussion: What made you stay for a long time at Kitamburo primary school? In this study, focus group discussion was used with a group of seven people who formed part of the village government.

In all cases when focus group discussion was used, the question for discussion was posed to the participants and then participants were allowed to voluntarily contribute to the question. However, the researcher had the role to moderate and ensure that the discussion was within the topic. Both directive and nondirective techniques were used to let participants contribute to the agenda. The researcher is directive when he interferes with the discussion and nondirective when the discussion was left to "flow naturally as long as it remains on the topic of interest" (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 11). I interfered when participants were trying to go off topic

and when they were not talking. To encourage them speak, I used follow-up questions based on what had been said by the previous speaker.

Analysis of data.

"'I can't see the wood for the trees', 'What am I going to do with all these data'" Wellington (2000, p. 133). Many research scholars admit that bulk data is one of the characteristic features of qualitative research (Creswell, 2012; Stake, 1995; Wellington, 2000). I opted for the most accepted procedure of data analysis in qualitative research by doing data analysis while conducting data collection. I made data analysis part and parcel of the data collection as recommended by Wellington: "data analysis is an integral part of the whole research process. It should start early. Data analysis should not be a "separate stage coming towards the end of a linear research path" (p. 134). The question, however, was not only when to do it but how to do it.

For Coffey and Atkinson (as cited in Wellington, 2000), *"there are many ways of analyzing qualitative data"* (p. 134). This is supported by Yin (2009) who proposed four general strategies of analyzing qualitative data and five analytic techniques. As such, the strategies are adherence to the propositions of the study, adherence to the framework of the study, combining quantitative and qualitative analysis, and explanation of rival factors (Yin, 2009). In addition to the strategies, Yin proposed five analytic techniques: pattern matching, explanation building, time series analysis, logic models, and cross case synthesis. Wellington (2000), on the other hand, proposed three stages of data analysis: "data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification" (p. 134). Although the two scholars can be viewed as proposing different ideas, I held the opinion that they were looking at the same assignment from different perspectives. Thus, in this study I used Wellington's stages of data analysis, but in doing so I employed Yin's strategies and techniques of data analysis.

I started with data reduction. Data reduction is the "selection and condensation" of the collected data to sort it into "themes, clusters and categories" (Wellington, 2000, p. 134). I did this while bearing in mind Yin's strategies of adherence to the research propositions which, in this context, referred to adherence to the major research question and the four interrelated questions explained in the introductory part of this study. I did data reduction in tandem with consideration of the research questions because "the proposition helps to focus attention on data and to ignore other data" (Yin, 2009, p. 130). This process made me ignore an interview by one

respondent because it was all about grievances regarding the name of the village as explained in a section on limitations and delimitations. I also left out respondents' explanations that were completely out of the scope of the topic.

After reducing data, I displayed it. Data display is a process of visualizing the collected data. It involves organizing, assembling, and displaying data (Wellington, 2000). Essentially it is all about having a visible conception of data and charting out potential relationships that may lead to the conclusion. I did data display by electronically applying the same color to any idea that gave the same insight. I did this with a conception of my framework as suggested by Yin (2009) that "you should have thought (at least a little) about your descriptive framework before designing your data collection instruments" (p. 131). This study was framed in the community capacity model and thus at that point I visualized the different capitals, the community mechanisms, and the outputs for purposes of identifying possible catalyst conditions that led to the emergence of the learning communities at Kitamburo.

Following data display is drawing conclusions. This stage involved "interpreting and giving meaning to data" (Wellington, 2000, p. 134). This was a complex level of data analysis required to answer the research question. Thus I played with data as suggested by Wellington, "it involves taking in, digesting them, taking them apart, then putting them back together again (leaving lots of bits lying around unused at the end) and sometimes returning to collect more" (pp. 134–135). Wellington suggested six stages to follow in attempting to reach a conclusion, namely: immersion, reflecting, analyzing, synthesizing, relating and locating, and finally presenting. Immersion refers to "getting an overall sense or feel for the data" (Wellington, 2000, p. 135) through things like listening to tapes and reading and re-reading the collected notes and notes from transcription. Reflecting is attempting to take in the data and own it in such a manner that the researcher actually lives in the data. When it comes to analysis, apart from using Wellington's technique of carving data into manageable units, filtering, categorizing, and subsuming to merge some categories or come up with yet new categories, I used Yin's (2009) time series analysis to capture chronologies that took place at Kitamburo. I also used Yin's (2009) explanation building to help explain what made something happen as I synthesized data by putting things together to answer the question of how learning communities at Kitamburo emerged. Lastly, I presented data as shown in Chapters 4 and 5. At the center of all data analysis exercises, I had in mind that "all research is a search for patterns and consistencies"

(Stake, 1995, p. 44) and thus I applied the "practical approaches to analyzing data" (Wellington 2000, p. 145) by looking for commonly used metaphors, buzzwords, and commonly used words.

Ethical issues

This study was conducted within a broader study as explained in the introduction. The broader study in turn had five case studies including a school case. This study was conducted as an extension of the school case. University of Alberta ethics that guide conducting research involving human beings and animals were adhered. The school case[2] ethics was revised to allow for this study and to include parental perspectives about the conditions that led to the emergence of a learning community at Kitamburo.

When the ethics was approved, access to the area of study was gained through requesting a permit through Mzumbe University, a university in the country where I teach. The introductory letter from Mzumbe University introduced me to the regional Education Officer (REO) where Kitamburo is located. The REO in turn wrote a letter to introduce me to the District Executive Director (DED) in the administrative district for Kitamburo. The DED delegated the authority to the District Education Officer (DEO) of the district who wrote a letter which introduced me to the Ward, the Village, and Kitamburo Primary school. At all levels, the letter had contacts who could help me in case of any problem.

Access to the community was gained through reporting to the village administration. Working with the village administration we decided how to go about meeting with the focus group and then with individual respondents. The Village Executive Officer (VEO) of Kitamburo introduced me to a village militia who accompanied me to meet and introduce me to individual respondents. After being accepted by the interviewee, the militia left. Thus, all interviews were carried out in areas where confidentiality was ensured. In addition, every respondent was requested to choose a pseudonym which was used in writing this report. Therefore issues of respondents' confidentiality were well cared for. Finally, all respondents were requested to fill in consent forms before the commencement of any data collection. The consent forms were completed voluntarily after explaining to participants what the study was about and the purpose

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[2] Kitamburo Primary School was one of the schools studied in the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnership Development Grant 890-2010-0027, as mentioned in the Introduction.

of the study. Every respondent completed the form by themselves because all respondents were able to read and write, despite the fact that most of them were between 65 and 75 years of age.

In all cases, after the transcription of verbal data, transcripts were returned to the respondents to allow them read, add, or delete some of the information before it was used for this study.

Conclusion

This study was motivated by a pre-study. In the pre-study, investigation was done to underscore what was taking place at Kitamburo primary school which led the school having promising examinations results in mathematics. Data was collected through focus group discussion and interviews. Preliminary findings revealed that Kitamburo had promising results due to the collaboration between parents, teachers, and students. In the current study, investigation was done at the same community–Kitamburo–with the aim to understand what contributed to making community members, teachers, and the school work together and how it evolved over time. Themes which emerged from these two investigations are presented in the next two chapters.

Chapter 4

Emergent Themes Part I: The School and Teachers

This chapter shall present themes that emerged from the study. As explained in the introduction chapter, this study sought to answer the general question: *How do schools and communities in Tanzania work together to generate learning communities*? Themes emerging from the study were like a strip of plaited palm leaf used to make traditional African baskets or mats. Strips of plaited palm leaves are made of slips of the palm leaf. According to ethno-mathematics related to basket making that my father taught me, the lengths of the strips are measured using body height with hands raised up straight. One such length is traditionally called *pima moja,* literally meaning one unit. To make a basket with the capacity of 20 liters for instance, he [my father] needed 10 such units. Palm leaves are short and so are the slips made from it. Thus, making a long strip implied weaving and, in the process, joining the slips one over another. The intersection between one slip and the next one is equivalent to the width of the strip. Every slip has a role to play and thus if one of the slips becomes weak, the whole basket or mat starts to be weak. After weaving, the strip is joined one edge to another using a rope tied to a needle. The rope is again made of palm slips. It is therefore short and it always needs be joined with the next slip through intersections.

The study revealed that there is no single theme that explained the emergence of learning communities at Kitamburo community. There are many things combined that led to and sustained learning communities at Kitamburo. This study was preceded and motivated by a study on a particular school case. In the context that conditions are so weaved, it is illogical to speak about perceptions of community members without having a broad background on what transpired in the school that motivated the researcher to investigate what made it happen. Thus emergent themes of this study are presented into two chapters, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. Chapter 4 is about what was learned from teachers at the school, and Chapter 5 is about perspectives of community members about learning communities and the school community connectedness.

Kitamburo Primary School

       Getting there.

Kitamburo primary school is at the edges of the plateau where Kitamburo community is located. The school is surrounded by trees and flowers making it difficult to be seen clearly while on the road leading to the school.

School buildings.

Kitamburo primary school has adequate and good school buildings capable of accommodating all students. Each grade has its own classroom. In addition to that, the school has a staff room with space equivalent to a classroom, two book storage areas, one storage area for other school equipment, one storage room for school food, a head teacher's office, and an office for the teacher responsible for academic issues. There were 19 rooms in total. The buildings make a *U* shape. At the forefront centre there was a platform with a flagpole to raise and lower the national flag. On the front side of the platform was a school motto which read: "TUZINGATIE TAALUMA, KAZI NA NIDHAMU," literally meaning "let us put emphasis on academics, work and discipline." The fore school grounds were decorated by well-dressed burnt bricks painted white. Some building walls were painted white and light blue while others were left without any color, exposing the natural beauty of well burnt bricks built in straight rows. The wall on the extreme left of the school building is decorated by a world map; the next side of the same building is a wall map of Africa, the next wall a wall map of East Africa, and then a wall map of Tanzania. The setting of the wall maps demonstrated the idea of zeroing in from the world view to a home country while approaching the office of the head teacher, and growing broader from home country to a world view as moving out of the school compound. In relation to global citizenship, it reflected the idea of thinking globally and acting locally, and acting locally while impacting globally. The compact design of the school buildings had the potential for collaborative work among teachers and students. It was potentially easy to have access to what was happening in another room and it was also easy for student-teacher interaction and for students to get feedback from teachers. The locations of the staff room, the office of the head teacher, and the office of the teacher responsible for academic issues allowed for regular monitoring of students during class hours. All these factors helped to enhance teaching and learning, including the teaching and learning of mathematics.

Inside the staffroom were wall maps and teachers' tables and chairs. Every table had a number of well arranged books and some tables had students' exercise books. At one corner of the office there was a tea flask and a number of tea utensils indicating that teachers had regular office tea during workdays. Information about the school is on the walls of the head teacher's office where all important and recent records were shown. These included information about the

school timetable, school financial position, head teachers who happened to lead the school since its establishment, as well as a list of all teachers with their respective responsibilities.

The curriculum.

The school followed the national curriculum. Subjects taught were mathematics, English, Kiswahili, science, history, geography, civics, information and communication technology, domestic science and personality. These subjects were taught by 16 teachers who constituted the school teaching staff, including of the head teacher. Including the incumbent head teacher, the school had employed eight different head teachers since 1975 when it was established. Upon data collection, most teachers stayed in the school for many years. Table 2 shows a summary of teachers with the respective number of years they served at Kitamburo primary school. In addition to staying for a long time, out of 15 interviewed teachers, 12 (80%) had the same number of years of service and years of staying at Kitamburo which indicated that since they started teaching at Kitamburo, they were not transferred to another school. Moreover, whereas some teachers stayed for as many years as 26 in the school; six teachers had stayed in the school for 5 years or less, which provided the opportunity for mentorship by long-term experienced teachers—just like the intersection between palm slips in making a strip long for weaving.

Table 2

The Teachers' Years of Service and Teaching at Kitamburo Primary School

Interviewee	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Years of Teaching	26	16	09	11	01	17	03	11 months	37	02	07	05	26	21	30
Years at Kitamburo	26	16	09	11	01	17	03	11 months	01	02	07	05	26	11	06

Source: Field data collection, 2011.

When teachers were asked why they stayed so long in the school, their first response was:

> If you are posted to a teaching station and stay there without being transferred by the government, you are compelled to stay in the station unless you request for transfer. (Follow-up discussion notes with two more Kitamburo teachers, 18/05/2012)

In Tanzania, the government is responsible for assigning teachers to schools and for transferring teachers from one school to another when needed. The government's role is to ensure rational distribution of teachers in all primary schools and to ensure that teachers deliver what is expected of them in the school. If a teacher does not perform, even when the government does not have

money to pay for transfer, there is an option for the government to transfer the teacher as punishment, in which case the punished teacher covers all transfer expenses. Finding teachers who had stayed in the same school for many years without being transferred suggested that teachers were performing to the satisfaction of both the served community and the government, who was the employer. To understand what made teachers at Kitamburo stay for long time and yet continue to perform, teachers were encouraged to narrate their stories. Most teachers perceived that Kitamburo had a good work environment, which was hard to find in other places.

> We like the place due to transport infrastructure. It is easy to get transport compared to other places. (Follow up group discussion notes with Kitamburo teachers, 17/05/2012)

Upon data collection, Kitamburo was served by one public transport passenger bus. The bus's final destination was a village beyond Kitamburo towards the interior. It had daily to and from trips from the village to the region headquarters through Kitamburo, except on Fridays when it did not come back to the village until Saturday afternoon. Villagers said the schedule was arranged by the proprietor of the bus who was also the driver to ensure weekly technical service for the bus. It was labeled: *Vitu laini* (literally, soft things). During trips the bus was always full of passengers and luggage. One time I travelled on the bus from the region headquarters to Kitamburo. Informal conversation with passengers at the bus stand indicated that villagers along the road leading to Kitamburo preferred travelling with the bus because it had the lowest bus fare price for both passengers and luggage and had good terms of service compared to other buses passing through the same villages. On that day the bus stopped at any point the passenger requested. At some points it just stopped to unload luggage for people who requested bus workers to purchase some items for them from town. When we reached a certain village the driver stopped the bus, ordered two buckets of wild fruits from the fruit vendor along the road, and told the bus conductor to distribute the fruits to all passengers free of charge. Apart from transport, teachers also narrated about the conducive weather of the village:

> The weather here is so friendly for one to live. There is little environmental destruction.
> (Follow up group discussion notes with Kitamburo teachers, 17/05/2012)

As earlier said, Kitamburo is located at a high altitude plateau and thus had cold weather compared with many other places of the district which had relatively warm weather. Cold weather in tropical countries has a number of advantages as pointed out by one participant:

This village is characterized by cold weather almost throughout the year. This makes it almost free of mosquito and malaria. (Follow up group discussion notes with Kitamburo teachers, 17/05/2012)

Thus, one reason that encouraged teachers to stay a long time at Kitamburo was the absence of mosquitoes and malaria. Therefore, information about cold weather and the absence of mosquitoes that teachers claimed to enjoy suggested that the absence of malaria that mosquitoes caused, but also the absence of discomfort caused by mosquito movements, sounds and bites, had equally important health and performance implications as far as the teaching profession was concerned. Teachers needed comfortable places for personal reading and lesson preparations. It is difficult for a teacher to do all activities concerning teaching during the work hours. Some activities are done at home. A home without mosquitoes is more conducive for teachers than a home with mosquito disturbances. Apart from health issues, teachers pointed out that the weather at Kitamburo was conducive for crop production:

Also the climate enables us to engage in other economic activities such as agriculture.

(Follow up discussion notes with two teachers of Kitamburo, 18/05/2012)

This infers that teachers' engagement in agricultural activities ensured food for themselves and their families. The major crop cultivated by literally all people at Kitamburo is maize, which is a staple food for Tanzanians. This was evidenced by one teacher who said:

Good weather enables us to engage in agricultural activities that supplement our income as you know our salaries are not enough. (Follow up discussion notes with two teachers of Kitamburo, 19/05/2012)

Supplemented economy entails the capacity to fulfill at least the basic needs without using the formal income, which in this case is the teachers' salary. Teachers being able to fulfill their families' needs perhaps allowed them to concentrate on their job of teaching.

Teachers' engagement in agriculture would not be possible without having land to cultivate. When teachers were asked how they got land for crop cultivation, they said:

It is not difficult to get land for cultivation; the village gives that provision and offers us land for cultivation. (Follow up group discussion notes with Kitamburo teachers, 17/05/2012)

Land is one of the main resources for most economic activities. Finding a village ready to offer at least a piece of land for cultivation suggests that such a village is on good terms with

newcomers, including teachers who come to teach in the school. This inference was evidenced by teachers when they said:

> There is good sharing of inputs and experiences between villagers and teachers. The villagers are ready to adopt teachers' ideas and the teachers are ready to adopt villagers' ideas. School problem is treated as village problem and village problem is treated as school problem. (Follow up group discussion notes with Kitamburo teachers, 17/05/2012)

Thus, low salaries that teachers claimed to receive was taken as a village problem and in turn dealt with by village willingness to offer land to teachers. Teachers' perceptions about the good relationship with the village were echoed by the village chairperson who, in accounting for the many years that teachers worked in the school, acknowledged the "friendly" relationship between villagers and teachers. Teachers were employees posted to the village by the government. In an effort to be accepted as insiders to the village and continue enjoying good weather and hospitality of community members, they were committed to perform.

Teachers' Innovations.

Teachers narrated stories that showed a number of initiatives with respect to the relatively promising performance of the school. In the first place they said:

> It is teachers' commitment and giving as many exercises as possible. (Interview notes with Alberta, 9/9/2011)

Commitment entails self dedication to a given course of action to achieve a certain predetermined goal without regard to the difficulties, challenges, and whatever that might act upon and tempt to change the course of action. Saying that teachers were committed meant they were committed to teaching. However in Tanzania, like most other countries, the immediate measurable output of the teaching process is better examination results of the taught students. This suggested that teachers had the vision of achieving better examination results for their students and thus the mission was commitment to teaching. This was implied when they said:

> We have discovered that when a student is exposed to many questions get enough exercises which maximizes possibilities of passing examinations. (Interview notes with Amina Malonyo, 9/9/2011)

This statement indicated that the purpose of teachers was not mere teaching but thorough preparation of students to successfully write their examinations. They were trying to build both

capacity and confidence to students in writing examinations including mathematics examinations. Given the situation that most teachers stayed at the school for a long time, there were dangers of losing value of the said many exercises through repeating the same questions over and again. To overcome the business as usual syndrome they networked with fellow teachers of other schools:

> We also have a system of looking for past papers from different schools within the ward, district but even from other regions like Dar es Salaam, Mbeya. (Interview notes with Irine, 12/9/2011)

Kitamburo, as said already, is located in rural areas of Southern highlands of Tanzania. It takes at least 7 hours drive to reach Dar-es-Salaam city and four hours drive to reach Mbeya from Kitamburo. To manage the collective desire of having examination questions framed by other teachers in distant regions like the ones mentioned, they assigned themselves to take their local past papers and exchange them with fellow teachers in their respective regions, districts, wards, and villages of domicile when they went for holidays.

> Normally when teachers go for holidays to their respective home places everyone comes back with past papers of varied subjects including mathematics. (Interview notes with Lilian Sebastian, 9/9/2011)

The practice gave reasons to believe that teachers at Kitamburo were so committed that they were able to think about how to improve the performance of their students, even when they were on holidays. In addition to thinking about the school performance, it was evident that teachers could not collect some examination papers (tests) from their respective areas of origin without having prior communication and even close links with fellow teachers. So this infers that teachers at Kitamburo had the commitment to network with fellow teachers in nearby schools as well as in their respective areas of origin. To be in touch with fellow teachers might involve personal resources such as money to pay for communication expenses. Thus effective curricula delivery drew resources beyond formally recognized sources of resources. It included resources from an individual teacher's capital. Capital in its broad sense as pointed out in the study design includes the social capital that a teacher had to invest and maintain with his/her fellow teachers; financial capital to pay for unexpected expenses; and human capital that the teacher had to use in scrutinizing the quality of the said past papers that were provided by other schools in order not assume that because it came from another school then it was good. With respect to promising

performance in mathematics, teachers commended the teacher responsible for teaching mathematics in Grade 7. They said:

> The mathematics teacher is so committed and volunteers to extend a lot of support to students. (Interview notes with Lilian Sebastian, 9/9/2011)

It was evident, however, that a single teacher could hardly afford to bring about the noted promising performance. To support what the mathematics teacher was doing, teachers at Kitamburo initiated and believed in the value of teamwork and were committed to helping each other through internal [school based] arrangements of capacity building.

> There is strong mutual capacity building among teachers and students also do help each other. (Interview notes with Chifu, 9/9/2011)

A mention of students elicited the idea that the teachers' commitment alone would not lead to promising school performance in mathematics. Students had a role to play. Just like weaving a palm leaf strip, which is made possible by joining not only one slip over another but also having slips crossing over one another in a well-planned pattern, teachers had to encourage students to commit to their role as students. They said, "we insist students work hard" (interview notes by Bibi 9/9/2011). Almost all teachers claimed that their students were committed to reading and were not allowed to loiter around the village, particularly in entertainment sites. Kitamburo was a day school. Students used most of their daytime in school but went back to their respective homes in the evenings. This needed another slip of the palm to come into play in order to continue making the strip—parents. They said:

> They [parents] provide extra care to students and make sure that they are not involved in leisure activities. (Interview notes with Cammando, 10/9/2011)

And also:

> Students are not allowed to loiter in late hours once caught in such vulnerable environment stiff measures are taken against the student. (Focus group discussion notes, 9/8/2011)

All interviewed teachers commended parents for a job well done in making sure their children were not involved in leisure activities. However, students are human beings with the capacity to think and decide, hence in this respect it is necessary to recognize the role of a hidden slip–the students–and credit them also for taking responsibility of not going to leisure activities. Kitamburo is in remote rural area. The community had one big hall owned by the community

which was constructed during the heydays of ujamaa. The hall was not elaborate but was used in celebrations like weddings. In addition to this, an individual in the community owned a small hall that was relatively decently furnished with a super stereo music system which, when opened, could be heard from far in the community. The hall sold beer and had sessions of paid video shows and disco. In evenings, youth played on the pool table located in front of the hall. Apart from pool, people played *bao* (African traditional board game). In most cases the elders had their own bao and spectators and the youth had their own bao and younger spectators. Moreover, there were a number of shops which sold local and industrial beer on a daily basis, beginning at 2:00 p.m. Students ignoring these tempting entertainments implied a degree of internal commitment rather than merely externally imposed commitment by parents. Without the students' internal commitment there would be the possibility for them to ignore their parents and go to entertainment sites without knowledge of their parents.

Students' commitment of not attending leisure activities or loitering after school hours had the potential to make them spend more time on school work. Reading and timely completion of homework couldn't be thoroughly done using school-day times alone. Students had to do some of the assignments at home. Kitamburo is in remote rural area. During data collection, Kitamburo was supplied with electricity from the national grid; however, given the implied costs to connect electricity to houses there were still many houses without electricity. To support their students, teachers encouraged parents to invest money in purchasing sources of power. One respondent said:

> We insist students to work hard and [we] tell their respective parents to spare time and provide facilities like kerosene for them to read in their respective homes before going to bed. We regularly reinstate on these issues. (Interview notes with Bibi, 9/9/2011)

Financial investment was also reflected in parent commitment to ensure their students were supplied with the necessary stationeries as narrated by one respondent that:

> They also provide their children with learning materials like exercise books and pens. (Interview notes with Lilanga, 9/9/2011)

Parents, as shall be explained later in this section, were also committed to contributing funds for school food as noted by one respondent that:

Parents are told to contribute Tsh 2,500/= and ten (10) liters of maize so that a student do not go back home for lunch because most of them come back late when they go home during lunchtime. (Interview notes with Bibi, 9/9/2011)

Kitamburo was not an island; it fell under ward and district administrative jurisdictions. Education departments in the jurisdictions had initiatives to also support school improvement, including ward and district examinations. The running of these examinations had financial implications to pay for invigilators and also for teachers' food during examinations marking. Thus, effective school participation in these examinations required commitment by parents, which is well narrated:

The community supports us through various contributions especially with regard to ward and district examinations. (Interview notes with Amina Malonyo , 9/9/2011)

With respect to extra classes at Kitamburo, parents had to give their consent for their children to attend extra classes during weekdays, over weekends, and during holidays as teachers had recognized that:

The community supports us by allowing students to attend extra classes even during holidays. (Interview notes with Lilanga, 9/9/2011)

Parental consent implied parents were committed to do some extra jobs that would otherwise be done by their children after school hours and during holidays. This was done in order to provide more time for children to participate in schoolwork. Moreover some parents were capable of providing training to their children as noted by one respondent that said:

The community supports by helping their respective children in their homes such as teaching their children while at home and borrowing books or past papers from school and use them to teach their children while at home. (Interview notes with Tula Yohana, 9/9/2011)

The previous account suggests establishing that the noted relative promising performance at Kitamburo contributed to the interplay of commitments by teachers, students, and parents. They all wished to achieve one goal: better performance in examinations including mathematics examinations. This commitment led to innovation of new structures not prescribed in the formal school curriculum. As noted above teachers, parents, and students initiated extra classes.

Apart from the normal timetable we have extra periods for Grade 7 and teachers with respective skills volunteers. (Interview notes with Irine, 12/9/2011)

I observed the school timetable and found that during weekdays, students of Grades 4 and 7, who were expected to write examinations, reported to school earlier than their fellow students and went back home late. These same students had classes on Saturdays and during school holidays. Formal primary school curriculum in Tanzania has five school days each week, beginning Monday to Friday. On each formal school day, students stay at school for at least 7 hours; in most cases from 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Extra classes at Kitamburo involved at least 1 extra hour before and after the formal school day and 6 hours over weekends and holidays, excluding religious-based school holidays. Apart from the school day restructuring to take aboard extra teaching and exercises, teachers initiated student groups which were new structures to support curriculum delivery.

Staying at school would likely be very boring to both students and teachers should teachers have relied on traditional modes of delivery, which typically treated students as recipients. Teachers at Kitamburo:

> Divide students in groups thus those with relatively low capacity are supported by their
> fellows with relatively good capacity. (Interview notes with Amina Malonyo, 9/9/2011)

Formation of student study groups is one of the teaching methodologies well advocated in Tanzanian curricula, but teachers at Kitamburo went one step further by creating an incentive system within the framework of group formation when they said:

> Here students are divided in work groups according to how they perform in regular tests
> that they write. The tests allow teachers to know best students and weak students and
> teachers are set in such a way that can support every respective group according to their
> relative capacity. (Interview notes with Tula Yohana, 9/9/2011)

This meant that there were possibilities for a student to shift from one group to another based on how he/she progressively performed in tests. As human beings, students would not wish to shift from a relatively strong performing group to a relatively low performing group and thus the system of group formation motivated students to always work hard to maintain or improve performance that would allow shifting to a better performing group. This motivation was enhanced when it was noted that:

> Relative student performances in monthly tests are used in choosing leaders of student
> study groups. (Interview notes with Hania Mbeyu, 12/9/2011)

This implied that students tried to work hard in order to be selected as a leader of a study group. The incentive of leading a study group became more significant when teachers revealed that:

> Those who show outstanding performance are awarded with items like exercise books, pens and pencils. (Interview notes with Hania Mbeyu, 12/9/2011)

This indicated that the formed study groups were dynamic as every student wished to show up and get recognized by receiving a gift and becoming a group leader. Dynamic study groups with regular changes of relations of power amongst group members had the potential for eliciting creativity and innovations amongst students, both of which provided the potential for improved performance. Commitment by students, teachers, and parents led to the initiation of more activities. On the part of teachers, participatory approaches of teaching were more practiced, as noted by one teacher that:

> Here we apply participatory approaches in teaching using locally designed and made teaching and learning aids. (Interview notes with Hania Mbeyu, 9/9/2011)

Participatory approaches in teaching gives reasons to infer that there were enough teacher-student interactions in teaching. In addition, the idea that teachers used locally designed teaching and learning materials suggested that the interaction between teachers and students went beyond the subject matter under presentation to the real life environment of the community. Teachers would not understand clearly what materials from the community environment would help classroom teaching without asking students or community members some key questions about the community environment or use any means to be conversant with the environment. It is interesting to note that during the course of teaching in the village, teachers became more and more conversant with the community environment and thus transformed their respective statuses as outsiders to insiders of the local community. It can be reasoned then that in this way teachers came to know how the community became empowered to do their own things which meant teachers did not have to exercise power over villagers. Another teacher noted that:

> You know in this school we do not introduce anything without having parents' consent. This is made possible through closer relationship between our school and the village government. (Interview notes with Chifu, 9/9/2011)

Thus, when school food was introduced, teachers and villagers worked hand-in-hand to mobilize resources necessary for school food. They said:

In the first place teachers meet to budget then we call parents and sensitize them; upon their deliberation we start to collect. (Interview notes with Chifu, 9/9/2011)

Teachers had to meet and propose the budget; thereafter, a school committee meeting involving members from the village and the school was convened to discuss and deliberate on the proposed budget. After deliberation, the head teacher convened a school parents' meeting, which had powers to discuss and approve the proposed budget. After the approval, class teachers were given the responsibility of receiving parents' contributions and handing them in to the chairperson of the school food committee. As commented by one respondent that:

These are collected by respective class teachers. Parents are called for a meeting here at school. The meeting is the one which budgets for the food and decide on what every parent will contribute. There after collection is done by respective teachers. (Interview notes with Lilanga, 9/9/2011)

This information showed how parents and teachers were involved in innovative activities that collectively contributed to putting school food in place. When asked why school food was thought to be so important, teachers said:

The food helps students to concentrate on their studies including mathematics. Before this initiative students used to waste time going back home for lunch worse enough some came back [to school] without having anything because parents are not always at home. After this initiative, students are able to listen to teachers throughout the day and hence making extra classes program a success. (Focus group discussion notes, 9/8/2011)

The process of having school food involved both parents and teachers. This meant that both teachers and parents had the same vision of having improved performance of students through the mission of innovative teaching and learning strategies.

However interviews showed that not all parents were willing to contribute for school food outright. It was decided that if a parent failed to submit contributions as agreed the parent's name was taken to the village government. But again, the process was not mechanical like forcing the parent, rather:

Students are told to tell their parents about contributions and the deadline. When the deadline is over a parent who failed to meet the deadline is called to school to elaborate why he/she has failed to do so. (Interview notes with Bibi, 9/9/2011)

This meant that the school sought mutual understanding between the parents and the school for the implementation of agreed activities. It also revealed the middleman [sic] role that students played in the process. Students were able to communicate messages from the school to home as well as from home to the school. If the parent was able to explain to the satisfaction of teachers why the agreed activity was not met, a new deadline was mutually set. However, in the events that mutual understating was not reached they said:

> When the parent does not respond accordingly is forwarded to the village government for further actions. (Interview notes with Bibi, 9/9/2011)

When this happened, the village government took steps to contact the parent and brought feedback to the school. This procedure indicated the role of effective communication between the school and the community to enhance the implementation of the initiatives. It also indicated that both the school and the community had a sense of tolerance and an understanding that not all people understood the initiative as planned. All these actions contributed to the sustainability of the initiatives and its associated promising school performance.

Commitment and management oriented initiatives alone would not help teachers to perform so they also had activities that focused on actual classroom teaching in order to improve performance. Teaching was guided by the curriculum so in the course of teaching, teachers:

> List[ed] down difficult topics in order to arrange internal trainings by other teachers who are competent in the topics. (Interview notes with Bibi, 9/9/2011)

This meant teachers noted what topics were difficult or what areas of a specific topic were difficult for him/her. This list of topics was used as a source for both internal and local capacity building amongst teachers, and also internal support as noted that:

> What I know irrespective of the class and subject that a teacher teaches, we normally sit together and look at his/her competence and decide how he/she can support teaching in examination classes. In these extra classes even me [who teaches other classes other than examination classes] I am involved. (Interview notes with Bibi, 9/9/2011)

Teachers also had the practice of networking with fellow teachers in nearby schools as well. One respondent noted that:

> We also have a system of exchanging teaching materials. (Interview notes with Irine, 12/9/2011)

My personal experience with extra classes is that most teachers providing such classes to students demand payment from the students. At Kitamburo all 15 interviewed teachers said they did not request or get extra pay for the extra classes they provided. When asked how they came to the decision to offer free of charge extra classes, most teachers said they just felt responsible to the poor rural communities, as well noted by one respondent that:

> Basing on the life hardships that people in the village face we decided to offer free of charge extra classes. We thought it will not be good to impose charges to parents whose economic condition is not good. The school would have been paying us but it also have no enough funds so we decided to just volunteer. (Interview notes with Amina Malonyo, 9/9/2011)

So this raised interest about how teachers at Kitamburo came to innovate all those structures and activities to support implementation of their commitment towards improving school performance without demanding any extra payment from students and parents.

Background to innovations.

When asked why they wish their students pass examinations, they said:

> Due to poor results that we were getting so we were compelled to look for alternative strategies in order to support students. (Interview notes with Amina Malonyo, 9/9/2011)

Others cited mathematics directly by saying:

> It was a result of poor performance in mathematics in previous years. (Interview notes with Hania Mbeyu, 12/9/2011)

This indicated that teachers at Kitamburo had the culture of self-evaluation by trying to look at where they position themselves in terms of performance of their school. Self-evaluation has a link to self-awareness and commitment as one wish to know whether the expected outcome is met or not. Teachers who teach for the sole purpose of getting a monthly salary would not have time to bother with the quality of outputs as measured by examinations. A sense of commitment to bring about change was shown by teachers when they said they were able to identify the cause of the poor performance and plan for action:

> We started doing this after observing students' poor performance in the Primary School Leaving Examinations so we concluded that the formal teaching time is not enough and thus extra classes became a solution. (Interview notes with Lilanga, 9/9/2011)

The idea that students needed more time to stay in school was pointed out by one participant when they said:

> We also observed that students do not have enough time for private reading in their homes thus why we decided to offer extra classes. (Interview notes with Sarafina, 9/9/2011)

This statement implied teachers assessed the knowledge about the environment of their students and learned that most of them did not have a conducive environment to support the extra time needed for reading at their respective homes. This, in a way, contradicted idea stated earlier that parents contributed kerosene for supporting students' reading at home. However, if the scene is compared to medical treatment, then it can be inferred that extra classes were like a compulsory starting dosage in medicine that should be taken under the supervision of a doctor. Thereafter the patient could be instructed about how to go on with the rest of the medicine, which in this case may be equated to homework that students had to be doing in their respective homes using kerosene lamps.

While acknowledging the role of past poor performance in motivating teachers to innovate strategies for improving teaching and learning, it was known that poor performance was not unique to Kitamburo primary school and particularly so in mathematics. The District Education Officer (DEO) Kitenge district was aware of the poor performance in the district and had already taken steps to change the scene. Building on efforts by the district education office to enhance teachers' commitment, the DEO pointed out strategies that were in place to make regular follow-up with teachers in the district to ensure they delivered what was expected of them:

> Students' exercise books will show you. It will guide you understand the number of periods a teacher has attended in a month and how many periods a teacher have attended out of the 28 periods. You will be shocked that some teachers attend only three or four periods in a month. There were so many excuses amongst teachers. (Interview notes with the DEO, 17/05/2012)

This reflected an imposed commitment to teachers. Imposition of commitment was evidenced when it was noted that:

> What I do I talk with the finance person to withhold the teachers' salary and you will find teachers coming to apologize and agree with the office to compensate the periods. This is

how I started improving teachers' commitment. (Interview notes with the DEO, 17/05/2012)

The district, like other districts, covered a large area. To ensure follow-ups were made, the DEO had a strategy of moving around with the Ward Education Coordinator (WEC) of the ward where a particular school was found, and noted that:

In visiting the schools I was always accompanied by the ward education coordinator (WEC) of the respective ward. So at last the WECs took over and there is a form which teachers sign monthly to indicate the number of periods attended in class. (Interview notes with the DEO, 17/05/2012)

The DEO showed a strong belief in follow-up as means to make teachers deliver when she narrated that:

You know a human being is coward and do not like to see somebody making follow up upon him/her. Where there is close supervision human beings change their behavior. That was my entry point in improving teachers' job performance – follow-ups. (Interview notes with the DEO, 17/05/2012)

If follow-ups alone were enough to let teachers perform then logically all schools in the district would have shown the same level of performance in mathematics as Kitamburo. This was not the case. As already said in the introduction, Kitamburo was selected from amongst many schools in the rural setting of the district due to its relatively promising performance in mathematics compared with other schools.

Teachers at Kitamburo had mixed perceptions about the motivation and support they received from higher education management levels in relation to their innovations.

In fact there is no support we receive from the [district education] Office.

What about the Ward education Office?

In fact we receive no support. (Interview notes with Hania Mbeyu, 9/9/2011)

While others thought that:

Is the District Education Office supporting you?

Yes! Through trainings.

What about the Ward Education Office?

He does regular visits to our school. (Interview notes with Hania Mbeyu, 12/09/2011)

The role of training provided by the district education office or the ward in motivating teachers' innovation would be more logical if what was observed at Kitamburo would be found across the ward or across the district. The fact that Kitamburo came out as relatively exceptional infers that there were some reasons specific to the school that made teachers motivated to perform the way they performed. Teachers at Kitamburo revealed community participation in initiating the innovations:

> You know we decided to do this because of shame. You may be travelling by bus and then you hear passengers discussing that a certain school did not perform well. If you belong to a teaching staff of the school you feel shame to the extent that you fail to participate in the discussion. (Interview notes with Bibi, 9/9/2011)

Feeling shame due to poor results of a school gives rise to the belief that teachers linked themselves with the performance of the school. It indicates that teachers had a sense that they were instrumental in making the school perform better or poorly. But again shame implies awareness about assessment of an individual by others. Thus, teachers showed an awareness of how other people thought about them or looked at them with respect to how the school performed. This meant teachers were conscious of the presence of other people who had a stake in the school and had a vision of what was expected of a performing teacher. It is likely that the first group of concern was the community members in the vicinity of the school, that is Kitamburo community. It indicated the potential existence of a certain set standard, set vision, set mission which teachers wished to achieve and maintain in order to live with peace and happiness without any sense of shame and conscious guilt. The question of having a certain vision and mission was unveiled when one teacher said that:

> There are two neighbor primary schools around us so I was compelled to call my fellow teachers and convince them to offer extra hours in teaching to counter the challenges that these schools may bring to us in terms of performance. (Interview notes with Chifu, 9/9/2011)

Teachers had the spirit to maintain a certain standard of performance that would not let the immediate school community look at them negatively. In other words and based on the said advantages that teachers gained through living in the community, it showed a kind of promise, however non-documented it might be, between teachers and community members in which every

party had a role to fulfill. This brings us back to what teachers mentioned as reasons contributing to the observed pattern of staying for many years in the school.

Conclusion

This chapter shows that teachers were tied together by their individual commitments as well as a collective commitment as teaching staff of the school. In the course of working together as a team, they had lateral networks that connected individual teachers in another school as well as nearby schools in the ward and district. There was also an established hierarchy for dealing with school issues. Amongst all these, communication had a role to play in bringing the right messages at the right time to the right people, which kept teachers up to date on ongoing issues that had a promising impact in the teaching and learning of mathematics.

Chapter 5

Emergent Themes Part II: Perspectives of Community Members

I approached Kitamburo community as a single entity. Initially I was interested in knowing the background of the community. Kitamburo was a traditional settlement. Respondents knew little of the genealogical history of the community but had insights about pre-ujamaa Kitamburo.

Pre-ujamaa experiences

What appear as catalysts to the emergence of learning communities and the observed school-community connectedness at Kitamburo at the age of post ujamaa in rural Tanzania can be inferred from the nature and origin of the community. Kitamburo (refer to Figure 2 for a map of the area) emerged from a small settlement of people located about 1 km southeast of the current settlement of Kitamburo community.

> This village originates from up there. It was established in a land that belonged to my father. (Interview notes with Kijogoo, 21/01/2014)

Community members were initially tied together by blood relationships.

> When we started to join together and establish this village we had no strangers. (Interview notes with Severina Mkaluka, 18/01/2014)

None of the respondents could remember the exact number of residents who made up the community during the early days. At the time of data collection, documents indicated that Kitamburo community had a total of 3,623 people, of whom 1,768 were males and 1,855 were females. Before coming together as a village that later grew to a community:

> People were so scattered. Everybody lived in his/her area. (Interview notes with Galamula Magobe, 22/01/2014)

Most of the community members were poverty stricken as they had no good houses and food was also a problem as recounted by one respondent:

> We had no decent houses as you see it now but we had our mud made small houses that we used to live in. (Interview notes with Severina Mkaluka, 18/01/2014)

Moreover, respondents had memories that during those days:

> There were very few who could read and write. It was even difficult to get people who could take attendances of villagers in joint village activities. (Interview notes with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

Upon data collection as pointed out in Chapter 3, I used consent forms and none of the respondents had problems with reading and writing despite the old age of most respondents. Also, Kitamburo community had many relatively decent houses compared to other rural areas that I knew of. The houses were widely distributed but well patterned like streets in urban centers. At the center of the community, houses were more compact than in other areas of the community. Most houses were roofed by iron sheets and constructed of burnt mud bricks. I interviewed more than half of the respondents in their respective homes. I observed that the houses were spacious. Most household compounds had more than one house—a big house and small houses nearby. It was rare to find a compound with a single house. In most cases, the big house was relatively decent and it was for sleeping and used as a sitting room, although some households had an independent house for a sitting room. Other houses in the compounds were used as kitchens and for storage of food and other belongings of the household. None of the compounds had a kitchen inside the sleeping house. Some houses were supplied with electricity from the national grid, while most were without the service. This indicated that Kitamburo community had undergone a significant transformation in education and housing from the time of its formation to the time of data collection. Transformation that took Kitamburo from a predominantly poor community to a relatively promising community with enough awareness to support the education of their children is presented in Chapter 4 of this work. The scattered nature of settlement and community members' homogeneity during the beginning of the community suggested for the existence of indigenous living system.

Kitamburo village emerges.

Respondent Galamula Magobe did not believe that the village would have grown big and popular to the extent of attracting many people, including myself.

> Villages started with a lot of difficulties. This village was as if not well recognized and even if it was recognized it was as if there will be a certain loss in it. (Interview notes with Galamula Magobe, 22/01/2014)

The idea of loss was linked to the beginning of the village because the village emerged from:

> An association of people who were like belonging to the same religious faith and those people happened to live together so most of them were living together and this included both clan members and non-clan members. (Interview notes with Galamula Magobe, 22/01/2014)

Kitamburo community started as a village and the village emerged from member association. It indicated that people had to assess the potential gains and losses of joining or not joining the association. This suggested the existence of commonalities amongst association members. Respondents related that Kitamburo community:

> [It] was established in a land that belonged to an individual person. This person was a farmer so one day he caused a big bush fire which cleared a large area of land. Then one woman came to the person to request a piece of the cleared land be used as a farm by the Kitamburo Lutheran Church Women Association Group. (Interview notes with Kijogoo, 21/01/2014)

Kitamburo community members had the history of living as neighbors, however scattered they were, but they did not think about having an association or having a common farm. This scenario implied that the church–as with most other religions, believed in love–motivated them to love each other and thus made them see the possibilities of working together as an association and in association-based activities like farm work. This motivation was encouraged by the existing supportive environment of neighborhood and blood relationships. In addition, the association was supported by gender as it had females as founding members and was led by a female. Women extended their common religious beliefs from inside the church to real life experience by joining together as an association. This extension might have been motivated by different things, but one probable motivation was a search for a tangible better life now instead of waiting for better life after death, as most religions preach. One of the immediate interpretations of tangible good life in rural settings was more crop production which triggered the association to request a piece of land for establishing joint crop cultivation activities. This action suggests that community members at Kitamburo had a disposition of using emerging opportunities. When readily available cleared land was discovered, the piece of land was requested by the villagers to establish a joint farm for members of the association. The exact number of members of the association was not well established; some said seven (interview with Severina Mkaluka, 18/01/2014), while others said eight (interview notes with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014). It can be stated, with some confidence, that there were fewer than 10 founding members of the association. Further, this also suggests the role of foreign ideas as a catalyst in the life of Kitamburo community members since the roots of the Lutheran Church involved are not African. It was further narrated that:

In the course of farming the women cultivated wheat in the first year. In the next year the wheat did so well this made other people including men to join the group. (Interview notes with Kijogoo, 21/01/2014)

When men found women making progress on their farm, they decided to join them. Joining the women's association was not the only option for men. They [men] could easily have decided to use the patriarchal system practiced at that time in African culture to prohibit women from working in the association. The fact that the men did not revert to the patriarchal system with regard to the farm indicated that people at Kitamburo had the urge to have a working strategy as a way out of the state of impoverishment in which they were living. The people's urge for positive change was evidenced by one respondent who said:

People in this highlands are pro changes, they like changes. (Interview notes with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

The positive change noted in the women's farm motivated men to join the association. On the other hand, the decision made by the women to accept men into an association initiated by women implied recognition of the potency of diversity in having things done. To both of them, it indicated mutual trust between men and women. Men trusted that women could do something and women trusted that the men would bring added value to the association.

Kitamburo village was officially established in November 19, 1968. (Interview notes with Mali ya Bwana, 17/1/2014)

Narrating about how the village started one respondent noted that:

The village officially began in the year 1968 by some of the few who willingly decided to shift to the village prior to [country wide] villagization program. (Interview with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

Despite having the same tribal base and implied shared world view, it took time for villagers to accept coming together from their past scattered settlements to settle as one village. This indicated diversity of perceptions amongst community members about what it meant to come together as a village. One respondent noted that:

I really only remember a little bit . . . remember only slightly began in 1968. I heard founder members were 38 . . . myself I joined the village a little bit latter on 12th January 1973. (Interview notes with Elizabeth Kigula, 21/01/2014)

Official village documents showed the village started in 1968 and transformed to ujamaa village in 1974. The early 1970s were years when Tanzania was working hard on implementing the Arusha declaration pronounced in 1967 which, amongst others, had to be applied to establishing ujamaa villages in rural Tanzania. This meant that implementation of national policies had a hand in the establishment of Kitamburo community, as noted that:

> Later on it was announced that we are supposed to move and live together. Soon it was announced once more that we have to shift to villages that everybody should move to a village. (Interview notes with Galamula Magobe, 22/01/2014)

This narration gives reasons to believe that there were forces coming from above the community level leadership that helped to unite community members at Kitamburo as a village. However the community had the advantage that forces from outside were adding to what villagers had already initiated, taking into consideration the religious-based women's association, the willingness of men to join into the association, and the willingness of some community members to join and make a village before the countrywide enforcement of the villagization program. Forces from outside that emphasized collective work and self determination made villagers have confidence in what they had already initiated and thus were encouraged to trust religion and their traditions, which played core role in the initiation of the women's association already explained.

Clan-based leadership at Kitamburo.

The decision by men to join an association initiated and led by women raised management challenges that made Mahugila, the founder and leader of the women's association, step down and hand over leadership to a brother, Chipwasa. After leading the association for about 2 years, the brother handed over the leadership to yet another brother, Milonge. Data collection indicates that Kitamburo community, which emerged from a women's association with a woman as founding leader, had only that one woman leader throughout its existence. A respondent commented that:

> When the women association group absorbed many members, Mahugila the founder and leader found it difficult to lead and decided to delegate the leadership of the group to her brother. (Interview notes with Kijogoo, 21/01/2014)

However, respondents noted that each of the three leaders contributed to the history of the community. Mahugila was the founder and leader of the women's association, Chipwasa used his influence of working with the youth wing of the then-ruling party to transform the association

to a village, and Milonge had a record of leading the village as a chairperson for more than 20 consecutive years. The three were relatives, as noted that:

> These two Milonge and Mahugila were true brother and sister [were son and daughter of the same couple], and Chipwasa though did not belong to same family belonged to the same clan so they were relatives. (Interview notes with Galamula Magobe, 22/01/2014)

Even though every human being is unique, having leaders of the same clan and the same family background implied having leaders who were raised by the same parents. Childhood life influences life during adulthood and thus provides reason to believe that the village was, for a long time, under the leadership of people who had a similar worldview. This is to say the community emerged from a single family leadership which, despite the noted diversity of ideas, entailed the possibilities of behaving like a single family. This also includes aspects of unity amongst community members already tied as community by religion and traditions.

Milonge spent more than 20 years as a village chairperson. Villagers recounted that he had personal characteristics that made people love and trust him and thus they were willing to implement almost whatever he proposed. They noted that:

> The old man had a gift of being able to love everyone, and he was an adviser to every person. Therefore people liked him very much, thus everything he proposed people agreed with him. (Focus group discussion notes, 15/01/2014)

Love united the community members with Milonge. Milonge loved community members and, in turn, community members loved him as a village chair. Community members worked as one community in a bid to reciprocate the love extended to them by Milonge. This suggested that Milonge had no power over community members in the sense of commanding them about what should they do. Rather he had the capacity of making community members realize their status and develop the power to do what could change their statuses. Milonge derived his loving spirit from the religious belief and practice as noted that:

> The late Milonge had closer cooperation with the Lutheran Church . . . he was not drinking. He was also secretary to the church and he took most of his wisdom from the Bible. (Interview notes with Amina Kadinda, 21/01/2014)

The habit of not drinking alcohol suggested that Milonge did most of his decisions while of sound mind. Also, he was a religious believer and leader with the position of secretary to the church in the community. Religion can play a role in making people behave nicely in fear of

God. However, in reviewing the history of the Lutheran Church to which Milonge belonged, it is possible that he had a critical mind capable of questioning the status quo of himself and the people he was leading because his critical thinking was the essence of the Lutheran Church denomination. Milonge also harvested his wisdom from professionals:

> The first he had done was to involve professionals at his disposal, which is the first thing he was doing. His statement came after having consulted some professionals like teachers, extension officers who were found in limited number in rural areas and also the pastors, this thing has kept him always reasonable. (Focus group discussion notes, 15/01/2014)

> Professionals in rural areas were relatively educated compared to most rural dwellers. A close link between Milonge and professionals indicated he was harvesting technical advice from relatively more educated people. As a result, he was able to discern the differences between educated and non-educated people and their approaches to development issues. This knowledge may have contributed to his valuing education and the school. Through such understanding Milonge encouraged fellow villagers to do the same through enhancing cooperation between teachers and villagers. It was also pointed out that Milonge had insight into education through attending *bush school* classes.

> Yes bush school, he attended my classes which gave him a insight which helped him lead the village. (Interview notes with Zakayo Nyamba, 18/01/2014)

Bush schools were schools established by Christian missionaries of almost all denominations at the advent of western Christian missionaries in Tanzania, with a goal to teach their believers and potential believers the three skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic in order to let them read the gospel. Thus, Milonge's reading and writing skills, religious beliefs and his use of outside professionals in solving problems, contributed to building his capacity as a village chair person. In turn, he contributed to building capacity of Kitamburo in working together towards addressing and redressing their development challenges, including education. Community recognition of the relatively higher capacity Milonge possessed resulted in community members building trust in him, which in turn he used to strengthen cooperation among community members.

Hey Days of Ujamaa at Kitamburo

Ujamaa experiences.

Under Milonge's leadership, Kitamburo community witnessed an unexpected pace of development within the first 5 years of its establishment. Mahanjam Malinguni believed that:

I think the achievements recorded by our community during ujamaa will never be beaten. . . . If I were me the only way to development is ujamaa. (Interview notes with Mahanjam Malinguni, 17/01/2014)

This was a result of the proper implementation of ujamaa policy at the community level. Ujamaa advocated for collective work, self-reliance, and the zeal for self-determination aspects, which were in one way or another found in the religion and traditions of Kitamburo community. Thus the history of Kitamburo fostered the implementation of ujamaa policy. As a result, the village managed to initiate and successfully run many community-based collective projects. The success encouraged outsiders from the district, region, the nation, and foreign countries to support Kitamburo, something which encouraged the initiation of more and more community collective projects. Commenting on the advent of the support to the community, respondent Galamule Magobe said:

We were harvesting and without our expectations we found a machine coming with the chairperson. The chairperson announced: Hey folks the government helped us with the machine to harvest this season. Then the machine entered the farm and within few hours the harvest was done. It did everything. (Interview notes with Galamule Magobe, 22/01/2014)

This was a combine harvester which was owned by the district and was moving from one village to helping villagers harvest wheat. The villagers' role was to fuel the machine. As noted already, promising performance in agricultural production made Kitamburo receive many government supports. Amongst things remembered by all respondents were: four tractors, three vehicles, four flour-making motors, two village ujamaa shops (shops opened by capital collectively owned by villagers and which villagers had the final say on how the realized profit should be used), and one village carpentry workshop. Kitamburo also kept enough cows, enabling them to sell milk to the milk industry in the regional headquarters of the administrative region where Kitamburo was found. The community also kept a number of swine. During data collection, I used to have my breakfast and lunch at a food vendor's in a building which I was told was donated to the village by founder of the nation, the late Julius Nyerere. The building constituted a simple hotel and guesthouse. It was upon the implementation of the relatively

promising ujamaa policies that invariably Kitamburo happened to be the best village in implementing *Siasa ni Kilimo* (Politics is Agriculture) at district, regional, and national levels. I observed the certificates the community was awarded in different years.

However, community members learned that the promising joint production and productivity outputs realized from the collective community-based activities were not translated into tangible human well-being which, as noted above, seems to be the essence of the women's association that established the community. Community members were unhappy:

> We have been telling him, Mr. Chairman [Milonge] you are leading this village but what we see is material development our economy is still very poor so what are we doing this is mere material development. We had village tractors, village vehicles, maize graining machines, and so many other machines. We had village milk cow which produced milk that we had to sell milk to milk industries down town, swine which failed to stand up during eating due to the overweight, but we said these are material developments our wellbeing is not good. (Interview notes with Yajenga Paulo, 21/01/2014)

This indicated that community members were learning and had a vision, or rather expectation, of how family and individual wellbeing would correspond with the recorded production and productivity outputs. Moreover, it demonstrated that Kitamburo community members did not have the culture of silence. They were transparent. It was a community of people who could stand and speak out when they saw things not in their favor. Collective ujamaa activities raised people's awareness which helped them question their status quo.

> The people were still poor it was easily noticeable that these people are still weak, they do a big productive work but themselves are still. . . . By then we had very strong effort when we were told to go and do a development work we did, we were going to carry timber from the forest to the extent that some of us were left with life permanent ocher, women with babies on their backs went to carry timber on the spirit of development activity . . . that is when we started to discuss with the chairman, you guy in our opinion what we have is just material development, what about our welfare? That is the time we started building these houses. (Interview notes with Yajenga Paulo, 21/01/2014)

These grievances made the village management find ways and means to access a loan from the Tanzania Housing Bank (THB). Through the loan, villagers were able to make decent houses which, upon data collection, were still in good order. Villagers were jointly making bricks and

burning them and giving them to someone in the community. That person used the bricks to construct a house and requested a subloan from the village to purchase industrial-based construction materials. The loan was paid back through selling farm products. Villagers paid back the loan to the village management, which in turn paid back to the bank. It is interesting that the exercise of making bricks locally made villagers learn the potential of making bricks for constructing buildings other than residential houses.

        With improved production and improved houses the population at Kitamburo grew and the number of children grew also, but the village had no a primary school.

> The idea of establishing a school came after having learnt that the village had many children and that letting them all go to another village in search of education was found to be very unfair. . . . so we tried to request for a school at the district . . . the district response was positive and they said that is one of the goals of establishing a village you will now engage in various joint development projects. (Interview notes Hussein Juma, 17/01/2014)

Prior to having a school, most children from Kitamburo were schooled in primary schools in nearby villages, both of which were at least 5 km from Kitamburo and thus a child had to walk at least 10 km every school day. When asked who initiated the idea of constructing a school at Kitamburo, they said:

> In fact it was the people [community members at Kitamburo] who initiated rumors that we need a school in this place because we do not have a school, we do not have a school so councilors were discussing the issues and latter we found we were approved to have a school. (Interview notes with Zakayo Nyamba, 18/01/2014)

As noted earlier, Kitamburo community was established *pari passu* with the country-wide villagization program in Tanzania. As noted by respondent Kingie Mnyumba:

> One of the goals of socialism was to gather people [in collective villages] in order to provide them with important services including education. (Interview notes with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

It was envisioned that the government would initiate construction of the school. To the contrary, it was the community members at Kitamburo who requested the government allow them to construct a primary school in their village. It is interesting to note that community members wanted to balance progress made in agricultural production with progress in other important

sectors like education. This was indicated by community members thinking that the school belonged to them from its establishment and thus they had the full responsibility of ensuring the school was constructed and operational. The excitement of having a school was evidenced by another respondent who said:

> We went to make bricks. We villagers made bricks for the construction of two classrooms. That was one stream. Then the next year they constructed another building . . . if I am not mistaken by the time they were shifting to the proper school buildings they were already in Grade 4. They started at Grade 4 down there . . . So that is how the school as you saw it now was constructed. It was constructed by our own efforts. Parents' effort. Yes Mr! (Interview notes with Elizabeth Kigula, 22/01/2014)

Elizabeth Kigula had memories that the school started at a building designated as a village warehouse before shifting to the current proper Kitamburo primary school buildings. According to her memories, which I later confirmed with school records, the school started in 1975. Community members had close link with school teachers and, in turn, school teachers had close link with the community members as noted by one respondent:

> Foundations were laid by the first teachers who told us that this school is around you so it is yours. We kindly request you [villagers] not be afraid of us [teachers]. We are teachers but we need to share with you, we ask your help so do not stay away from us. (Interview notes with Yajenga Paulo, 21/01/214)

The first teacher, who was also the first head teacher of the school, was a female teacher. Explaining how she was received by community members at Kitamburo, Kingie Mnyumba said:

> In fact they [Kitamburo community members] received her with suspicion because was a female teacher they did not believe that she could run the school. As you know the general trust over women during those days was doubtful. (Interview notes with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

This indicated that right from the beginning community members wanted a performing school. Kingie Mnyumba further commented that contrary to the mistrust of community members, the female teacher was brave enough to accept living in the huts just like villagers did before having the relatively decent houses. This made villagers wholly accept the teacher and come to trust in her. Even though the teacher accepted this environment, it was not perceived that she lost her professionalism.

She was brave. She already had experience of working in mountainous areas so she had no problems with the environment. She stayed and worked with us until she gave out fruits under her leadership. (Interview notes with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

The said fruits were students selected to join secondary school education.

Successes and challenges.

The good work done by teachers as measured by students selected for post primary school education and the spirit of joining villagers shown by teachers, as exemplified by the head teacher, made community members be more committed to their school. The school, which began without having a single building, had 19 rooms, as already noted in Chapter 4:

All constructions you see there is a result of public commitment. We bought ourselves the iron sheets and cement. The government contributed iron sheets for the head teacher's house only. We made bricks and the brick making site was about 5 km from here. (Interview notes with Mali ya Bwana, 17/01/2014)

Community volunteerism in school construction work was supported by the government by way of vehicles brought by the district to help villagers transport the bricks from the brick-making site to the construction site and also:

The village was given the opportunity of making timber from the nearby natural forest, so we looked for a license of making and selling timber and we used the money to purchase iron sheets and the sheets were by then very cheap. (Interview notes with Mali ya Bwana, 17/01/2014)

Community members feeling as though they were key stakeholders of the school played a part in the success of the school project. Construction work included teachers' houses which respondent Mtamalile Matege said since its construction which was done around the past 40 years by the time of data collection, teachers stay without paying any rent fee:

The purpose is to make teachers do away with the idea that they are here to be charged money. We just tell them on arrival that you will pay house rent but until today they only live free. (Interview notes with Mtamalile Matege, 17/01/2014)

The community also offered cultivation land to the school and helped the school to cultivate crops. Kitamburo village had tractors.

So we [school committee] requested villagers to let the village tractor help cultivate the school farm and villagers accepted. (Interview notes with Mpenda Elimu, 17/01/2014)

The harvests from the school farm were sold and the money was used to purchase various things needed by the school, but also some corn was used to:

> Make [traditional] alcohol, the alcohol is collected at the school there for the ceremony [school ceremonies like graduations] and parents enjoyed. (Interview notes with Kijogoo, 21/01/2014)

These school success stories happened during the hey days of the implementation of socialist-oriented programs, nationally and at Kitamburo community, and contributed to establishing the basis of school community connectedness. Thus there were more and more community investments to the school which demonstrated awareness that the school belonged to the community. The school farm, having cow/cattle for the school, and rent-free housing were all in place at the time of data collection. These all contributed to the teachers' commitment to improved school performance. The community had very close cooperation with teachers. For example, with respect to village land, the community members were willing not only to offer cultivation of the land to teachers but also the means to cultivate the land as well narrated by Mtamalile Matege that:

> We gave them [teachers] village tractors, we said teachers should not have difficulties of getting food, we tell them to pay by installment later on, the students went to weed teachers farms, helped them to spray insecticides, helped them to harvest, and helped to take the harvest from teachers' farms to their respective homes without any complaint from community members. This made teachers realize the community recognition of their job and motivated them [teachers] to work hard in order to reciprocate the good things villagers did to them. (Interview notes with Mtamalile Matege, 17/01/2014)

At Kitamburo it was generally understood that:

> A student to help a teacher in his/her private work is part of training to children. Such activities were regarded to contribute to child upbringing and that a student belongs to both teachers and parents. (Interview notes with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

Going back to our metaphor, if teachers were taken as one series of slips and community members another series of slips, the two slips were so weaved together so that there was a strong strip in which every party had something to lose should it be weakened. However teachers were government employees who were allocated to schools by the government through the DEO. Thus teachers were coming and going. Kitamburo community did have a practice for

recognizing when a teacher was performing well, according to the community-based indicators. For example, the first head teacher (the teacher that opened the school) was often invited back to the primary school celebrations after she left the community.

> We were inviting her [the first teacher who opened the school] in our school celebrations in appreciation of what she did as founder of the school. We were giving her a chance to speak and she always added on the good things she already told us when she was here and we used to give her some gift when invited to such school events. (Interview notes with Yajenga Paulo, 21/01/2014)

This practice, the recognition of a teacher performing well, encouraged teachers to perform. One time Kitamburo received a head teacher who did not perform according to community [Kitamburo] based indicators of a performing teacher.

> We found like a loss to us because we constructed school buildings, we paid school contributions but children were not going for secondary school education, the first year no child, the second year no child, and the third year! (Interview notes with Mahanjam Malinguni, 17/01/2014)

This situation had a negative impact on the students and community members and made Kitamburo community learn that not all teachers fit their set criteria. As a result the community worked towards innovative strategies to retain good teachers:

> For example looking at the school environment, a teacher might claim that there are no decent teachers' houses, if that happens we look for a relatively decent house around the village and then we show the teacher and get satisfied and stays here. (Focus group discussion notes, 15/01/2014)

While good teachers were encouraged to stay, strategies were found to transfer bad teachers. As a result, the community started to assess the said non-performing head teacher and noted:

> It seemed he had a language that whether they pass or not is none of my business provided I receive my salary. (Interview notes Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

With respect to involving the community in school matters:

> He did not want to cooperate [with community members] in solving trouble issues like absenteeism nor did he like to monitor school absentees and he was able of taking unilateral decisions and beating students so this made him be in different with the school committee. (Interview notes Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

While other teachers were friendly and well received by the community, and parents were ready to see their children helping teachers as already noted, this non-performing teacher was assessed as:

> Unmarried and there were rumors that he was running with grown up school girls so parents found that he is likely to cause problems. (Interview notes Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

Kitamburo community members were concerned with the teacher's behavior and:

> That old man [Milonge] said we shall go to the district to see education officers and tell them this issue. (Interview notes with Mahanjam Malinguni, 17/01/2014)

This indicates that the Kitamburo community had visionary leadership focused on the future of the community and students were seen as important members of the future Kitamburo community. The leaders had insights into what issues to deal with—who, where, and when. Respondents said:

> We really went there we talked to them [district education officers] in fact they understood us they said we shall do something and when they did it since that year we found students going for secondary school education. Three students passed, four students, five students and sometimes eight students we came to say that we did a good thing. (Interview notes with Mahanjam Malinguni, 17/01/2014)

The district transfered the poor performing head teacher and sent a new head teacher to the school. Again, good leadership at the district level of education administration enhanced school community connectedness. The officers were ready to listen to community grievances and acted accordingly. Thus, the new head teacher, retired at the time of data collection, went to Kitamburo with an informed knowledge about the community.

> I came here as a head teacher well informed that we transfer you to a school where community members complain about poor school performance. (Interview notes with Mzee wa Busara, 21/01/2014)

Mzee wa Busara narrated that when he reported at the school he found the school not performing well as measured by the PSLE results. He started to put into place strategies to improve school performance. Mzee wa Busara remembered to tell fellow teachers that:

> The way this community is nationwide commended in best performance in agriculture, animal keeping, and other production sectors it is evident that in the education sector we

let them down so as teachers we have to work hard to ensure school performance is

improved. (Interview with Mzee wa Busara, 21/01/2014)

He said teachers had their grievances over parents and parents had their grievances over teachers.

He had to play the role of negotiator in order to bring the two groups together to work towards

improved school performance.

Teachers complained that parents had their own weaknesses but I reminded them that

even parents were supposed be educated by us [teachers] through adult education. So we

are like surgeons. If you are a surgeon and every patient you perform surgery dies on

your hands who is to blame, the patients or the surgeon? (Interview with Mzee wa

Busara, 21/01/2014)

When teachers understood the situation, the head teacher turned to community members. When

community members understood the situation, the two institutions–the school and the village–

worked together to form and revitalize the school committee and school organizational groups

and meetings.

In the first place we established school council which met once monthly. This was made

by all students and all teachers. Then we had staff meetings in which amongst others we

discussed issues raised in the school council . . . Then we had meetings of the school

committee, then parents' meeting which were convened to school and at the end of year

we had parents open day. (Interview notes with Mzee wa Busara, 21/01/2014)

It was through these meetings that school food was proposed as one of the strategies to address

and redress school truancy and improve performance. This information gives reason to believe

that good leadership on the part of the school and the village helped the two institutions to work

together. It was the village's good leadership which dared to bring the issue of poor school

performance to higher education administrative levels. It was the new school head teacher who

had the courage to face both teachers and villagers and revitalize school performance, which had

declined when the school was handed over to a poor performing head teacher. Almost all

interviewed community members commended that:

He improved the school because the one who was here before him dropped the school

academically and economically to the extent that the school was about to die. (Interview

notes with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

The teacher had the required participatory approaches:

Had a good language, he loved education, had a good way of guiding students.

(Interview notes with Galamula Magobe, 22/01/2014)

Having "good language" raises the issue of communication. To communicate for the purpose of enhancing cooperation, one must use language which can convince the person you wish to cooperate with. Community members further added that:

He [the new head teacher] was a kind of person who loved education and loved mixing with community member. The head teacher before him did not bother with school matters after office hours. (Interview notes with Galamula Magobe, 22/01/2014)

This implied the head teacher was able to take school issues to the village through mixing and discussing school issues in informal settings with community members without losing his status as a teacher. He had a kind of personality that made community members associate the school to him. He lived as an insider without losing the outsider qualities that brought him to Kitamburo as an expert in education. This demonstrated his creativity and flexibility, qualities that community members were missing before he came to the school.

Positive experiences were gained by improving school performance. Meetings at various levels motivated community members to adopt meetings as a means for planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Major school programs were prepared, deliberated upon, and finally approved for implementations through meetings. Major school challenges like parent-teacher misunderstandings and student truancy were discussed and solved through meetings. Community members perceived meetings as a major strategy for new innovations and follow-up of agreed activities, procedures, and regulations. When asked what happened if an issue was brought to the attention of the village government but was not solved:

You may wait until parents' meeting because the schedules of parents' meetings are known that every month there must be parent meeting. That is the place you will come to mutual understanding. (Interview notes with Elizabeth Mkaluka, 18/01/2014)

When asked how school-related problems were solved, they said:

If we find students are not passing we sometimes hold informal meeting of three or four people to discuss the issue. . . . Yes, why our children are not selected to join secondary school . . . from there we advance our concern to public village meetings or to the school through our school committee. (Interview notes with Hussein Juma, 17/01/2014)

It was further added that:

There are also informal meetings of elders who can discuss the issue [related to education] before it is taken to the attention of hamlet or village leadership. (Focus group discussion notes, 15/01/2014)

The use of informal conversations in discussing school issues suggests the recognition and contribution of wisdom in settling potential misunderstandings. The use of elder participants in such meetings who arguably had long experience in the community indicates the recognition of the role of indigenous knowledge in managing education related matters. Further, it indicated the long history of the use of meetings in reaching to a consensus. This foundation contributed in making Kitamburo community members believe in sharing information and ideas through meetings as a way out of potential school community misunderstandings and thus strengthen school-community connectedness. Community members perceived that:

With the current system in place at the village government and the school, a person has a desire to know exactly the revenue, and the programs and many arguments such as why children fail. If there are contribution funds, how were they used, what problems. Currently parents are called in a meeting and they are told each and everything and a consensus must be reached in the parent meeting. (Interview notes with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014)

School issues were also discussed in all villagers' meetings as pointed out by one respondent that:

We have village assemblies, of which teachers attend and the head teacher or a representative is given a chance to present school needs and concerns. Everything is discussed there and if it is good they [community members] accept it and if it is bad they reject it there. (Interview notes with Severina Mkaluka, 18/01/2014)

Community members at Kitamburo respected meetings and most of them attended because:

What is agreed in the meeting is taken by teachers for implementation without doing anything against what was agreed in the meeting. (Interview notes with Severina Mkaluka, 18/01/2014)

Thus even when some teachers were getting transferred and new teachers reported to Kitamburo, the community believed in intergenerational learning and did not expect changes as noted by one respondent that:

I don't think if there will be any teacher who can do anything different because the teacher who comes meets here the remaining [experienced to the community] ones so they tells where should walk with two legs and where to walk with a single leg and that this community needs one, two, three! (Interview notes with Kijogoo, 21/01/2014)

While this perception focused on the teacher community, the same perception was held by the village community that:

I might say is a matter of wisdom or may be our traditions because even if a person shifts to this village from another place after a time you find him/her behaving just like the rest of the people who have been here since the beginning of the village. (Interview notes with Severina Mkaluka, 18/01/2014)

This suggested the existence of a strong cultural foundation which made new comers adapt to the community culture instead of making community members adopt and adapt the culture of a new comer. Therefore there is a school culture which fostered school community connectedness and there was a community members' culture which also fostered school community connectedness. These two cultures depended on the reciprocal performance of each of the parties to motivate the other to perform. It was upon this coexistence that it was possible to cultivate school community connectedness to post ujamaa Tanzania.

Post Ujamaa Experiences

Ujamaa ideology.

Many respondents perceived socialism to contribute to the observed school community connectedness.

The majority of us are still those who have survived socialism that is why. You know ideas once established in mind is difficult to let it go out. (Interview notes with with Severina Mkaluka, 18/01/2014)

The ujamaa ideology emphasized self-reliance. It kept primacy on the use of resources at the disposal of a community in the development process and thus encouraged critical thinking and self-determination of an individual and the community. The ujamaa ideology also emphasized democratic management and planning processes. Community members perceived themselves as having a socialist legacy:

Our village was socialist oriented. We had a unified voice under one leader (Milonge). I would say it was socialism which established the idea that we are all one. (Focus group discussion notes, 15/01/2014)

However, upon data collection, other equally socialist-oriented activities in the community were not as active as they used to be. As a matter of fact, most collective joint projects, including ujamaa farms, had ceased operations or were sold by the time of data collection. Respondents perceived that:

If you have religious faith absolutely perfect for your religion, even if you might come to a point of losing faith you cannot lose it completely to death. [For example] a member of a given faith let say a Christian might for one reason or another be excommunicated you will find the same person at least attending Sunday masses. (Interview notes with Mahanjam Malinguni, 17/01/2014)

Almost all respondents agreed with Mali ya Bwana's thinking that:

There is a *Swahili* saying that a child is molded according to mentorship extended to him/her, therefore the mentorship extended to us by our founding leaders made villagers know that the school belongs to us in the sense that the students who undergo training there come from our families and for that reason we have the obligation to support it and see that children of our school receive a better education from teachers. (Interview notes with Mali ya Bwana, 17/01/2014)

Thus, the cooperation amongst community members and between community members and teachers was translated as remnants of socialism. This belief had some truth in it because though most machines (vehicles, motors, etc.) that Kitamburo community owned at the time of ujamaa were, by the time of data collection, sold, material things were not the only support Kitamburo had received during socialism.

The founder of the nation, the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere for instance, visited the village twice when he was serving as president of Tanzania. I observed two trees planted by Nyerere near a building which had been used as the village library and then transformed to the village archives where old village documents and materials were kept. Community members remembered that when the two trees were planted, the hill closer to Kitamburo primary school was almost bare without any trees and during the event Nyerere told them that in his next visit to the community [which never happened anyway] he would like to see the hill covered by trees.

This motivated villagers to plant trees, a process which triggered villagers to open their own trees farms which, upon data collection, were one of the reliable sources of funds to villagers. The said hill was also covered by a forest.

Agricultural experts from Canada, China, and Japan also visited the Kitamburo community. The Chinese expert taught Kitamburo community members about horticulture (interview with Mahanjamu Malinguni, 17/01/2014), where as the Japanese expert trained them in harvesting and storage of horticultural products. Through the Government of Japan, Kitamburo and neighboring villages were supported by a warehouse to store green products like vegetables and fruits (interview with Mahanjam Malinguni, 17/01/2014). The warehouse was located about 6 km from Kitamburo. Later, a Canadian who came to Kitamburo as an expert in animal husbandry (interview with Kingie Mnyumba, 22/01/2014) mobilized community members at Kitamburo and neighboring communities to establish a savings and credit cooperative organization(s) (SACCOs) to manage money they were getting from horticulture. The SACCOs was therefore named *Mali mbichi* [literally meaning green products] SACCOS. Upon data collection, the SACCO was still active and was substantial in helping community members save their money and access loans at an affordable interest rate for purchasing agricultural inputs and paying for the education of their children. Although most formal ujamaa projects were not active, there were various skills and knowledge garnered during ujamaa which helped people to improve their life. Moreover, there were a number of associations which might be identified as modified forms of ujamaa that helped community members to earn money. Thus respondent Mtagalile Matege proudly said:

> We have a lot of resources outside there [in the farms] do not think we stay idle. There are so many things you can cultivate- round potatoes, maize, fruits, . . . everything is available here. Through such resources if you harvest little by little you must get money. (Interview notes with Mtamalile Matege, 17/01/2014)

With respect to associations he said:

> We have honey keeping groups, we have joined in a number of groups, we have joined to the SACCOs, those are things which helps us collect little by little. (Interview notes with Mtamalile Matege, 17/01/2014)

Income generated from the said diversified economic sources ensured parents' capacity to pay for the education of their children. With an understanding that primary education was the

foundation for all other levels of education to follow, parents were committed to providing a better education for their children in primary schools and thus committed to school community connectedness as a strategy to motivate teachers and students to perform what was expected of them. Respondent Mtamalile Matege said that by using the resources he was able to send his children to a private boarding secondary school, despite the fact that there was a government secondary school within the community. This scenario suggested that the human capital Kitamburo community had received from foreign experts helped them to transform the environmental capital at their disposal into financial capital, which in turn helped them to reinvest into human capital not of foreigners but of their own children.

Role models.

Educated people from Kitamburo community were returning home, not as visitors but as development catalysts. For example:

> Zelina constructed a house for her mother, Terudi has built a house for her family, Nolina has built a house for her mother, Treace has built a house for her mother. (Interview notes with Mzee wa Busara, 21/01/2014)

This made community members understand the benefits of investing in education which in turn motivated more effort in investing in education, an effort which was partly translated in investing social capital by having close cooperation with teachers.

In addition to the material support, educated people from Kitamburo community were coming back home with obvious social changes such as marrying White people. Upon data collection, there were two people from the community who, after going to western countries for further education, married White wives[3] and went home to Tanzania with them. At Kitamburo, the significance of bi-racial couples was demonstrated by one person who was married to a White person. Upon the death of his wife, relatives of the wife [in one of a western Europe country] were able to mobilize funds which the husband used to construct a building that villagers were using as kindergarten. This possibility of marrying a white person in a western country made students in primary school work hard and achieve well to increase the probability of going to western White people countries for further education.

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[3] In my experience, many citizens of Tanzania, like many other countries which were once under White colonial rule, considered White people as superior to Black people therefore a marriage to a White person suggests that an individual is relatively better than the others.

The well cherished Milonge, who served the position of village chairperson for more than 20 years, had the opportunity to visit a number of foreign countries during the hay days of socialism in Tanzania. He visited:

> West Germany before the reunion of East Germany and West Germany. He visited both countries. He visited Australia, he also visited Cuba. He visited about 5 foreign countries. (Interview notes with Mahanjam Malinguni, 17/01/2014)

During those old days such an opportunity was rare to Tanzanians and could have made Milonge consider himself elite and one who was not supposed to live in rural areas. To the contrary, he came home to Tanzania and was able to serve his people. Upon data collection, one member of the village council responsible for village accounts was a graduate of a renowned cooperative college in Tanzania, which offered a diploma course in cooperatives. The positive role played by Milonge and the increasing number of educated elites with Kitamburo as their village of domicile, along with their respective material and moral support of their respective families and the general community, increased the already existing critical thinking amongst community members; an aspect that suggested the need for quality village leadership. Based on the promising management records of Milonge and the relatively poor performance of village leaders who came after him:

> Then came to power the late Chigambe and then the late Matimla then Mdebwedo there after . . . (silence) oh during that period we were quite unstable. Oh yes. Then came to power one young boy called Teruwanda who served for just a short time and then came to power the late Sekeseke. So the village had totally lost direction. In fact all that time it was like there was no proper village chairperson. (Interview notes with Elizabeth Kigula, 22/01/2014)

Community members learned the importance of education and the importance of their leader's exposure to different countries and difference experiences. Thus upon data collection, one member of the focus group said:

> I should not feel so proud of myself but personally I finished schooling in this school in 1984 and there after I was privileged to go abroad for a one year study tour. I stayed in German and Denmark. While in Denmark I visited Russia, Spain, East and West German, Sweeden and Norway. (Focus group discussion notes, 15/01/2014)

This was the incumbent chairperson of Kitamburo village who was also chairperson of the school committee. Education and diverse experiences (such as traveling to other countries) of top village leadership made Kitamburo community develop workable management procedures and principles.

Village government.

The village management structure at Kitamburo was in line with recommended structures as per the laws and regulations of Tanzania (URT, 2001). At the top of the village management structure was a meeting that included all of the villagers, the second level was a meeting of the village council, and the third level, a meeting of the hamlet (sub-villages). According to the law, hamlets and the village council met monthly, while all villagers met quarterly. This was the procedure at Kitamburo. Kitamburo, like other villages, had a village executive officer (VEO) responsible for the daily execution of village management activities and a village chair person who was the head of the village and chairperson of all village level meetings, such as the meeting of the village council and villagers' meetings (village assembly). According to the law, the VEO was a government employee whereas the chairperson was democratically elected by villagers. The village chairperson represented the village at the ward and district levels. This suggested that the village chairperson was crucial for effective village representation and thus Kitamburo community had to ensure that the post was held by a visionary person:

> Steps are taken against leaders who are not stable. I will give an example of a period of time you can not specify the person concerned, but he assumed chairmanship of the village and we said this is just normal to rotate but his affairs were quite incorrect he was selfish, tribalism we started to question his leadership and people began to complain. Eventually a team of about 10 elders decided to call a meeting and write down the complaints and submit to the District Director. . . . the District sent here investigators who proved beyond doubt that the man squandered the village wealth . . . he was taken to custody and the District Director finally came and said the person is no longer the village chairman he is terminated from office due to one two three reasons. We chose another chairperson. (Interview notes with Mahanjam Malinguni, 17/01/2014)

Through strong village management, Kitamburo made bylaws to guide the various activities of the community members, including activities of education.

Yes we had village bylaws. If somebody did not attend to a village development activity

was penalized. (Interview notes with Mpenda Elimu, 17/01/2014)

Despite effective village government, some community issues needed indigenous skills, relations, knowledge, and experiences:

When the village government find an issue can best be solved at a clan level it advises the

clan leader of the concerned clan to hold a [clan] meeting and try solve the matter.

(Interview notes with Severina Mkaluka, 18/01/2014)

This practice made the village involve indigenous leadership in various matters that were beyond the scope of village government. These included matters regarding welfare of individuals linked to clan relationships.

Probably if we see a clan fellow whose behavior is not in line of what is expected of him

or her then the respective clan must call a meeting to counsel him or her. (Interview

notes with Severina Mkaluka, 18/01/2014)

In turn, community members recognized the importance of clan leadership. Thus, the clan relationships, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, which contributed to the emergence of Kitamburo community, continued to be active and respected despite the emergent village leadership and all ujamaa activities explained in this chapter.

Indigenous community management.

Upon data collection, Kitamburo community had at least 12 clans but three were most dominant. This indicated that indigenous clan structure lived on through the colonial, and ujamaa phases of Tanzania. Today the clans lived together in villages but in the day to day lives of the people clans continue to have an influence. The sustainability of indigenous clans which arguably employs indigenous management skills and knowledge suggests the contribution of indigenous knowledge on the observed school-community connectedness and learning communities. Respondent Severina Mkaluka remembered that each clan held meetings to discuss clan issues and these meetings were "scheduled," an idea well supported by another respondent who said a clan chair person:

Had plans on how clan meetings will be convened to [discuss] clan issues that cannot be

solved by village assembly or other village administrative organs. When the clan fails to

solve that is when the matter was brought to the attention of the village management.

(Interview notes with Kijogoo, 21/01/2014)

This information about clan meetings suggested that clan meetings were either called in response to suggestions brought to the attention of clan leaders by the village management or were held to try solve a clan issue. If these actions failed, the matter was forwarded to the village management. Without regard to the hierarchy of the process involved in holding clan meetings, the information showed the integration of formal village management and clan management in the village:

> For example if an adult person does not have a farm then the respective clan of the person will call a meeting to discuss and consul him/her if there will be no changes then the matter will be brought to the attention of hamlet leaders and finally to the village office. I found this practice here at Kitamburo. (Focus group discussion notes, 15/01/2014)

Clan welfare issues dealt with at clan meetings included education issues as well as:

> If [let say] you did not send corn to school while you know, your chair will call you to the clan meeting. They will tell you that you make us feel shame! You are supposed to send corn to school and once you send the corn your clan chair will be happy. (Interview notes with Kijogoo, 21/01/2014)

Thus issues concerning parents' responsibility for the education of their children involved clan members and clan management apart from involving the village management. Clan members had blood relationships so it was understandable that community members in their respective clans had more information about the state of affairs of community members with respect to the school progress of their children. Thus it was easier to follow-up, which strengthened the cooperation within and between clan members. The interesting thing of clans is that same clan members cannot marry, so every clan had a link with another clan through marriage which was very powerful in tying community members together.

Despite strong clan member relationships, respondent Elizabeth Kigula reminded me that clan leadership dealt with management of tangible issues only; the spiritual part was done by churches. She confidently said:

> There are currently no traditional religious rituals here. It [the traditional rituals] is a dead sector completely. Community members are deeply religious. Oh here? We even have no any traditional healer. Here we have the Bible only. There is even no person male or female whom you can go for divine services. We live peacefully. We live only by the power of God. (Interview with Elizabeth Kigula, 22/01/2014)

The church.

Upon data collection, Kitamburo was a congregation of the Lutheran church which constituted five streets; three of which were within the Kitamburo community and two were in nearby communities. The congregation pastor was stationed at Kitamburo. There were three church buildings for the Lutheran church alone which, according to church administration, every church was considered as a church street and was led by a street evangelist. Apart from the evangelist whose role was to impart religious beliefs to the members of the street, a church street had a chair person, a secretary, and a treasurer to take care of management roles other than those directly related to the gospels under the street evangelist. Down to the evangelist, there were elders of the church who were selected according to the context of the street. These elders had close contact with families and individual believers. Thus the Lutheran church had a close network which united the people.

Another denomination with a good number of believers in the community was the Roman Catholic (RC) church. However, there was no parish at Kitamburo. The parish was near the headquarters of the Kitamburo administrative ward at a place called Nzave. The parish father conducted Sunday mass only once in 2 or 3 months. The RC community was a sub-parish (an outstation). Despite being an outstation, there were four catechists and seven small communities of the RC church which met once per month to pray. Every community had a chair person, a secretary, a treasurer, and other religious related associations. The monthly RC community-based prayer did not take place in the church building. It took place in different houses of the RC believers. One of the criteria to determine where the monthly prayer should take place was the activeness of the RC member. If a certain household showed a noted weakness in following religious beliefs it was chosen to host the monthly prayer in order to use that opportunity to reinforce the household's religious practice.

Religion continued to instill a sense of unity both within denominations and between general communities as noted by a participant:

> As I said you will see churches have significant contribution, people are living the word of God even those who are yet to be baptized are not arrogant. You know I preached the world of God at Mndizi there for 3 or 4 years and in my assessment probably the non-converts here are better off compared to Christians at Mndizi. . . if you happen to live there and then come here you will learn that here people have traditional religious faith,

they know god and you can see people living the faith of god even the non-converts behave completely different and you can notice that these people know God. (Interview notes with Zakayo Nyamba, 18/01/2014)

Kitamburo had not lost the very slips which led to its establishment and all that happened during ujamaa. Despite the death of ujamaa, the Kitamburo community continues to have strong school-community connectedness.

Conclusion

This chapter shows how community members were critically reflecting on their statuses and taking action towards improvement. Mentorship and monitoring helped to forge collaboration despite potential different points of view amongst themselves. Collective beliefs and mutual trust strengthened the collaboration between and among community members and teachers. Lessons learned from history motivated them to constantly generate and advance new agendas, including the agenda that the education of their children was the most important thing in their development path. This collective believe led to the community members collectively supporting the school. Emergent themes from chapters 4 and 5 are summarized and discussed in Chapter 6.

Figure 2. Map of Kitamburo

Chapter 6

Summary of Themes, Discussions, and Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative study about school community connectedness and exploration of learning communities was to answer the question: *How do schools and communities in Tanzania work together to generate learning communities*. The question was broken down into four interrelated questions, namely: (1) From the perspective of community members, what institutions, structures, personalities, norms, values, and ideas are in place and internalized by members of the extended school community that define a school as covenant community; (2) How the collectively acknowledged institutions, structures, personalities, norms, values, and ideas that speak to everyone in a moral voice of working together in curricula implementation operate; (3) How do the community members explain how shared community institutions, structures, personalities, and obligations were initiated or recognized; and (4) From the perspective of the community members, what impact does the school bring to the community and the community bring to the school that makes the partnership sustainable. The exploration was framed within a community capitals model with a focus on unveiling the catalyst that led to the learning community in the area of study. Data collected were analyzed using social capital theory, intergenerational theory, and learning as transformative theory, and pieces of emergent themes were presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

This chapter provides a summary of the emergent themes, discussion about the capitals, and discussion about the catalysts. Finally, the chapter provides the conclusion of the study, policy implications, limitations, and suggestions for future studies.

Summary of Themes

This study was framed in a community capabilities framework (CCF) which assumes that communities in different places have forms of capital which, in the presence of catalysts, can be used to achieve community vision and mission (Emery & Flora, 2006). Selection of the community under study was done based on the observed promising performance of the school. A pre-study that prompted this study revealed that the close collaboration between the school and the community could be contributing to the promising school performance. Collaboration is an aspect of social capital. Literature about social capital argues two major orientations, there are those who look at the community as an entity and thus emphasize community social capital (Putnam, 1993; Whitley & McKenzie, 2005), and those who put emphasis on the individuals and

emphasize individual social capital (Portes, 1998). Community social capital puts emphasis on what binds community members together: whereas individual social capital emphasizes how individuals assign their assets in a social dimension. I approached the Kitamburo community as an entity and thus investigated what brought community members together. The concern of community social capital is how communities of the same level bond and bridge with communities or individuals of higher or lower levels. Alternatively, community social capital is about horizontal and vertical connectedness, and structural and cognitive bonds (Whitley & McKenzie, 2005).

Emergent themes presented in Chapters 4 and 5 were analyzed to find out how they relate to one another and how they subsume one another. This process revealed that there were cognitive invisible ties between community members and the school that established the school community connectedness. With respect to the framework earlier presented in Chapter 2, these were the underlying mechanisms that encouraged community members to work together and create outputs that characterized learning communities. The themes emerged as a result of the interplay of the community capitals, whereas the interplay of community capitals was catalyzed by certain catalysts. Here under, is the summary of the themes.

Commitment.

Community members at Kitamburo showed commitment in taking their development in their own hands. Since pre-ujamaa days, the community showed signs of feeling responsible for their own development. Women in remote rural areas were able to initiate an association and initiate production activities that attracted more community members to join the association, forming a village. The village grew successfully, which is indicated by the fact that it was split into two administrative villages by the time of data collection.

The sense of commitment to take development in their own hands motivated the Kitamburo community to innovations that led them to construct a school. The school was a product of their own initiatives and they considered it to be their own property, a consideration that motivated them to always initiate strategies and activities aimed at making the school perform well. Thus, school-community connectedness grew organically from within the community due to the logic that the school belonged to the community. Community members were involved in school activities as custodians of the school. Most teachers were not the original members of the community. After learning how the community members at Kitamburo

perceived a school and being willing to conform to community members' understanding of that meaning, they remained to work at the school. However, when a teacher failed to conform to the community-based perception of the school or acted as a barrier to expectations of the school, the community members were able to question and take action towards redressing the situation. One standard that community members were aware of and worked hard to ensure was the transition of their children from primary school to secondary school. Ways and means were initiated to monitor and evaluate teachers', students' and parents' activities to ensure the goal was realized.

The purpose of using the primary school as a means for children at Kitamburo to continue onto secondary school education made community members be committed to improving the school's teaching and learning environment. The community constructed the school buildings one after another. They also constructed teachers' houses. They committed to provide moral and material support to the school. They provided farm land for the school. They provided cows for the school to keep. Thus when the idea of providing more time for their children to study at school and provide school food was proposed, it was warmly received by community members as an extension of the commitment to school improvement that they already had.

Commitment of community members was supported by the commitment of the teachers. Teachers were ready to live and work in remote rural areas. The first teacher who opened the school lived in a simple house just like the villagers at the time did. At the time of data collection the school had teachers' houses that were not of the same standards[4] of those owned by individual community members. Teachers' commitment to their professional career required them be creative and innovative in designing a teaching and learning environment through workable teaching methodologies, and teaching and learning materials, while establishing school-community connectedness.

The commitment of teachers and parents was further supported by students who were willing to embrace the initiatives of their parents and teachers in helping them to learn and perform. Most of the first batch of students were beyond the average recommended age of a

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[4] Teachers in Kitamburo were aware that they were staying in relatively low standard houses, but were satisfied due to their professional commitment. Teachers knew they were trained to train people. In Tanzania ignorance is more felt in rural areas than urban areas. Hence, the teachers found themselves at the right place to execute their professional responsibilities.

primary school, but they were able to perform because they were committed to school. Their commitment extended to students learning groups formed by the teachers. Here, students were able to lead themselves and learn new skills based on group discussions. Students were also able to ask teachers for technical support regarding concepts they did not understand.

Accountability and responsibility.

Parents found themselves accountable for the schooling of their children. They requested a school because they felt accountable for the long distance their children were walking in search of primary school education. When Kitamburo primary school received a head teacher who, according to community members, was not performing, the community members and particularly leaders of the community felt accountable to the situation, prompting them to report it to the district education officers. When the district education officers received the complaint about the teacher, they felt accountable for the poor performance of Kitamburo primary school and thus took steps to redress the situation. Teachers at Kitamburo primary school held themselves accountable for school performance and therefore initiated various activities to contribute to promising outcomes. These outcomes encouraged parents to support the initiated activities and students to get involved in the activities. Community members, teachers, and students had a common vision of improving school performance which was measured by students' transition to secondary school. To achieve the vision of students joining secondary school, a number of strategies and activities were initiated. Every individual had some responsibilities and every individual felt accountable when things were not going as they expected.

Communication.

There was smooth communication between parents, students, and teachers. The communication was mediated by meetings and messages through students or village leaders. Communication enhanced and informed participation, which encouraged creativity and innovativeness among teachers, parents, and students. This, in turn, encouraged regular improvement of strategies and activities while socio-economic policies were changing. Through effective communication community members were active participants of community meetings. It was through communication that teachers were able to share school progress and address challenges for purposes of improvement with parents. Learning and teaching challenges were communicated to parents directly or through the village government and school committee.

Participation.

Programs and activities at Kitamburo were always participatory in nature. Community members wanted to build capacity rather than being commanded to. Right from the beginning of the community as a village, community members were involved in processes that led to the establishment of the association, the village, the school, and various school programs and activities to support students' learning and teachers' teaching. Participation meant community members own the structures, programs, and activities initiated to support the school, like the school food programs. A sense of ownership made community members search for ways and means to get things done and to sustain school community connectedness even when macro policies were changing.

Mentorship and monitoring.

There was always a system of mentorship and monitoring at Kitamburo. Teachers who stayed at the school for a long time mentored new teachers. Therefore the school culture was sustained over time. During data collection, the incumbent head teacher had only 2 years of serving in the school and yet the school continued to perform as if he was there for many years. Community members were mentoring both new teachers and new people who joined the community. Moreover there was a systemic and ongoing monitoring of the practices of community members, teachers, and students ensuring each party effectively played its role. These roles among others were: reading on the part of students, taking care of students' school expenses on the part of parents, and teaching on the part of teachers. The monitoring system also ensured that distinguished individual and group efforts of any of the parties were commended while bad practices were discouraged and efforts were made to stop the negative practices. I was interested to learn that parents[5] were able to follow up and ensure rights were observed in the selection of students to join secondary school. For example, during data collection one of my participants asked me to read a letter from the district education officer (DEO) that he had received, and that highlights the way in which parents ensure rights were observed in the selection of students to join secondary school. In telling his story during the interview, my

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[5] In my experience parents in rural villages often regret when their children are chosen to join a secondary school as there are new fees involved and it means that their children cannot contribute to the family income. It appeared that in Kitamburo, parents wanted their children to join secondary school.

participant described how two of his children had been in consecutive primary school classes and had both been passed to join secondary school. Fellow villagers were suspicious of his children's performance, and thought that the children were using illegal means to pass the PSLE. The villagers secretly filed a letter of complaint to the DEO. The DEO discovered that the children did not use illegal means and wrote my participant a letter, the letter that I read.

Ideologies.

Kitamburo village was one of many registered ujamaa villages in Tanzania. In Tanzania, ujamaa was defined and pioneered by the first president of the country Julius Nyerere. Ujamaa was defined by Nyerere (1967, p. 162) as "an attitude of mind which distinguishes the socialist from the non-socialist." For him, the question was not how much wealth a person possessed but how the wealth was generated and for whom was used. If the wealth was generated through good means without involving the exploitation of other people, and if the wealth was used for the good of the poor masses, it was well and good. He was against exploitation and made people believe "self-reliance as the only way out of Tanzania's poor economic situation" (Nyerere, 1968, p. 60). He clarified that "self-reliance did not mean isolationism. For us, self-reliance is a positive affirmation that for our own development, we shall depend upon our own resources (Nyerere, 1968). He further added that "gifts and loans will endanger our independence," and that "gifts . . . have the effect of weakening [and] distorting our own efforts" (Nyerere, 1968, p. 239).

In the process of implementing his dreams towards socialist Tanzania, after only 5 months of independence for Tanzania in 1962, Nyerere published *Ujamaa: The Basics of African Socialism* because he had the notion that ujamaa was a mere extension and improvement of traditional African life, which was based on family. In pre-colonial Tanzania, like many other countries in Africa, the situation was as concluded by Yeager (1982) that:

> Because of their harsh physical surroundings, labor-intensive technologies, and familial social organizations, traditional cultures placed a high survival value on the equal sharing of resources. (p. 43)

It was that kind of equal sharing of resources that Nyerere had capitalized on in defining and establishing socialism in Tanzania.

Ujamaa came to be more pronounced in 1967 when Nyerere published three consecutive documents of *The Arusha Declaration: Education for Self-reliance and Socialism and Rural Development*.

> *The Arusha Declaration* spelled out Tanzania's path to socialism in more practical terms; *Education for Self-Reliance* described a strategy of practical education to support the socialist transformation, and *Socialism and Rural Development* explained how the peasantry were to become the focus of, and driving force behind, both local and national development. (Edwards, 1998, pp. 3–5)

This is what made Hyden (1980, p. 33) ruled out that "after the Arusha Declaration of 1967 the political leadership placed virtually all their eggs in the rural development basket." According to Nyerere, Ujamaa villages were to be:

> voluntary association of people who decide of their own free will to live together and work together for their common good. They, and no one else, will decide how much of their land they will cultivate together from the beginning. They, and no one else, will decide how to use the money they earn jointly. They, and no one else, will make all the decisions about their working and living arrangements. (Nyerere, 1968, p. 283)

According to the respondents, this was the context under which the Kitamburo community emerged as an ujamaa village in 1974 after having become a normal village in 1968.

It was very fortunate that the ideology and practice of ujamaa was well received at Kitamburo and the most significant construction in the community took place during the heydays of ujamaa in Tanzania. Almost all respondents referred to ujamaa as key to their observed collaboration with the school. Apart from the ideology, which is essentially a belief, ujamaa has left behind foundations of improved agricultural production and improved community members' capacity to have their voice heard. In addition, ujamaa allowed the community at Kitamburo to continue with a number of pro-ujamaa associations such as SACCOs and other production-based micro associations that contributed to the income of community members and nurtured socialist-oriented principles earlier applied to the community. Believing that something cannot be achieved by a single person but can be achieved through united effort, community members at Kitamburo collaborated among themselves to influenced teachers and students in collaborative activities which sustained the learning community.

There was a close link between commitment in building socialism and living as learning communities since learning communities are "cultural settings in which everyone learns, in which every individual is an integral part, and in which every participant is responsible for both the learning and the overall well-being of everyone else" (Myers & Simpson, as cited in Roberts & Pruitt, 2009, p. 5). Although socialism in Tanzania remains on paper rather than practice, socialism has molded community members to the extent that it is difficult for them to suddenly forget everything about it. Perceptions of socialism as a bond are beliefs invariably noted in the speeches and writings of the late Nyerere, who pioneered and advocated for a socialist development path in Tanzania. Therefore community members at Kitambulo had internalised a belief in socialism.

Values, norms, and rules.

Values, norms, and rules are vital in guiding people who live together as a community. Human beings are similar but each individual is unique and thus living together needs harmonization or at least conformity to some of the universally agreed values, norms, and rules. "Values are collective ideas about what is right or wrong, good or bad, and desirable or undesirable in a particular culture" (Williams, as cited in Kendall, Murray, & Linden, 2007, p. 77). "Need for achievement" (Pye, 2000, p. 250) is a cultural value taught to Chinese people right from the childhood. Values serve as "criterion for selecting among the alternatives available in a given situation" (Grondona, 2000, p. 45). There are two types of values "instrumental" and "intrinsic" values. Instrumental values are upheld in a context where people look for something which has direct or immediate benefit, while intrinsic values are held as a matter of life and death without consideration of the immediate or direct benefit. Internalized intrinsic values are called "moral" (Grondona, 2000, p. 46). Thus "a person is moral when answering to intrinsic values" (Grondona, 2000, p. 46).

Moral voice includes "justice voice" which reflects "an ideal of equality, reciprocity, and fairness between persons" and, "care voice" is an ideal of "attachment, loving and being loved, listening and being listened to, and responding and being responded to" (Gilligan as cited in Tappan, 2006, p. 6). Moral voice can also be perceived along Kohlberg's six stages of moral development, namely: (1) Heteronomous morality, (2) individualistic or instrumental morality, (3) interpersonally normative morality, (4) social system morality, (5) human rights and social

welfare morality, and (6) morality of universalizable, reversible, and prescriptive general ethical principles. Hence, values are the basis of community ethics.

Whereas values provide ideas about how people are supposed to behave, norms "have specific behavioural expectations" they are thus "established rules of behaviour or standards of conduct"(Kendall, at al., 2007, p. 78). Rules, on the other hand, are documented stands of behavior with respective enforcement sanctions. In other words, values serve as vision; norms serve as mission; and rules serve as constitution towards achieving development goal.

Kitamburo community had improved well-being as its value. Everybody was struggling to improve his/her life. Right from the beginning of the community, women formed an association and later looked for a farm in order to improve their income and general life and well-being. The general value of the need for improved well-being made them choose hard work over laziness, unity over isolation, and innovation over dormancy. During the heydays of socialism, the community worked hard and harvested much; harvests that enabled them to improve their life through improved housing and roads, and the construction of a primary school within the community.

From the outset, the long term chairperson of the community– Mr Milonge–had access to education as an intrinsic value towards improved well-being. He himself attended a bush school which gave him insight about the importance of education. Additionally, he used to seek advice from experts before engaging in any serious issue concerning the community. Seeking advice from experts who generally had many years in school relative to most community members is evidence that the chair valued access to education. In the same spirit, he pioneered advocating for the community to have its own primary school. When the school started, the first teacher showed promising behavior to community members, resulting in community members' positive attitudes toward educated people. The teacher managed to make some students continue with secondary education. On the basis of relatively promising outputs of educated people, the community made access to school a value and thus established a number of norms to support the school and children going to school. When these norms showed positive results, some of them were transformed into rules that governed community members' behavior with respect to school and schooling. It is these values, norms, and rules that collectively spoke in a moral voice to community members to make them support their school and show promising school-community connectedness.

Community members have also developed values and norms regarding the qualities of a good leader, including the community chair, head teacher, and the chair of a school committee. Having a community chair with diverse experiences in different countries seemed to be a norm. Having a performing head teacher with the capacity to interact with community members seems to be a norm after witnessing a head teacher who did not interact with parents led to poor school performance. Having some members of the school community who belong to the village council seems to be a norm after seeing the effectiveness of the committee when it included such people. During data collection, the community chair also served as the chair of the school committee for about 10 years. During data collection I interviewed four respondents who invariably were both members of the school committee and members of the village council. These were links that were similar to those discussed in the school committee and what was implemented in the community.

Reciprocity.

There was strategic school community reciprocity that made the two institutions connect despite macro policy changes. The community set aside land to be used as teachers' farms and school farms, thus food was not a problem for teachers as they themselves said during interviews. For comfortable teaching and learning, furniture is important. At Kitamburo, community members ensured that school desks, chairs and tables were satisfactory and I witnessed myself that there were enough desks for every student and enough tables and chairs for every teacher. Kitamburo community members requested a permit from the government to make timber from the nearby forest reserve. The timber was used to sell for money to buy iron sheets for roofing school buildings, but they also used timber to make school furniture. As mentioned earlier, even in individual houses of the interviewees I visited, there was enough furniture in every house. Thus the school benefited from being located at a community capable of making its own furniture. One of the big buildings in the community was a building used as a carpentry workshop during the heydays of ujamaa. This activity, though found inactive during data collection, left behind a number of people with carpentry skills previously employed in making furniture, including school furniture.

In addition, the school benefited because the community was taking care of it on the grounds that it viewed the school as a community property. They were always thinking about how to improve it. For instance, the school buildings were not constructed in a single year,

Instead the community engaged in a greater process that ultimately led to the school buildings. There was no point at which the community was satisfied with what was achieved. For example, when the community found the number of students at Kitamburo primary school was too big, they decided to construct stream 'B' of the school.

The village also had been gaining from the school. These gains were human capital, skills, material gains, and publicity, which was an added value to the reputation of the community. As earlier noted, the school led students from the community to go for secondary education, who after graduating in colleges and universities, successfully transformed their human capital to financial capital—they were going back home to invest in family houses. One community educated person who went through the same primary school went one step further when he decided to construct a community kindergarten building through his own resources.

The community also gained skills like mathematics skills, which community members used in their daily life. During data collection I witnessed farmers using rope in planting seeds, making the planting of crops more efficient, and helping the farmers to maintain their plant population. Respondents themselves said even other skills like cleanliness and other health issues improved after the establishment of the school. It is convincing that some of the gains are not a direct product of classroom lessons but rather life experiences after witnessing teachers' manners of life. All teachers who taught in the school resided in the village. Some community members, who happened to teach in the school and were transferred to other schools, decided to return and settle in the community when they retired from teaching.

Systemic operationalization.

Agreed upon values, norms, and rules that spoke in a moral voice to community members and made them live as covenant learning communities were systematically implemented using formal and informal management structures. The village management structure at Kitamburo was in line with recommended structures as per the laws and regulations of Tanzania (JMT 2001). Hamlets and the village council according to the law must meet monthly, while the all-villagers meetings are quarterly. Kitamburo community was able to carry out all meetings at all levels of the village management as per government regulations. One of the agenda items in all these meetings was education and school progress. Thus at the village assembly, the school head teacher was given an opportunity to tell the community about school plans. The assembly was

used to approve the school plans and once approved, all community members were bound to implement them.

At the school there were staff meetings and think tanks involving teachers. Any innovations raised therein that required students' actions were deliberated upon and approved in the school council where all teachers attended. There was at least one school council meeting in every month of the school term. Topics raised at the teachers' staff meeting that needed parents' support were brought as agenda items to the school committee meeting. There they were deliberated upon to determine which things needed the support of all community members and which needed the support of only parents of the students. Things needing the support of only student parents were brought to the all-parents meeting convened by the school head teacher for deliberation and approval for implementation. Any thing needing the support of all community members was brought to the village council meeting or the village assembly for discussion, deliberation, and approval.

Apart from these formal meetings of the school and the village which are formal institutions, there were other meetings carried out in religious organizations, traditional clan meetings, and other associations that had the school and children's education as an agenda. Moreover, school issues were discussed informally by community members in their daily conversations. These meetings enabled community members to resolve potential inter-institution, inter-organization, and inter-personal conflicts which helped them live as a covenant learning community and show promising school community connectedness. The meetings facilitated communication, transparency, and enhanced accountability and responsibility, which collectively helped to connect community members in working towards improving their school through enhanced school community connectedness.

These themes were generated over time due to the interplay of the capitals at the community.

Discussion on the Interplay of Capitals

Kitamburo community, as evidenced by respondents and through observation, was rich in natural capital. The community grew from a church-based association and was located in an area with relatively fertile soils, good annual rains, and good weather capable of allowing a variety of crops, and suitable for keeping animals. Socially, the community was composed of a number of small clan-based organizations which, according to respondents, had strong bonding social

capital that helped clan members conform to clan values and beliefs. The clan-based organizations existed historically and were still in operation at the time of data collection. However, none of the clans was able to establish a joint farm of neither a single clan nor of two or more clans. The first joint farm was opened by a church-based women's association after noticing a large area of open land cleared by bush fire.

Most churches and religions generally preach about love to everybody. In the case of Kitamburo, the first women's association crossing traditional clans grew after the introduction of the church, giving me reason to believe that the catalyst to establish such an association emanated from church teachings. Church teachings enabled the women to understand that relationships could go beyond traditional clan systems and allowed them to decide to establish a church-based women's association. In addition, the women's association decided to establish a joint farm. This indicated that there were visionary members of the association who were capable of analyzing and understanding that life was more than just waiting for death and enjoying a good life in heaven. I believe they were able to link the envisaged future of good life after death with good life before death. Among the aspects contributing to good life before death were material well-being, food, and clothes which according to the context of the community, were to be obtained from engaging in farm work and resulted in the decision to open a joint farm. The relationships between association members required the existence of trust and cooperation which are aspects of social capital (Hayami, 2009; Portes, 1998). This suggests that every member showed trust and commitment to cooperate towards jointly set association goals. The association could not be established and sustained without mutually felt trust and cooperation amongst association members because social capital is "relational" (Portes, 1998, p. 7). It was the perceived mutual relationships which made members feel they could benefit from working as members of an association.

Thus right from the beginning of the community, there was interplay of various capitals. Religious teachings, arguably responsible for the establishment of the association, fall in the constituency of cultural capital (Emery & Flora, 2006). The cultural capital catalyzed women to establish an association. Women were human beings and thus they were human capital (Emery & Flora). The women were exposed to new religious teachings which suggest that they underwent transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000) which enabled them to initiate a new idea of establishing an association and then a joint farm as a way of bettering their relatively poor status.

Women expected to get yields which could contribute to their improved well-being at least by increasing access to food.

The association cultivated wheat in the first year of their joint association farm. The wheat thrived very well and so they realized a good harvest. The good harvest attracted men to join the association. Men would not come to know how much the association had harvested without having some loose ties with the association members. This indicated that the women in the association had bonding ties which united them together as women, but every woman had some form of tie with a certain man within the broader community. It is possible to argue that the small-scale female-male interactions were translated into large scale association ties with the effect of acceptance of men as members of the association. The notion of the strength of loose ties in social capital is discussed by Granovetter (1973) who posits that networks in small scale can impact more strong ties at large scale networks, which can in turn impact more strong small-scale ties. Aspects of commitment, accountability, and responsibility can be traced to the establishment of the association and willingness to work jointly in a joint farm.

Allowing men to join the association initially established by women introduced more agendas relating to the well-being of association members. These agendas created a complex environment (Mezrow, 2000) which called for stronger political capital (Emery & Flora, 2006) capable of organizing and harmonizing members' voices. The increased need of political capital required the association to have a leader with the ability to bring the voices together. In traditional African "habit of mind" (Mezirow) females are perceived as inferior members of community. Taking advantage of cultural capital between the outgoing leader of the association and the new leader (Benett & Silva, 2011), a brother to outgoing leader was assigned to lead the association. Voices of diverse association members made the association look for bridge social capital (Narayan, 1999) to address their dreams beyond the boundaries of their association. The bridge social capital enabled the association to meet people and learn, a learning that enabled them to change their frames of mind (Mezirow) and transform the association to a village and later an ujamaa village with more reputable structure, more objectives, but all targeted towards one vision and mission—an improved well-being.

The same social capital enabled the Kitamburo community to work together and show promising results in agricultural production. Promising agricultural products had an impact in building stronger bonding social capital amongst community members and more strong bridging

social capital, which facilitated more access to higher political powers and increased political capital. The access to higher levels of political powers and the reputation established through strong bridging social capital, enabled the community to get a reputation at the district, regional, and national level; a reputation which translated to built capital (Emery & Flora, 2006) in terms of tractors, vehicles, and other machines to carry out improved agriculture. The built capital enabled the community to produce and harvest more than they needed, a situation required more built capital in terms of structures like warehouses to conserve their harvests and passable roads to transport their surplus products to market places to transform the harvests in financial capital.

Accumulated financial capital and the increased number of machines to support agricultural production brought about a new environment which made villagers question the status quo in relation to what they owned as a community. Through critical discourse (Mezirow, 2000), community members were able to reach a decision to improve their housing. The communities used their bridging social capital to access loans from financial institutions to construct improved houses and contribute to the improved built capital of the community. The loan they had accessed was meant to support community members with the purchase of industrial-based construction materials only. Other materials, such as bricks, were to be made locally. Having learned of the potency of joint work in agriculture, the community decided to utilize the same social capital to mobilize human capital to make the bricks jointly. Bricks were made jointly by all community members with the capacity of doing that job, and then arrangements were made to give the bricks to specific persons. The mobilization of human capital for various activities was done on the basis of collectively agreed principles and rules upon which mentoring and monitoring was done.

The experience community members gained in making bricks taught them the possibility of constructing a building other than residential buildings. This building was the school. The community had been harvesting enough food, which contributed to population growth through both reproduction and immigrants who joined the community after learning that the community was positively progressing at an unprecedented speed. However, there were no primary schools thus the rising number of children posed a challenging situation, which made community members prioritize construction of a school to let the community raise and improve the human capital within the community boundaries.

The established school brought in teachers who spent more years in school and colleges and arguably had more human capital than most community members. Knowledge is power, thus teachers were looked at as sole sources of knowledge in the community. This made community members support them which, in turn, encouraged teachers to deliver and contribute to students' transition to secondary schools. The trust and cooperation, which are aspects of social capital, community members had invested in constructing the school and supporting teachers was systematically being transformed to human capital through students' attendance to the primary school and transition to secondary school. In turn, the students who continued with post-primary school education were able to accumulate enough human capital which was transformed into finance capital (Hayami, 2009) through employment or improved production and productivity within the community.

The long term exposure of students to family and clan ties during their formative years through well organized clan leadership made students internalize cultural norms and values which are aspects of cultural capital. Internalized values, beliefs, and customs made students maintain their family and clan ties irrespective of the number of years they spent in school, even if they left the community and furthered their education. Some of them were living in foreign countries and were married to people of different races. Marriage to non-community members created new networks which are aspects of social capital. In addition, some of the former students of the Kitamburo primary school came back with money and they worked together with their respective families to improve their family houses. This motivated parents who had no children with secondary school education invest in the education of their children. Thus, human capital possessed by former students of Kitamburo primary school was transformed into finance capital then brought back home to improve family houses and was thus transformed into built capital, which in turn strengthened the family-children ties with their respective families and therefore created more social capital. The scenario motivated more families to invest in human capital by supporting the school and creating a strong social capital with the school community, including teachers.

On the other hand, the generosity extended to teachers by community members as indicated by granting free occupation of school teachers' houses, allocating plot of land for teachers' individual farms, and community members' willingness to allow their children to support their teachers in chores like fetching water and cultivating in teachers' individual farms

motivated teachers to deliver their work accordingly. In addition to the motivation to work hard, the generosity made teachers and parents alike open doors for interaction. These interactions assumed different forms. It included informal interactions in informal settings like in traditional beer shops where, in the course of discussions, other issues concerning school progress were introduced and addressed as inputs for both parents and teachers' action. Formal interactions took place in situations like parents' meetings, school open days, and village assemblies, in which case teachers and parents were free to share experiences, achievements, and challenges concerning school improvement and were able to contribute to promising school community connectedness and school progress.

The community capabilities framework was helpful in approaching the study as it clearly showed the different forms of capital and how they were influencing one another, and worked upon by community members towards contributing to promising school-community connectedness. Through the framework, the study has unveiled that Kitamburo had characteristics that qualify it be termed a covenant learning community. In the course of making a meaningful life, the community evolved norms that controlled community members' actions related to school-community connectedness through rewards and sanctions. Community members at Kitamburo were able to regularly construe their past experiences and revise their interpretation of what it meant to live as a community. It was in this process of critical reflection that they were able to transform from an indigenous community tied by mere clan ties to a community with inter-clan ties in the form of association and later a village. As a village they were able to transform from an indigenous community relying on traditional tools of production to relatively improved tools of production which included tractors, vehicles, and other machines. They were able to transform from traditional techniques of production which emphasized food crops to relatively improved techniques involving cash crops and modern crop husbandry involving the application of standard crop spaces, application of fertilizers and pesticides.

The community at Kitamburo exercised both instrumental learning (Mezirow, 2000) which enabled it to constantly adopt and adapt new methods of doing things, but they also had communicative learning which enabled them to use reflective discourse to communicate amongst community members and other communities, including those in higher administration and leadership positions at the district, regional, and national levels. These skills helped them to effectively utilize bridging social capital which, in turn, has helped them to access more political

capital. The political capital enabled the community to access funds for housing. The houses increased built capital, a process which helped them to review their frames of mind and see the possibility of having a school from their own effort. The school brought to the community school teachers who had a relatively better human capital. The teachers' human capital was motivated by a good community social capital to result in more human capital from within the community. The human capital from within the community was able to translate the human capital into finance capital that was then reinvested in the community, thus strengthening community bonding social capital that was observed as a covenant learning community with promising teacher-student-parent collaboration.

Whereas the interplay of capitals that brought the observed school-community connectedness at Kitamburo is well acknowledged, it is pertinent to go back to literature which, amongst others, Porter (2000, pp. 14–15) noted with concern that:

> Treatments of the role of culture in economic prosperity tend to focus on generic cultural attributes that are deemed desirable, such as hard work, initiative, belief in the value of education, as well as factors drawn from macroeconomics, such as prosperity to save and invest. These are surely relevant to prosperity, but none of these generic attributes is unambiguously correlated with economic progress. Hard work is important, but just as important is what guides and direct the type of work done. Initiative is important, but not all initiative is productive. Education is crucial, but so is the type of education sought and what the education is used to accomplish. Saving is good, but only if the savings are deployed in productive ways.

Contextualizing the above argument in aspects of a covenant learning community and the investigated school-community connectedness adds to the already introduced purpose of the study of looking for the catalysts to which the observed school community connectedness at Kitamburo is linked. The capitals would not promisingly influence one another to support the school community connectedness without having certain guiding forces. This study has unveiled that there were catalysts who/which generated the mechanisms discussed above under the sub heading of summary of themes. These catalysts worked in both directions. In one direction, it mobilized some of the capitals which led community members internalizing some of the mechanisms. But also, the catalysts generated some mechanisms which helped community members mobilize resources and contribute to school community connectedness and learning

communities. For example, it was Milonge's good community leadership that contributed to mobilizing community human resources to construct the school using natural and financial capitals. In turn, when the school was established and community members started to benefit from the investment in education, community members began placing value on education and were more willing to establish structures to support the school.

Catalysts

Incentive system.

Commitment amongst the said groups was motivated by an incentive system. Community members continued to have commitment because there were positive outputs from what they were committed to do. When they were committed to work as an association and get involved in agriculture, the government supported them. The support encouraged them to transform from a mere association to a village, and later on to an ujamaa village. When they requested a school, the government accepted their request and was willing to post teachers to begin a school before the construction of formal school building. Incentives encouraged community members to advance their grievances to top district management regarding education. Village management and the top management always listened and acted positively to support the interests and purposes of the community members. Thus, when 7 years after the first teacher reported to the school, she was able to make some school leavers proceed to secondary school education. The Kitamburo community was encouraged to work hard and improve the school building, an initiative that was cultivated and considered part and parcel of community culture and translated into sustained school-community connectedness.

Teachers were received by the community as members. Among other incentives, teachers received privileges like access to village land for cultivation, living rent-free in teachers' houses, receiving free transportation, and being allowed to use student labor for small household activities like fetching water. These were not institutionalized guidelines and when one party felt that another party was not doing what was expected, the incentives changed from positive to negative, as what had happened to the non-performing head teacher at Kitamburo primary school. The possibilities of receiving non-institutionalized incentives made every party work hard in order to encourage the other to do what was expected, which translated into sustained school community connectedness as in post-ujamaa days.

Students received rewards when they performed well in the regular tests that teachers initiated. The reward was even greater with the possibility of being selected to continue on to secondary school education upon performing well on the PSLE. Those who had the opportunity to go for further education were able to secure good paying jobs. Thus students understood that education provided one of the opportunities to cross over from abject poverty to a relatively better life. These incentives contributed to school community connectedness by making students, teachers, and parents cooperate as if every party had something to lose should they work in isolation.

Transparency.

Kitamburo communities were transparent communities. At the overall community level, the community members were able to let their voices be heard at any administrative level provided they had well-grounded evidence to support their grievances. This was adopted as a community culture and helped to mentor various people who assumed administrative roles in the school and the village. It also helped in the monitoring of the performances of various community members. If a community member was not doing what was expected of him/her the neighbors were able to tell him/her and advise accordingly. In turn, this helped community members conduct effective self-assessment of their activities in order to conform with what was expected as per community members' values. In turn this helped to maintain and pass on community values, including the value of education which contributed to school community connectedness as one aspect to foster promising school performances.

As already said in the introductory part of Chapter 4, there was no one single factor that could be considered to have contributed to the observed school community connectedness, but rather a collection of issues well woven together which resulted in what was observed as school community connectedness. The question was who weaved them and how were they woven to result in sustained school community connectedness despite macro and micro changes of development policies in Tanzania. To underscore this I will go back to the conceptual model that guided this study and thereafter address the specific questions of the study.

Personalities.

Tracing back to the genealogical development of the Kitamburo community, the observed use of community capitals can be linked back to the people who assumed leadership and mobilized resources towards community progress, which happened to include school community

connectedness. It was the woman leader Mahugila who initiated the church-based women's association that later turned into a village community. It was the good leadership of Milonge, who took over from Mahugila, and happened to lead the community for more than 20 years. After the retirement of Milonge, the community passed through a relatively weak leadership phase and no significant progress in school community connectedness was recorded. This speaks to the importance of the community selection of a chairperson similar to the late Milonge. Milonge travelled to at least five foreign countries through nationally sponsored study tours. The incumbent chairperson I met during data collection also had a 2-year study tour to a European country and while there visited at least five more countries. Milonge stayed in power as chair of the community for more than 20 years. The incumbent chair person during data collection had at least 5 years experience but was still young enough to continue in this role if re-elected. Arguably, community members had learned the importance of electing a village chair with experiences of traveling to different countries to lead them and had informally set it as a leadership criterion.

A learning community is a community that uses learning as a means to define and question their status quo. It also uses the same education to set and implement strategies that lead to positive change (Tu & Corry, 2002). Kitamburo had good land for crop production but the community members continued to live in abject poverty. Mahugila, the woman who initiated religious-based women'sassociation, was able to make association members learn of the opportunity at their disposal. The association was a learning model for prosperity which motivated other members of the community (other than women) to join and eventually transform the association into a village. Later the village had another visionary leader—Milonge. Thus, persons with critical thinking and who did not take things for granted had a role in serving as catalysts to the transformation of the community, effecting a learning community with a promising school community connectedness.

On the other hand, the first teacher who opened the school lived in small poor house similar to villagers' houses of the time. This served as a catalyst for community members to accept the teacher and other teachers who joined the teaching staff and school. It is possible to argue that the readiness of the first teacher laid the foundation for future links between community members and the school. This was evidenced by research participants who recalled the head teacher's encouraging words and made community members believe and act as owners

of the school. The community continued to invite the first head teacher to school events, even when she was transferred to another school. During the events she was given a chance to speak and was awarded gifts by community members. To show that personality count, when the school came under the headship of a teacher who did not like to interact with community members, the school community connectedness went down and a number of issues were raised against the head teacher, issues which contributed to his transfer from the school. Immediately after his transfer, a new head teacher came who was very cooperative and successfully revitalized the school community connectedness along with improved school performance. Thus, the observed school community connectedness suggest that there were people with personalities on both sides—on the side of the community as well as on the side of teachers and students—who acted as catalysts to make the collaboration sustainable.

Writing of the role of a leader for the development and maintenance of a professional learning community, DuFour et al. (2008) noted the central role of a group leader. The trust that community members and teachers were giving to a leader on the basis of what they were receiving from the leader contributed commitment, which in turn motivated Kitamburo communities to learn and act accordingly.

Students had group leaders chosen on the basis of performances, thus group members expected input from the leaders and were willing to cooperate and work constructively in solving various questions of different subjects. Teachers had head teachers; community members had school committee members and village management. When weakness was found in the leadership of any of the three parties the school community connectedness was affected.

Visionary leaders were also capable of enhancing smooth communication which promoted participation and accountability. Leaders of each of the parties (students, teachers and community members) were crucial in defining the vision and mission of the groups they were leading. The people were always willing to perform when they knew that they were on the right track towards achieving their dreams. So when there were any traces of deviation from what community members believed to be their set future state of affair (vision) they questioned the leadership. This is what happened when Kitamburo had many production machines but poor houses, this happened when the school was not performing, and this happened when one of the village chairpersons happened to misuse community funds and resources in general.

This suggested that the community was living as a covenant community. Covenant communities have "agreed-upon beliefs" (Mullen, Bettez, & Wilson, 2011, p. 283) which help them define who they are, what they are doing, and how to govern themselves. Covenant communities are "inscribed with moral and procedural codes" (Twale & De Luca as cited in Mullen, Bettez, & Wilson, 2011, p. 283). A covenant community has a common worldview and is capable of using various mechanisms to enforce the sustainability of the bond that brings them together. Covenant communities have their own ecclesiastical structure, rituals, rites of passage, mores for prescriptive and proscriptive behavior, identified roles for each individual, a common understanding of language within the group, a "consciousness of kind" and a "we/they" mentality. This aspect brought about the crucial roles of religious belief, traditional indigenous management, and ujamaa ideology in enhancing school community connectedness.

In addition to formal leaders of the broad community at Kitamburo, there were respected elders who had the authority to influence the few people who showed deviation from the majority.

Sustained institutions.

The Kitamburo community emerged from a church-based association which transformed to a village and then ujamaa village. The church, as is the case of most other religions, has a characteristic of unifying its followers using faith-based principles. Kitamburo predominantly belongs to two main religious denominations with traces of minor denominations attempting to penetrate the community. Religious homogeneity had a role to play in making the community a covenant learning community. The association referred to by many respondents as the foundation of the community belonged to the Lutheran church. One characteristic feature of the Lutheran church inherent from the founder of the Lutheran church, Martin Luther, right from its inception in the 16th Century, was a critical reflection of the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. In practice, the culture of the Lutheran church was to delegate the development of the church to followers of a given locality where the church was found. It is noteworthy that community members at Kitamburo, the majority of whom were influenced by the teachings of the Lutheran church during their formative years, adapted the church-based strategies of development through community-based development activities and thus influenced frames of mind of community members to engage in critical reflections which enabled them to realize the importance of education and collaboration in enhancing school improvement.

At the time of data collection, there were micro ongoing social capitals on the basis of religious denominations (Lutheran and Roman Catholic) which had roles in maintaining and sustaining the overall social capital which bound the community as an entity towards strengthening school-community connectedness. Though social capital has the disadvantage of leading to exclusion because the very same values, beliefs, and customs that keep some people tied, also have potential of excluding others (Narayan, 1999), at Kitamburo there was no such potential as at the time of data collection there was only one Muslim household in the community.

Apart from the faith-based institutions, the glue that binds community members at Kitamburo can be traced back from pre-colonial and pre-ujamaa days. As narrated by participants, prior to coming together as a community they were living in clan based scattered settlements. It is convincing that if their coming together as a community meant doing away with skills, knowledge and experiences gathered while living in isolated scattered settlements, the clans would have been weakened and probably died. Fortunately this was not the case. As noted earlier, upon data collection, Kitamburo community had at least 12 clan organizations, though the majority of the villagers belonged to only three clans. The clans had well-established management structures as suggested by their abilities to convey clan based meetings to discuss various issues including the education affairs of children who belonged to a clan.

This suggests the role of indigenous knowledge in the observed promising learning community at Kitamburo. While respondents said there is no more traditional religious rituals at Kitamburo, it is of interest to see the flourishing of an equally traditional institution– the clans. Arguably, clan based management is still needed. Though Hyden (1980), argue that social formations that existed before colonialism and socialism in Tanzania survive because of the survival of the economic structures which give them life (p. 4); I would say economic structures are not the only reasons that support the structures. Indigenous knowledge is "The information base for society, which facilitates communication and decision-making. Indigenous information systems are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems" (Flavier, et al., 1995, p. 479). In the context that traditional clans at Kitamburo survived from pre-colonial to post ujamaa, it is convincing to argue that the indigenous knowledge applied in managing the clans is still needed in facilitating communication and decision making that make Kitamburo show promising characteristics of a

learning community. Traditional clan leadership employs indigenous management knowledge (Beidelman, 1997). Clans in Africa were responsible for maintaining norms and customs, including making sure that the reputation of a clan was maintained and sustained through good deeds of clan members (Beidelman, 1997). The community at Kitamburo had collective values, norms and rules which prioritized on community role in supporting the education of children. Perhaps, indigenous knowledge which played role in maintaining community values, norms and rules in traditional clans contributed to the observed covenant learning community at Kitamburo by maintaining and sustaining values, norms and rules on supporting the school.

As an institution, the school had autonomy. There were no conflicts of performance between the school and the community. Although the school and each of the institutions, such as churches and clans, within the community operated within its own boundaries of execution powers there remained strong links and networking between and among them. All institutions were part of a broader institution of the community as village with well-established structures and strong school community connectedness.

Historical achievements.

The Kitamburo community had a good record of achieving what the community had decided to do. Achievement acted as a motivation and unifying argent. Kitamburo emerged from a small women's association. When the association chair wanted to establish an association farm, she approached the person with available land. After opening the association farm, cultivating and harvesting, they attracted men to join the association. Later the association was transformed to a village and an ujamaa village. When the village opened joint village farms they had good harvests which enticed leaders from the district, region, and the nation to give them more support. When they used the support effectively they were able to gain recognition in various aspects which improved their reputation and brought even more recognition to their efforts. When they wanted to get a school, they got it. When they happened to have a poor performing head teacher, they filed their grievances and succeeded in having him transferred. A new teacher then made significant contributions to the progress of their school. When the village happened to fall under a poor performing chair person, a group of intelligent old people of the community filed their grievances and succeeded in forcing him to step down and a new chair was elected. When the villagers started to support the school they found performance results of students increased as measured by the PSLE results.

The long-term trend of strategy-action-success taught them that there was always a possibility to win if they decided to work together toward the set objective. It was this historical achievement which contributed to the school community connectedness, despite the changing policies from socialism to open door policies. Thus the spirit of working together as covenant community began from the time the community learned of the potency of unity in making mission and vision success.

Summary of Results

Kitamburo was selected as a case for this study due to its noted relatively promising performance in mathematics as measured by PSLE results and other locally organized inter-school examinations. The preliminary study that prompted this study noted earlier that the school was performing relatively well because it had a sufficient number of teachers who worked as a team. Most teachers stayed at the school for a long time and thus were able to innovate workable approaches to teaching and learning. The innovations were easily implemented and sustained because the teachers were well received by community members who invariably supported them through the provision of school food for their children. It was further noted that the parents' support of the school was sustained through well-established supportive values, norms, and rules enforced with the support of formal and informal sanction systems in clan-based communities, religious based communities, the school, and the village government.

This study has unveiled that the Kitamburo community was bestowed with a natural environment with good weather, and was conducive to support the cultivation of a myriad of crops and keeping a variety of animals. The environment attracted people to settle in the area. In the course of living and working in the environment villagers established a common way of looking and acting at the world around them. Repeated testing of strategies and actions of working with the world around them showed promising results and they such strategies were then institutionalized. This institutionalization led to the establishment of community values, norms, and rules which spoke with a moral voice to all villagers and therefore enhanced collaboration among the individuals and micro communities that constituted the broader Kitamburo community. One such small institution was the primary school, hence the emergence of school-community connectedness witnessed and investigated in this study.

The study showed that the Kitamburo community lived as a covenant learning community that impacted sustained school-community connectedness because of the trust and

collaboration in form of commitment, an incentive system, accountability and responsibility, mentorship, participation, communication, and transparence. These were initiated and practiced due to the existence of personalities with influence and the power to mobilize community capitals towards achieving a common mission and vision of accessing quality education as a way out of poverty. Influential personalities in micro institutions in Kitamburo were synchronized by those at the macro level of the whole Kitamburo community to lead to promising positive impact in form of learning communities. Further, Kitamburo community members had internalized the socialist ideology which reinforced collaboration. The leaders, institutions, and ideologies made community members develop common ways of looking at and working with the work around them as summarized in community values, norms, and rules. The values, norms, and rules were able to be maintained and sustained due to promising achievements recorded in history and the long term school-community positive reciprocity.

Policy Implications

Establishment of learning communities with a bid to enhance school community connectedness as a way out of poor school progress is an area extensively studied by academics and frequently recommended by policy makers and curriculum implementers. However, most studies are professional-centered, focusing on teachers as key argents of establishing learning communities and thus most policies make recommendations to teachers and establish strategies on how to create learning communities from the vantage point of teachers as professionals. This study has shown that learning communities at Kitamburo were organically generated from community members and then influenced teachers to create a professional learning community.

Stemming from these results, I recommend that efforts be done to make community members have their voices heard and their efforts recognized. Community members should not be looked upon as recipients of curriculum and policy directives, but rather as makers of curriculum and public policies including policies regarding the education sector. The well-documented decentralization program should have practical implementations by giving community members more powers over the school in their area. If management powers of the school shall be vested in the community it will be easy for them to do counterchecking which will ensure teachers deliver what is expected of them. The noted promising school community connectedness at Kitamburo was partly contributed to by leaders with small mouths and big, big eyes and ears, which encouraged the bottom-up initiative to take off and be sustained over years,

despite policy changes at the national macro level. It is difficult to develop policies and program guidelines which will fit to all schools. Community members who have accumulated knowledge about their community should be empowered to guide the direction of their own school and their own community.

Learning communities at Kitamburo were a function of people with Kitamburo as a home. It was interplay of community members in their totality irrespective of the geographical distance between them. Arguably, every remote community has some elites who succeeded in finding good jobs or running a good business after having passed through a primary school. It would be important for every remote community to take the initiative to mobilize resources from community elites. Independence of most of the African states was a result of the commitment of a few African elites who happened to be educated elsewhere but were willing to come back and wage protracted struggles that led to independence. Without the commitment of these earlier African educated and economic elites, most African states would be under colonial rule to date. Kitamburo has demonstrated the effects of mobilizing resources from its community members from across the board.

I also recommend the initiation of study tours for community members. Some communities have poor performing schools and poor school-community connectedness because of the failure to have people witness a performing school that uses locally mobilized resources through the social capital sustaining school community connectedness. Development practitioners have the role of mobilizing at least few influential people to visit schools like the one at Kitamburo community to learn from them. Teachers at Kitamburo narrated that one technique they used to improve performance was to network with their fellow teachers in the nearby schools and in schools of their respective areas of domicile. The proposed study tours might help generate networking between different communities which might help community members harvest management skills that will help them strengthen collaboration and school community connectedness.

Delimitations and Limitations

This study explored a learning community made up of smaller learning communities in the rural area of the United Republic of Tanzania (herein after Tanzania). Tanzania is a union of the two countries of Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Tanganyika gained her independence December 9, 1961 from British colonial power. Zanzibar was under dual colonialism of the British and

Arabs. Locally it was ruled by Arabs but The United Kingdom remained the ultimate colonial power. After centuries of Arab domination, in 1832 Sultan Seyyid Said bin Sultan of Oman moved the capital city of Oman from Muscat (Oman) to Zanzibar. Thus, although formally Zanzibar gained her independence from the British in December 10, 1963; the independence did not free indigenous Zanzibaris as that would have meant giving autonomy to Arab colonial powers who exercised colonialism without the influence of the United Kingdom. The indigenous people of Zanzibar waged a successful revolution on January 12, 1964, a revolution referred to as genuine independence of Zanzibar. In fear of domination and on the basis of traditional and historical relationships between Zanzibaris and Tanganyikans (Duggan, 1976, pp. 83–84), the two founder presidents, Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika and Abeid Karume of Zanzibar, signed Articles of Union between the two independent sovereign states which led to the emergence of Tanzania on April 26, 1964 (Mussa, 2005). However, primary education was not among the matters of articles of the union (Mussa, 2005). Thus, where Tanzania is mentioned in this report, reference is made to the former Tanganyika which is currently known as Tanzania Mainland.

Also, at the time of data collection, the Kitamburo community existed as two villages, Kitamburo and Ndolu. Due to the long-term popularity of the name Kitamburo, there were some complaints amongst respondents who belonged to Ndolu village about the rationale of the name be taken by the other part. The complaint was based on the grounds that the headquarters of the Kitamburo community were located in an area which belonged to Ndolu at the time of data collection. Although the study involved community members without regard to their current administrative villages, the grievances they had might have influenced the telling of their stories. For example, during data collection I had to spend about 15 minutes speaking to one villager who was not ready to get involved in the study just because they belonged to Ndolu village.

Furthermore, the method I used to select participants might have caused bias that led me not to have the chance to talk to additional respondents because they were not identified by other respondents as explained in a chapter about methodology. For example, although at the planning stage I had students at Kitamburo as potential respondents, I did not involve them in this study because they were not mentioned by the respondents with whom I started. Thus this report might have missed some additional or different stories about the subject matter under study from the perspectives of students. However, as well noted by Wellington (2000), the process of

conducting research involves also testing and evaluating the methods chosen to carry out the research.

Lastly, this study was conducted within a broader study as already explained in the introduction. I was interested in exploring learning communities which sustain school community connectedness in the context of liberal policies that Tanzania followed. The purpose of the broader study was to contribute knowledge that could improve the practice of teaching and learning mathematics; whereas the purpose of this study was to contribute to literature about learning communities and school community connectedness.

Suggestion for Future Research

This was a case study which cannot be spared from the "no one size fits all" syndrome. I propose more studies of my kind in other communities to contribute to knowledge of the role of community members in initiating and sustaining learning communities and strengthening school-community connectedness with promising school performances as outputs. This study used a community with promising school community connectedness as a case. It would be important to have a case study that used a community with poor school community connectedness to discover whether the same identified issues influence the poor school community connectedness in the school. In addition, this study was focused on what happened that a learning community with promising school community connectedness emerged. There is no account of students in this study. It was a study designed to capture the perspectives of the community members who happened to have the history of the emergence of the learning community and the school community connectedness. Another study, from the point of view of students, might contribute to yet new knowledge and enrich this academic area of school community connectedness.

Conclusion

The situation of school-community connectedness and learning communities in Tanzania is "long in prescription and short on description" (Lortie, 1975, p.vii). As noted in this report, Tanzania is rich in writings and policy documents emphasizing the importance of learning communities in the development process of the country, however, with little equally important contextual step by step description on how to establish such communities.

Kitamburo community has deviated in curriculum implementation at Kitamburo primary school, with promising results. Teachers, community members and students have collectively

innovated activities and structures which enhanced effective implementation of the curriculum. The innovations had implications on the teaching load of teachers, education costs on the part of community members and efforts on the part of students; but none of the three sub-communities found the implications as a burden. Every sub-community was committed to fulfill what was expected in order to meet the collective community objectives.

This deep commitment made teachers teach as teachers, students study as students and community members participate in school issues as community members. Teachers made effective teaching a part of their identity; students identified themselves as hard working; and community members identified themselves with effective participation in supporting the education of their children. All these were a result of learning processes which to a large extent originated in the roots of the community. Learning processes enabled community members, teachers and students to see what was working, and what needed to be changed.

As I was reflecting on the results of this study, a number of ideas came around. As a teacher teaching development studies at a university level, one of the challenges I face is whose stories I bring in class to share with students about education and development practices in general. In more cases than not, I used to feed my students with development policies, programs and strategies that skewed towards developmentalism (Ibhawoh & Dibua, 2003), an approach which took little cognizance of voices of the rural population or of those meant to benefit from development in general. The results of this case study will serve as immediate supporting evidence for home grown rural development strategy. Kitamburo has shown that the most important thing is not the documented policy or strategy or activity which is brought to rural community as prescription (Pritchett, 2012). The most important service is not school buildings and other services brought to serve community members as unfortunate victims. The most important thing is not the rules, norms and values that community members are directed to adopt and adapt. Rather, it is how the community gets to the activities, to the programs, to the policies, to establish services, and to establish values, norms and rules. Kitamburo has shown that what matters is the struggle the community members have to engage in to establish values, norms, rules, and structures that shall serve to tackle problems and challenges. Primary school curriculum document is a policy document and has its own prescriptions on how to get implemented. I would say teachers, community members, and students at Kitamburo used

learning as a means to deconstruct the curriculum in order to address the challenges and problems at hand that they wished to solve.

This study can also contribute to my consultation service to policy makers and development supervisors, particularly on the aspect of accountability. Accountability is more than making follow ups on how effectively one has followed the prescribed procedures and principles governing an assigned job. For example, the teaching process in Tanzania involves teachers' documentation of their teaching plans in form of scheme of work and lesson plans; but in this study, these documents were not amongst the things the community members were looking for when they wanted to know whether the teachers were performing or not. Nor were these documents believed to be important by the teachers, as an account of a poor or good school performance. Teachers were interested to hear good stories about themselves and their jobs from community members, and these stories motivated them to work hard. Arguably, community members were also interested in hearing good stories about themselves from teachers.

As a development practitioner, these results shall serve as firsthand account on examples of the role of community members in taking responsibility for the development process of individuals, the school and the community at large. The concept that a human being can not be developed but develops himself [sic] has been stated by the founding president of Tanzania, the late Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1974); however, my experiences show that most community members in rural Tanzanian communities are yet to develop an awareness and critical thinking that could help them take a full responsibility for their own development process. It is in this context that I suggested rural-rural community members' study tours, in order to share experiences that might contribute to their frames of reference, habits of mind and points of view which might contribute to community members' taking responsibility for their own development.

Further, the results of this study are not meant to serve as a general principle in establishing learning communities beyond the context of Kitamburo. Thus, as a new researcher in the field of school-community connectedness and learning communities, I will take these results as the beginning for further research that might advance knowledge about the generation of learning communities in poor countries like Tanzania. In addition, though my initial intention was to contribute to literature on how communities and schools work together to generate a learning community, I am convinced to move forward by going back to the community I have

studied, to share at least some excerpts of the pertinent issues that in my view, might promote their efforts in enhancing the promising elements of learning communities.

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Sample interview protocol - Kitamburo

Post Ujamaa School-community connectedness: Exploring Learning Communities in Rural Areas

Post ujamaa school-community connectedness: Exploring learning communities in rural areas seek to understand how some communities in Tanzania has managed to establish and maintain closer school-community partnership which promote the teaching and learning in primary schools. *Kitamburo* village is one of the villages with such kind of relationships which helps the students at *Kitamburo* to show good performance in Mathematics. You are kindly requested to tell us stories which explain the conditions in *Kitamburo* village which led to the emergence of a learning community that support the teaching and learning of mathematics in this village. You are chosen to participate in this study because of your better knowledge on the stories that led to the emergence of the said learning community. I have a tape recorder so I would like to get your consent to allow me tape record the stories you will tell me so that I will not miss any of them. The stories you tell will be treated confidentially and will be used for purposes of this study only. To ensure that you are requested to choose a pseudonym which will be used in reporting the stories you tell. If you agree to participate in this study, I kindly request you to fill in and sign the consent form.

Date:

Interviewee Actual Name:

Interviewee Pseudonym:

Position of Interviewee:

Questions

1. Please describe the school- community relationships in this village

2. What is the impact of the relationship between the school and community members?

3. What organs, people, norms, values and people do you think plays the central role in maintaining the relationships you have said?

4. When did the school and community members start having the kind of relationship you have said?

5. What conditions led to the beginning of the relationships you have said.

6. What things can you claim that villagers gains due to the said relationships.

7. What things can you claim that the school (teachers and students) gain due to the said relationships.

8. What mechanisms are in place to ensure community members unified actions to support the school?

9. Are there free riders? How do you deal with them?

10. How do you reach to a consensus?

11. What role is played by the leaders, organs, values and norms in maintaining the relationships?

12. How do you manage the villagers – Are villagers managed as whole group or in small groups?

13. Is there rivalry and hostility from outside the village? How do you manage it?

14. How do you manage new comers?

15. What are the challenges facing school-community connectedness?

16. What are the achievements of the closer school-community relationships?

17. If I were to join the village as a new member of the village- what are the do and don't do you were to tell me? Why?

Appendix B

Sample observation protocol- Kitamburo

Observational field notes- Post ujamaa school-community connectedness: Exploring learning communities in rural areas.

Observer:…………………………………..

Role of observer: Complete observer/observer as participant/ participant observer

Time:……………………………….

Length of observation:………………………………….

1. The setting:

Physical environment:…………………………………………..

Context:……………………………………………………………….

2. Participants:

	Children	Youth	Middle age	Old	Very old	Total
Female						
Male						
Total						

3. Activities and interactions

What is going on:……………………………………………..

4. Frequency and duration

When did it begin:…………………………….

How long does it last:……………………………….

How frequently it occurs:………………………………………..

5. Subtle factors:

Informal and unplanned activities:………………………………

Symbolic and connotative meaning of words:………………………

Nonverbal communication:…………………………………………..

Appendix C

Sample focus group protocol- Kitamburo primary school

Good afternoon/morning and welcome to our session. My name is Athanas Ngalawa I teach at Mzumbe University and I am currently interested in understanding the conditions that led to the emergence of a learning community at Kitamburo which operates to the effect of making your school- Kitamburo Primary School, have relatively better performance in Mathematics in the district as measured by various examinations like Primary School Leaving Examinations.

You are invited to this session because you belong to the school, you are students here in the school and you know better what is happening around the village.

I will be asking you questions and you will be giving me answers. There are no wrong and right answers but rather differing points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. I am interested in both negative comments and positive comments.

I have a tape recorder because I don't want to miss any of your explanations. You have very helpful things to tell me and I cannot write fast enough to get them all down. The explanation you will tell me shall contribute to writing a research report on the subject matter I just told you, how the learning community at Kitamburo came into being. To effect that, I kindly request for your consent. If you are ready to participate in this discussion please fill in the consent form that I will give you just now. If you are not ready please be free to tell me so that I request somebody else to take over your position.

Well, let's begin. To begin with, you already know my name and the place I work I would like to know the name of each of you and a brief story of himself/herself. I have this ball here with me. I will start by throwing it to one of you. Your job is to catch it and once you have it then is your turn to tell us your name, your Grade level, where do you live in this village, and a brief story about yourself. When you are done you will tell us and I will tell you to through the ball to another person of your choice so that he/she can do the same.

Now we know each other. Let us go to the questions.

1. I have this circle here with a picture of a person at the center. This picture represents you. I also have a piece of paper written 'Mathematics". Your jobs is come forward and position this piece of paper at a distance you will choose from you (the picture at the center) and tell us why have you decide to put it at that particular distance from you. As a general rule putting it very close means you love mathematics and putting it far from you means you do not love mathematics. Putting it outside the circle means you would wish not to see mathematics in your school timetable at all.

2. Now this time the center picture is a house. This house represents your school- Kitamburo. Instead of having just one piece of paper I have so many papers with names of institutions around our village. I will choose one of you to put the relative position of the institutions I have listed from the school. As usual, putting it very close to the school means the institution is very helpful to your life and learning here in school while putting it very far it means the institution

has insignificant contribution. Ok now you see the institutions- can we read loudly? (they read while the one who put them is pointing using a pointer). Do you think the list is exhaustive or I have forgotten some of the institutions? Fine you see how our fellow "x" have positioned the institutions. Now "x" can you tell us why do you put institution 'a' at that position? Who has a different point of view and a different position he/she would have positioned institution 'a'? Ok go and show us? Ok why do you decide to put it there?

3. Now instead of institutions I have a list of organization organs here in the school and in our village.

4. Ok. This time I have a list of teachers and at the center is mathematics.

5. Ok this time I have a list of names of villagers and at the center is the school.

6. I have the same list of villagers and at the center is mathematics.

7. Suppose you are to create a balance sheet between the school and the village how would it look like- how the school gains from the villagers and how the villagers gains from the school?

8. Suppose I want to join this village what would you tell me to do or not to do in order to be accepted as a good member of the village.

9. Ok Do you have a question to ask me?

10. Thank you for taking your time to participate in this discussion. I will go and write down your views and come back to confirm with you in future days before I decide to use it in my research.